Studies in Arts-Based Educational Research 6

Barbara Bickel
Rita L. Irwin
Richard Siegesmund *Editors*

Arts-Based Educational Research Trajectories

Career Reflections by Authors of Outstanding Dissertations

Springer

Studies in Arts-Based Educational Research

Volume 6

Arts-Based Educational Research continues to garner increased interest and debate among artists, arts writers, researchers, scholars and educators internationally. Further, the methodologies and theoretical articulations associated with Arts-Based Educational Research are increasingly employed across the disciplines of social science, education, humanities, health, media, communications, the creative arts, design, and trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

This book series offers edited collections and monographs that survey and exemplify Arts-Based Educational Research. The series will take up questions relevant to the diverse range of Arts-Based Educational Research. These questions might include: What can Arts-Based methodologies (such as Arts-Based Research, Arts-Informed Research, a/r/tography, Poetic Inquiry, Performative Inquiry, Arts Practice-Based Research etc.) do as a form of critical qualitative inquiry? How do the Arts (such as literary, visual and performing arts) enable research? What is the purpose of Arts-Based Educational Research? What counts as Arts-Based? What counts as Educational? What counts as Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research be responsibly performed in communities and institutions, individually or collaboratively? Must Arts-Based Educational Research be public? What ways of knowing and being can be explored with Arts-Based Educational Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research build upon diverse philosophical, theoretical, historical, political, aesthetic and spiritual approaches to living? What is *not* Arts-Based Educational Research?

The hinge connecting the arts and research in this Arts-Based Educational Research book series is education. Education is understood in its broadest sense as learning/transformation/change that takes place in diverse formal and informal spaces, places and moments. As such, books in this series might take up questions such as: How do perspectives on education, curriculum and pedagogy (such as critical, participatory, liberatory, intercultural and historical) inform Arts-Based inquiries? How do teachers become artists, and how do artists become teachers? How can one be both? What does this look like, in and beyond school environments?

Arts-Based Educational Research will be deeply and broadly explored, represented, questioned and developed in this vital and digitally augmented international publication series. The aesthetic reach of this series will be expanded by a digital online repository where all media pertaining to publications will be held. Queries can be sent via email to Mindy Carter editor.aber.springer@gmail.com.

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Arts-Based Educational Research Trajectories

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This book is dedicated to all former and future Outstanding Dissertation Award Chairs of the Arts-Based Educational Research Special Interest Group (ABER SIG) for their dedicated scholarly attention, care and service given to hundreds of emerging ABER scholars. We apologise if we have omitted any names of former award chairs.

Donald Blumenfeld-Jones, Diane Conrad, Jaime Fiddler, Dan Harris, Kelly Jo Kerry Moran, Margaret MacIntrye Latta, Ruth Leitch, Joe Norris, Monica Prendergast, Sarah Promislow, Kryssi Staikidis.

Series Editor's Foreword

Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) Trajectories: Career Reflections by Authors of Outstanding Dissertations is a collection of chapters written by a number of ABER dissertation award winners between the years of 2005–2021. This book is a contribution to the relatively short 30 years of American Educational Research Association's Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) Special Interest Group (SIG) history that has sought to offer scholars a legitimate way to connect their arts-based work with educational research. As is described in the chapters in this book, the journeys and current explorations of ABER dissertation award winners are varied and complicated. They include ideas on what ABER is and how it is practiced, as well as how it might be taken up in teaching or how one may mentor others into this approach. As in any book that seeks to reflect back on what has been done in order to inform understandings of where the field might be going, considerations of what voices, races, identities and genders of contributors are present and absent are important to reflect upon. The ABER research represented in this book is both a celebration of the foundational work that has been done by ABER scholars over the last three decades; and a call to look towards the future and not only what ABER has been, but what new ways it could be shaped. What will the future hold when rather than focusing on fighting for legitimacy in the field, ABER scholars can use the arts to push the limits of socio-political paradigms and structures? What will the future hold when ABER scholars can use critical creativity and conjecture to further disrupt and provoke conversations and thoughts on/for environmental justice, solidarity movements and theoretical movements? I look forward to considering such trajectories and more in the years ahead.

Additional queries about our ABER book series' can be sent via email to Mindy R. Carter, Ph.D. at editor.aber.springer@gmail.com.

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Foreword

Reading the diverse and compelling essays in this collection has afforded me the welcome opportunity to revisit two close personal associations with arts-based educational research (ABER) in my own life: first, the ways in which, as a graduate student throughout 2007–2010, my prejudices against what I believed to be the hegemony of the positivist academy were gleefully shattered by the incredible ABER work that I was introduced to by my supervisors, and the work they in turn encouraged me to go further in doing myself; second, engaging with this text took me back to my time as the ABER Dissertation Award chair 2016–2018, an experience that inspired and extended me by bringing me into closer contact not only with generous and brilliant colleagues including the co-editors of this volume, but with the thirty-two dissertations I read, lived with and championed through that role. Both experiences showed me what research could become, what it already was in other places than what was proximate to me at that time, and how far and how quickly this methodologically and theoretically rich area of research was advancing.

Many moving examples of mentoring and collegiality are evidenced throughout this book, including the dialogic dynamic between Richard Siegesmund and Karinna Riddett (chapter "Sustaining an Arts of Living: An Interview with Karinna Riddett"), where their long and mutually-respectful history is evident, as well as the co-authored chapter by Doug Gosse (this award's very first recipient), and his current ABER postgraduate students Jeffrey Thornborrow and Kari Janz (chapter "Mentorship and Allyship in Arts-Based Educational Research"). These kinds of examples not only model good collaborative ABER work, but show us how these kinds of creative-relational commitments can reverberate across time and place.

Framework of the Award

In my first year of co-chairing the dissertation award, I inherited a cache of excellent foundational guidelines produced by Richard Siegesmund and others. To give readers some processual context for the chapters to follow, I include the guidelines as they

existed during my time. All submissions for the ABER Special Interest Group (SIG) Outstanding Dissertation Award are independently reviewed by three reviewers in two separate rounds of review. The reviewers are asked to take into consideration, in a holistic way, the criteria below and to offer comments to justify their selections. Round 2 comments are always compiled and shared anonymously with finalists and the selected award winner, in keeping with the award's ultimate goal of mentoring and supporting a new generation of ABER scholars into conversation with the field. Reviewers are asked to be mindful that their criticism remain constructive, as it is intended to promote a deeper understanding of the newly minted colleague's growing contribution to arts-based research.

The criteria against which first round reviewers are asked to assess each submission include the following:

Relevance to Education
The study addresses a topic that is relevant to the field of education.

Arts-Based Research is the Methodology Employed
Engagement in a form of inquiry that evidences artistic dimensions; as opposed to, for example, inquiry that explores arts or arts and learning but does not include artistic dimensions in the research process or representation.

Significance
Does this piece address a significant issue, contribute significantly to our understanding of social-life and/or benefit others and society? Does it generate new questions and/or move me to action?

Aesthetic Qualities
Is the work artistically shaped, satisfying, and complex? Do all aspects of work contribute to the wholeness of the experience? Does the use of creative analytical practices enhance uncertainty, create productive ambiguity and/or invite interpretive responses?

Resonance
Does this affect me, emotionally and intellectually? Does it resonate with my experience? Does it invite us to vicariously engage with an embodied lived-experience?

Reflexivity
Has the author sincerely explored her/his role, investments, or position within the research? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view? How did the author come to write this text? How was the information gathered?

Ethical Considerations
Are ethical issues addressed? Is the author sensitive to and responsive to the situations and/or people with which she/he engages? Does the work engage relationally and dialogically?

Readers may question, as I did at first, how (or why) an ABER study is required to attend to so many and such rigorous demands. The list certainly requires more than

most Ph.D. examination processes. It also represented to me the kinds of ongoing debates around any methodological or theoretical community of practice. While definitions and guidelines are needed, they are never comprehensive and therefore create platforms for dissent and debate, which themselves can often help to further the nuance and rigour of any particular community. The list also, however, points to a core consideration that seems to remain globally relevant about ABER work: is it fair to ask ABER (or its relatives) to perform what is essentially double the work of a traditional Ph.D.? Must it really require theoretical *as well as* methodological innovation and original contribution, when other doctorates are content to demand an original contribution in only one area? Are we setting ourselves up for failure by demanding so much? The chapters in this volume, and the other recipients' work not included here, bear witness to the power and possibility of combining theoretical as well as methodological rigour in arts-based educational research. There is, of course, no absolute answer to such queries, but asking is enough to keep pushing ABER forward, and this kind of interrogation is exactly what the community-making of this collection does best.

ABER as Sustainable Creative Ecology

One notable thrill while reading this book is the evidence of how far the field of ABER (and associated articulations) have come in the 16 years since the call for participation for the 2005 AERA Winter Institute, including but not limited to practice as research, creative research, research-creation, creative-relational inquiry, arts-informed research, practice-led research and more. This 'suite' of artistic research (in this case within education) responds each in unique ways to what Natalie LeBlanc notes—quoting Australian "practice-led researcher Barbara Bolt (2006; 2013)—[as]…the handling of materials reveals a certain kind of knowledge that is neither merely perceptual nor rational" (this volume). The nexus of materiality, discourse and practice is evident here in spades, or what Siegesmund has called "*nomadic materiality*, a mode of inquiry created through a fluid sensibility" (in LeBlanc, this volume). Barbara Bickel, Rita Irwin and Richard Siegesmund have done an excellent job of curating this collection of commentaries from past winners, together offering a kaleidoscopic impression of the lasting impact of this ground-breaking ABER Dissertation award.

Reflections on process and product, and other not-so-binary aspects of ABER work, threads throughout the volume. As Karinna Riddett reminds readers in chapter "Sustaining an Arts of Living: An Interview with Karinna Riddett", the cross-over between the processes and products of academia and industry are also tethered to the expanding contributions of ABER in both sectors. There are increasing numbers of creatives, ethnographers, technologists and designers moving fluidly between tech industry and higher education; siloes of practice are dissolving in a growing global 'gig' work economy, a shift that requires creativity, collaboration and empathy across all fields of endeavour. At the same time, broad industry impact is increasingly a priority in university benchmarks. ABER can effectively respond to all of these

evolutions. Riddett lays out the ways in which arts-based skills are value-adding in the business sector, at a time when many postgraduate students are asking what the purpose of a Ph.D. even is anymore, as multinational corporations once again function as (virtual) factories that prefer to train their own. These are just some of the important conversations that this collection takes up.

As Siegesmund says, an ABER dissertation can be less a cake recipe and more an emergent series of "strategies for getting unstuck." I like this very much, and it's clearly just a small part of the innovation and promise of ABER research still to come. The potential of creative research or what Vlad Glaveanu calls 'possibility studies' as research creation, as knowledge production, as a truly new 'ethico-onto-epistemological' (Barad 2007) turn that walks in the world in inseparably ethical and embodied ways. Willingness to take a risk is the cornerstone of creativity, of authentic education, and of ABER. Increasingly, it is the cornerstone of globally mobile cultures intersecting and co-informing: creatively-relational (Wyatt 2018), posthumanly agentic (Harris 2021) and sustainable. This ABER award-focused collection carries readers along several exciting trajectories where arts-based educational intra-actions materialising in emergent events (Barad 2007) can occur, and in the process can extend more traditional and mixed-methods research designs in generative, speculative and transdisciplinary directions.

Several of the chapters remind readers of the importance of building diverse and sustainable creative ecologies now in the twenty-first century, environments and communities that have the capacities to sustain us and collaborative work in ways and temporalities that the academy no longer seems structured for (if ever it was). Creative ecologies can be—as they are for Riddett and others here—a practice of storytelling, an ability to reach, to meet, to connect, to care. ABER research outputs aren't the end goal, a bounded destination, but rather inherently a site within an ecology in which all components matter equally, in which dynamic relationality is at the core. For Toliver, Hofsess, LeBlanc and Sameshima, these ecologies are visual as well as storied; earthed and ephemeral as well as timeless and reverberant.

Socio-economic considerations are no less a part of the ABER story than are onto-epistemological ones. Barbara Bickel's chapter is a beautiful nod to the symbolic and practical power of the award in her life, but also to her important role in its establishment and implementation, the sustenance of doing service within such a dynamic community, and to the potential of this award in the lives of other academics going forward. Bickel's career trajectory has been informed by socio-economic as well as artistic and academic choices: deciding to leave the academy and the implications for healthcare (in the United States), affiliations, professional thriving, and the politics of commodification and late industrial capitalism all play a role. Yet like many of the other authors here, her trance-based inquiry exemplifies the kinds of outward-spiralling lines of flight for which ABER provides the launching pad, a safe foundation in a still-sometimes-hostile academic world. Bickel's work with partner Michael Fisher, *Spontaneous Creation-Making*, offers new trajectories into/around/through research-creation. These are just some of the possibilities birthed by the contemporary ABER field, spearheaded and maintained by the editorial and disciplinary standard-bearers Bickel, Irwin and Siegesmund.

Bickel and others have experienced rejection from the mainstream—arts or education, or arts education schools—who feel their work is flowing too far afield. This too highlights important and persistent trends: while the clear signposts for progress are evident in this collection, the examples of its cyclical nature—or regression/retrograde—are certainly here as well. As the co-editors note in the afterword: "We also have to remain vigilant as the arts always seem to face reduction or elimination first in times of financial cutbacks in the educational system and the larger Arts community," and today we find ourselves at just such a juncture globally. As they make clear in their introduction, progress is slow and not always linear, but these chapters hum with the power and importance of community-making to moving the field forward nonetheless.

Future Directions

The volume points to several future directions that can be addressed or strengthened by this powerful international ABER award. Here I will briefly address just a few, but readers will find their own. Good work such as this collection always inevitably point to the 'what's next?', and this is no exception. What began as a Canadian SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) funding category has certainly become much more than this since the turn of the twenty-first century. It is fitting that Kathleen Vaughan is the recipient of the first research-creation Ph.D. from Canada's York University, and one of the earliest ABER awards (2008). Her chapter troubles the category of ABER, and draws on the rich development of the category of 'research-creation.' Erin Manning, in particular, has extended this funding and practice-defined category into an ontological landscape, arguing that "research-creation is less about an object than a mode of activity that is at its most interesting when it is constitutive of new processes" (2016, p. 130). Most of the authors here who take up a discussion of research-creation (many of whom are Canadian) cite little other scholarship on this emergent practice beyond the original SSHRC description; more cross-pollination of the distinct but related strands of arts-informed/related/based research will be helpful, but this volume provides an excellent starting point.

The co-editors rightly identify these award winners as representing "a benchmark of innovation and excellence" in research, and some of the demographics here offer additional detail that may inform ABER scholars and future adjudicators of the award. Of the 18 recipients of the award to date:

1 is music-based (miroslav manovski)
3 are primarily language- or text-based (Toliver, Sameshima and Gosse)
3 are performance/theatre (Hosig, Nieves and Marin)
3 no modality is provided (Vega, Garner and Dubin)
8 are visual arts (Restler, LeBlanc, Boulton, Hofsess, Riddett, Desyllas, Bickel and Vaughan)
2 of the 18 are male-identifying scholars.
All 18 recipients' granting institutions are from Canada or the USA.

Six are from universities/departments in which at least one of the founders of the award work or worked. At least three others gained their degrees from departments in which foundational ABER scholars worked or supervised them. All in all, half the recipients were from three universities: UBC (four winners), Arizona State (two) and University of Georgia (three). Given that Rita Irwin (UBC), Richard Siegesmund (University of Georgia) and Tom Barone (Arizona State) have been so instrumental in the establishment of the award, I'm keen to see the recipients move further afield from these institutions.

These statistics are not to question the efficacy of this award—quite the contrary. The reason I note these affiliations and trends is because of the ways in which they gesture toward ways that doctoral supervisors, committee members and departments can nurture and promote communities of excellent ABER scholars/scholarship. The powerful mentoring and nurturing in these pockets is clear evidence of the efficacy of concerted and strategic efforts, both within universities and between them. This is a powerful lesson for readers hoping to grow such programmes in other universities.

The fact that the award has only been won by North American scholars is understandable for its first decade or two; it is, after all, administered by the *American* Education Research Association. I note this despite my own role as administer of the award for three years, during which there were few submissions from outside of North America, despite my best efforts. Why aren't Ph.D. scholars from other parts of the world winning, or perhaps even submitting? How widely is the award known outside of North America? Might it reach new audiences, new communities, and strengthen its role as a champion of leading edge ABER scholarship by now diversifying regionally and geographically? What might eventuate from having an award chair from a non-white, non-global north location? While these questions are intended to gesture toward new directions for expansion and broader reach of this award, it is equally important to attend to the network of educational research organisations worldwide to ensure ABER is recognised, valued and visible.

It is also useful to note issues of diversity within the recipient pool. Despite considerable cultural/ethnic diversity, only two of the 18 recipients are male-identified, and 45% of all recipients work in the visual arts. For me, this raises generative and frequent questions within the ABER community, about 'embodied' creative research, 'versus' discursive or written creative research. That is, ABER has frequently been positioned in opposition to the discursive or 'scholarly writing' mode of traditional research and scholarship. Evolutions such as a/r/tography and new materialism have challenged such binaries, articulating in new ways the embodied nature of discourse, and the agency of matter. Rita Irwin's development of theoretically robust a/r/tography, and Erin Manning's work from her background in dance, have advanced these arguments greatly, as have some of these recipients, and the ABER award can continue to move this conversation forward in exciting new ways.

Conclusion

This book invites those completing ABER dissertations now to be the next generation of mentors for these award winners. The award recognises and provides a timeline of the advancement of both the methodological and theoretical sophistication of the field. Together, the chapters here also highlight the collective nature of the ABER community. The strength of this cohesion is seen in its first twenty years, and suggests that, going forward over the next twenty years, ABER will no doubt continue to work its transdisciplinary magic across a growing range of fields of enquiry. Its inherent nature as 'multiple' (both methodologically and theoretically robust) still has considerable range of expansion and impact within the academy, but also in a range of other contexts.

This book will also serve as a foundational text for those wishing to trace the multiple lineages that feed into that field known as ABER: Gary Knowles and Ardra Cole, jan jagodzinski, Melissa Cahnmann-Taylor, but also non-North Americans including Pranee Liamputtong, Philip Taylor, Vlad Glaveanu, Edmund Chow, Pamela Burnard, Samuel Leong, Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt, Anna Hickey-Moody, Kerry Chappell, Robyn Ewing, and Kathryn Grushka to name just a few. Also evidenced is the leading role ABER orientations and commitments can play in informing the fields of posthumanist and new materialist scholarship; the rich and many connections between these chapters and natural, animal, and mineral attachments are unmistakeable. Posthuman agencies are inherently present in ABER work and sensibilities, as many of these diverse chapters demonstrate.

As these esteemed co-editors make clear in the afterword, effective and sustainable allyship and mentorship require many spokes to the wheel, and this award offers a vital contribution to reinforcing and maintaining our shared global community. Such long-term and large-scale creative ecologies are required to grow critical and creative arts-based education scholars, particularly now.

December 2021

Daniel X. Harris
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Melbourne, Australia

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Harris, D. (2021). *Creative agency.* Palgrave MacMillan.

Manning, E. (2016). Ten propositions for research-creation. In *Collaboration in performance practice* (pp. 133–141). Palgrave Macmillan.

Wyatt, J. (2018). *Therapy, stand-up and the gesture of writing: Towards creative-relational inquiry.* Routledge.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the privileges and responsibilities of those participating in graduate programme research. We feel indebted to the richly creative and theoretically dynamic communities with whom we have been able to work.

As editors and authors, we acknowledge the First Peoples of North America and from around the world for their stewardship of the land upon which our creative and academic work is often based and situated. We are eager to support community efforts to nurture and sustain relationships with Indigenous peoples that is founded on respect, trust and dignity as we advance truth and reconciliation.

Full List of the Arts-Based Educational Research Special Interest Groups Outstanding Dissertation Awardees

Awarded in 2021
Stephanie Toliver
Dissertation Title: *Endarkened Dreams: A Speculative Counterstory of Black Girl's Oral and Written Stories*
Dissertation Chair: Jennifer M. Graff
Committee Members: Christopher Pizzino, Sherell McArthur and Kevin Burke
Degree Granting University: The University of Georgia
Dissertation link: https://esploro.libs.uga.edu/esploro/outputs/doctoral/ENDARKENED-DREAMS-A-SPECULATIVE-COUNTERSTORY-OF/9949365860902959

Awarded in 2020
Silvia Rodriguez Vega
Dissertation Title: *Immigrant Children: Resilience and Coping with HeART*
Dissertation Supervisor: Christina Marin
Committee Members: Leisy Abrego, Judy Baca, Charlene Villaseñor Black, Carola Suarez Orozco, and Gaye Theresa Johnson
Degree Granting University: University of California, Los Angeles
Dissertation Link: under embargo

Awarded in 2019
Porshe Garner
Dissertation Title: *Present Day Prophets: Defining Black Girlhood Spirituality in Saving Our Lives Hear Our Truths (SOLHOT)*
Dissertation Supervisor: Ruth Nicole Brown
Committee Members: James D. Anderson, Anne Haas Dyson, Soo Ah Kwon and Safiya Noble
Degree Granting University: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Dissertation link: https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/101384

Awarded in 2018
Victoria Restler
Dissertation Title: *Re-visualizing Care: Teachers' Invisible Labor in Neoliberal Times*
Doctoral Chair: Wendy Luttrell
Committee Members: Ofelia Garcia, Claudia Mitchell and Maria Torre
Degree Granting University: City University of New York
Dissertation link: https://www.proquest.com/openview/01de44b7a1fd56c3cd1ae8c0fd34869c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750
Digital Assemblage link : https://scalar.usc.edu/works/re-visualizing-care/index

Awarded in 2017
Natalie LeBlanc
Dissertation Title: *In/visibility of the Abandoned School: Beyond Representations of School Closure.*
Dissertation Supervisor: Rita L. Irwin
Committee Members: Dónal O'Donoghue and Anne Phelan
Degree Granting University: The University of British Columbia
Dissertation Link: https://open.library.ubc.ca/soa/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0223121

Awarded in 2017
Elizabeth Dubin
Disseration Title: *Dani Karavan's 'Passages' and the Poetric of Delueze/Guittari for Research and Practice in Art Education*
Dissertation Co-chairs: Charles Garoian and Kimberly Powell
Committee Members: William Doan and Christopher Schulte
Degree Granting University: The Pennsylvania State University
Dissertation Link: https://etda.libraries.psu.edu/files/final_submissions/12867

Awarded in 2016
Adrianne Boulton
Dissertation Title: *An Arts Based Methodology of Intuition: Secondary Visual Art Teacher Becomings and Encounters with Schooling*
Dissertation Supervisor: Donal O'Donoghue
Committee Members: Kit Grauer and Anne Phelan
Degree Granting University: The University of British Columbia
Dissertation Link: https://open.library.ubc.ca/soa/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0166628

Awarded in 2015
Enza Giannone Hosig
Dissertation Title: *But Now You Can See Me: Devising Theatre with Youth Artist-Researchers in Search of Revelations and Docutheatricality*
Dissertation Chair: Johnny Saldaña

Committee Members: Eric Margolis and Stephani Etheridge Woodson
Degree Granting University: Arizona State University
Dissertation Link: https://a33b1a5f-acd6-4879-8bc4-93ffb31ca18a.filesusr.com/ugd/086ce8_30494f6268de4507b921abb37828eaaf.pdf

Awarded in 2014
Brooke Hofsess
Dissertation Title: *Embodied Intensities: Artist-Teacher Renewal in the Swell and Afterglow of Aesthetic Experiential Play*
Dissertation Chair: Tracie Costantino
Committee Members: Melissa Freeman, Carole Henry, Christopher Schulte and Mark Vagle
Degree Granting University: University of Georgia
Dissertation Link: http://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/hofsess_brooke_a_201308_phd.pdf

Awarded in 2013
Miroslav Pavle Manovski
Dissertation Title: *Finding My Voice: [Re]Living, [Re]learning, and [Re]searching Becoming a Singer in a Culture of Marginalization*
Dissertation Supervisor: Jacqueline H. Wiggins
Committee Members: Deborah V. Blair, Ph.D. and George Sanders, Ph.D.
Degree Granting University: Oakland University
Dissertation Link: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED556287 UMI Number: 3576696

Awarded in 2012
Karinna Riddett-Moore
Dissertation Title: *Developing an Arts of Living*
Dissertation Chair: Richard Siegesmund
Committee Members: Tracie Costantino, Carole Henry and Elizabeth St. Pierre
Degree Granting Institution: University of Georgia
Dissertation Link: https://galileo-usg-uga-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/openurl?u.ignore_date_coverage=true&rft.mms_id=9939109453902959&vid=UGA&institution=UGA&url_ctx_val=&url_ctx_fmt=null&isSerivcesPage=true

Awarded in 2011
Moshoula Capous Desyllas
Dissertation Title: *Visions and Voices: An Arts-Based Qualitative Study to Understand the Needs and Aspirations of Diverse Women Working in the Sex Industry*
Dissertation Chair: Stephanie Wahab
Committee Members: Laurie Powers, Pauline Jivanje, Julie Rosenzweig and Ann Mussey
Degree Granting Institution: Portland State University
Dissertation Link: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds/23/

Awarded in 2010
Yolanda Nieves
Dissertation Title: *The Brown Girls' Chronicles: Puerto Rican Women and Resilience*
Dissertation Supervisor: Randee Lawrence
Committee Members: Layla Sulieman, Ramon Nieves Jr. and Elizabeth Peterson
Degree Granting University: National-Louis University
Dissertation Link: NA

Awarded in 2009
Barbara Bickel
Dissertation Title: *Living the Divine Spiritually and Politically: Art, Ritual and Performative/Pedagogy in Women's Multi-faith Leadership*
Dissertation Supervisor: Rita L. Irwin
Committee Members: William Pinar and Daniel Vokey
Degree Granting University: The University of British Columbia
Dissertation Link: https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0054657

Awarded in 2008
Kathleen Vaughan
Dissertation Title: *Finding Home: Knowledge, Collage and the Local Environments*
Dissertation Supervisor: Rishma Dunlop
Committee Members: Warren Crichlow, Carol Ann Wien, Belarie Zatzman and Lorrie Nielsen Gould
Degree Granting University: York University
Dissertation Link: NA

Awarded in 2007
Pauline Sameshima
Dissertation Title: *Seeing Red: A Pedagogy of Parallax*
Dissertation Supervisor: Anthony Clarke and Carl Leggo
Committee Members: J. Gary Knowles and Rita Irwin
Degree Granting University: University of British Columbia
Published by Cambria Press in 2007: https://www.cambriapress.com/pub.cfm?bid=102
Library hyperlink: https://open.library.ubc.ca/soa/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0055202

Awarded in 2006
Christina Marin
Dissertation Title: *Breaking Down Barriers, Building Dreams: Using Theatre for Social Change to Explore the Concept of Identity with Latina Adolescents*
Dissertation Supervisor: Johnny Saldaña
Committee Members: Tamara Underiner and Ramon Rivera-Servera
Degree Granting University: Arizona State University
Dissertation Link: https://www.proquest.com/openview/9366622da073862d2a4f60c5bb5e8ad6/1.pdf?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y

Awarded in 2005
Douglas Gosse
Dissertation Title: *Breaking Silences: An Inquiry into Identity and the Creative Research Process*
Dissertation Supervisor: Ardra Cole
Committee Members: Gary Knowles and Peter Trifonas
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Praise for *Arts-Based Educational Research Trajectories*

"This compelling anthology by three leading ABER scholars conveys the stories of 10 ABER dissertation awardees across 15 years, highlighting their career trajectory, professional and personal experiences, skillfully contextualized within the larger institutional academic culture. An absorbing and illuminating read!"

—Liora Bresler, *Professor Emerita, University of Illinois, College of Education, School of Art and Design, School of Music and Professor II, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences*

"This timely collection edited by three giants in the field makes an important political contribution to ABER studies that is not to be underestimated. It shares the sparkling work of ABER doctoral awardees and by doing so foregrounds the emergent scholarship by some of the field's now-expert researchers. The work shared by the awardees was created at a time before stable academic appointment, before tenure when career aspirations were perhaps fraught, but the freedom to create brave and exciting doctoral ABER work may never again be experienced in quite the same way. The work offers concrete hope and courage to fledgling academics regarding the necessary risks, creative agency and institutional support that are essential for successful ABER scholarship The rememberings of this collection offer hope and inspiration while simultaneously bolstering the impact of ABER studies, an undertaking that is still necessary in these fraught neoliberal times."

—Alexandra Lasczik, *Professor of Arts and Education, Faculty of Education, Southern Cross University, AU and Former Chair, AERA ABER SIG*

"For many of us the reason we can see so far is not because we have stood on the shoulders of giants but because we have been uplifted by the wings of kindred spirits. This collection honors the legacy of many pioneers who took risks in advocating the arts as ways of knowing. We owe the authors, editors, and ABER community a debt of gratitude."

—Joe Norris, *Professor Emeritus, Brock University, Canada*

"Arts Based Educational Research provides an important contribution to the study of educational practices. Dr.s' Barbara Bickel, Rita L. Irwin and Richard Siegesmund have been leaders in ABER for decades, and have assembled a collection of award winning essays and arts based artifacts. Arts Based Research is a small yet powerful dimension of our field, and all researchers need to be familiar with the contribution of this body of work. While some of ABER scholarship can stand alone, much of our work can offer a much needed collaboration and enhancement to traditional educational research. I have been involved in ABER research for over 30 years, and this scholarship has not only been inspirational but also transformative. All scholars will find this collection filled with possibilities to enhance educational research."

—Dr. Patrick Slattery, *Professor and Associate Department Head, Texas A&M University, Former Chair of the ABER SIG*

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Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

Barbara Bickel is Associate Professor of Art Education, Emerita at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, USA and co-founding Director of Studio M*: Research Creation Lab Intersecting Arts Culture and Healing based in Nanaimo, British Columbia. She is a former chair of the American Educational Research Association's Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) Special Interest Group (SIG).

Rita L. Irwin is a Distinguished University Scholar and Professor of Art Education and Curriculum Studies at The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada and is well known for her leadership in arts education and a/r/tography. She is a recipient of a number of awards including the AERA *Tom Barone Award for Distinguished Contributions to Arts Based Educational Research*, the National Art Education Association *Eisner Lifetime Achievement Award*, the Canadian Society for the Study of Education *Herbert T. Coutts Distinguished Service Award*, and the *Killam Award for Excellence in Mentoring* from The University of British Columbia.

Richard Siegesmund is Professor Emeritus of Art and Design Education from Northern Illinois University. A recipient of Fulbright awards to both the National College of Art and Design, Ireland in Art Education and KU Leuven, Belgium in Visual Sociology, he is also an elected Distinguished Fellow of the National Art Education Association. He is a former chair of the American Educational Research Association's Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) Special Interest Group (SIG) and a recipient of its Tom Barone Award for contributions to ABER.

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Introduction: Emerging Arts-Based Educational Research

Barbara Bickel, Rita L. Irwin, and Richard Siegesmund

Abstract This chapter offers an introduction to the history of the Arts-Based Educational Research Special Interest Group (ABER SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) before summarizing the stories and essays written by award winners of the Outstanding Dissertation Award of the ABER SIG (2005–2021). The essays and stories cover a range of topics from successful academic careers to extreme challenges. They also include a collection of ideas on what ABER is and how it is practiced, taught and mentored while also attending to challenging institutional ideas around race, identity and gender.

Keywords Arts-based Educational Research · Outstanding Dissertation Award · Stories · Doctoral research · Mentorship · Arts-based research · Winter Institute

The American Educational Research Association's (AERA) Arts-Based Educational Research Special Interest Group (ABER SIG) has offered a beacon of light for those searching for forms of inquiry reaching beyond the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of research and into artistic forms of inquiry. Over its history, many junior and senior scholars have helped to create a strong community of ABER scholarship and artistry that has only been strengthened over the years. This book focuses on a group of scholars whose doctoral research was granted an Outstanding Dissertation

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Award.[1] This select group exceled in their work, and collectively, their awards and work mark an occasion for all those interested in ABER to step back and reflect on the future of ABER. Beginning in 2005 when the Outstanding Dissertation Award began, and covering those awards until 2021, the essays shared here reflect on the career trajectories of ten recipients of the Outstanding Dissertation Award from the ABER SIG. Each year AERA's ABER SIG has recognized an exemplary emerging scholar through the Outstanding Dissertation Award. The 2022 ABER Outstanding Dissertation Award call for submissions from students who have successfully defended their dissertation announced that its purpose is "to honor and recognize an exceptional doctoral dissertation that explores, is an exemplar of, and pushes the boundaries of arts-based educational research."[2] Indeed, we use the ABER SIG's dissertation award as a benchmark of innovation and excellence. We ask, where did ABER take these promising young scholars? How did they face the known and unexpected challenges of research and academia? Does ABER continue to sustain their academic research and/or their lives inside and outside of academia? These questions do not presume that these scholars continued to use ABER methodologies in their research. They do not presume that these (once) young scholars pushed the theoretical underpinnings of ABER forward. These questions, in the language of quantitative analysis, are intentionally two-tailed. They left open the possibility that these scholars abandoned ABER altogether, or never pushed it further than the boundaries that they reached within their doctoral research. If the answer to our questions was, I really didn't do anything with ABER, we were willing to accept that. Without overly directing a response, we sought to know, what did you *do* with ABER?

AERA's formal engagement with ABER began in 1992 with its commitment to financially support the first Winter Institute on Arts-Based Approaches to Educational Research organized by Elliot Eisner (Stanford University), and supported by Tom Barone (Arizona State University), David Flinders (Indiana University Bloomington) and Gail McCutcheon (the Ohio State University), was a significant milestone. The first Winter Institute was held in 1993 in Palo Alto, near the campus of Stanford University. Over the next decade, this two-day think tank would become an annual event, as it rotated between Palo Alto and Tempe, Arizona. While Eisner and Barone would remain the core faculty, other invited instructors would include Maxine Greene (Teachers College, Columbia), Robert Donmoyer (University of San Diego), Liora Bresler (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), and Rita Irwin (The University of British Columbia), among others. The call for the 2005 iteration of the Winter

[1] The ABER Outstanding Dissertation Award was established by Patrick Slattery during his tenure as Chair of the ABER SIG.

[2] https://abersigaera.weebly.com/awards.html We acknowledge with gratitude the dedicated service of the numerous ABER SIG dissertation award chairs and the many senior ABER scholar reviewers of the submissions over the years. At the time of the writing of this book the Award Chairs of whom we have a record include: Donald Blumenfeld-Jones, Diane Conrad, Jaime Fiddler, Dan Harris, Kelly Jo Kerry Moran, Margaret MacIntrye Latta, Ruth Leitch, Joe Norris, Monica Prendergast, Sarah Promislow and Kryssi Staikidis. We apologize if we have omitted any names of former award chairs.

Institute, published in *Educational Researcher*, lends a picture into the content of this extended single seminar discussion:

> Approaches to educational research in the American educational research community have become increasingly diverse over the past quarter century. Among the approaches taken to the study of educational phenomena is what is called arts-based educational research (ABER). This approach to research is rooted in the methodologies and epistemologies of the arts and the humanities. This Institute will address ways of thinking about the construction of knowledge and the forms of understanding that research rooted in artistic considerations makes possible. Topics will include the nature of ABER, the contexts in which it may be employed, its underlying epistemology, its attributes and potential liabilities, the forms of representation available within ABER, the phases involved in its research and disclosure processes, ethical issues encountered, and others. (AERA Winter Institute, 2004, p. 55)

This call points out that the institute was initially concerned with how 'artistic considerations' could enrich 'description and analysis,' of classroom activity. Almost immediately following the initiation of these annual winter institutes, the participants constituted enough of a significant mass to formally create, in 1996, the ABER SIG within AERA as a permanent space where these innovative dialogues could continue. Remembering the tremendous buzz around the creation of the ABER SIG at the 1996 conference remains a vibrant and enthusiastic memory for those in attendance. Having a SIG dedicated to this focus meant there was legitimacy for this scholarship at the table of the largest educational research organization in North America. As the original conception of ABER occurred in 1992, we offer this book as a celebration of the ABER SIGs thirtieth anniversary.

Over this 30-year history, ABER scholars have sought to build the case for ABER as a legitimate research methodology for educational research. Yet, there have been many naysayers. For example, the 2002 report of the National Science Foundation in the United States (Shavelson & Towne, 2002) pointedly dismissed arts-based approaches from consideration for research funding going so far as denouncing by name both Elliot Eisner and Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (Harvard University) for promoting aesthetic methodological innovations.

These critics often sought to dissuade young novice scholars from using ABER methods or methodologies. They admonished their students that ABER would not be published in acceptable academic journals. Furthermore, even if ABER was published, it would not be convincing to general faculties of education. Therefore, newly minted scholars with an ABER dissertation would not be hired into academic positions. Finally, there were darker warnings that even if you were published and hired, a portfolio of ABER research would not be enough to secure tenure and promotion. ABER, they cautioned, would prove to be a disastrous slow walk over an academic cliff. Regrettably, this has sometimes proved true. There are tales from throughout the ABER community of opposition and confrontation.

However, in the same time period as the damming American report, Canada embraced providing research support to ABER through their government funded Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). After provincial and national consultations, SSHRC created a time specific 'research-creation' funding category that was eventually regularized and folded into their ongoing funding competitions that continues today. While this category benefitted all those undertaking artistic research across university disciplines, ABER scholars felt their

research was legitimized and supported. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, (2021) (n.p.) website defines research-creation in this way:

> An approach to research that combines creative and academic research practices, and supports the development of knowledge and innovation through artistic expression, scholarly investigation, and experimentation. The creation process is situated within the research activity and produces critically informed work in a variety of media (art forms). Research-creation cannot be limited to the interpretation or analysis of a creator's work, conventional works of technological development, or work that focuses on the creation of curricula…. Fields that may involve research-creation may include, but are not limited to: architecture, design, creative writing, visual arts (e.g., painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, textiles), performing arts (e.g., dance, music, theatre), film, video, performance art, interdisciplinary arts, media and electronic arts, and new artistic practices.

Unsurprisingly, such support nurtures research communities. Reflecting on the success of ABER scholars in Canada to secure federal funding, one can see how Ph.D. and M.A. research assistantships have helped create communities of artful practice. An example of this is Rita Irwin's research lab at The University of British Columbia. Four award winners (Bickel, Boulton, LeBlanc, and Sameshima) worked on various a/r/tographic research projects during their doctoral studies. While there may not be a direct correlation between Irwin's work and theirs, the research culture stimulated creative research. This was made possible with SSHRC funding. While it is difficult to make a direct correlation between the federal funding and the award-winning dissertations in this volume, having access to this level of support is affirming on many levels. Notably, regardless of award-winning distinctions, many scholars who have completed ABER dissertations have come out of Canadian institutions and have obtained academic positions in Canada and the United States.

The co-editors lived through these times. They have their own personal stories of how their choice to pursue ABER was met with skepticism and resistance. Nonetheless, over three decades, they have been involved in ABER research and are themselves supervisors, committee members, and mentors to former ABER SIG dissertation awardees. Two have served as AERA ABER SIG chairs. Two supervised and mentored several winners of ABER Outstanding Dissertation Awards. One is a well-mentored outstanding dissertation awardee. Each has felt like a trail blazer and has forged a distinctive professional path in the academy through ABER scholarship. However, they have also seen, as critics portended, others flounder as ABER scholars on the shoals of academic turbulence.

Why have some ABER scholars found success in the academy while others have failed or remain marginalized? As the first generation of ABER scholars begin to pass the baton to a second generation, many of the same fears and prejudices that surrounded the initial genesis of the field continue. While there are many examples of ABER's success, cautionary stories of how the roadblocks to using ABER persist. We ask readers to critically examine these narratives in this book. What contributes to the success of some scholars? What are the factors that contribute to the difficulties of others? Innovative and boundary crossing ABER methodologies invite struggle. Entrenched habits and expectations—even in purportedly creative disciplines like the arts—can create roadblocks that may dissuade young scholars from continuing.

A significant problem of the field has been the ability of young scholars who are not familiar with ABER networks to identify literature in the field. These neophyte ABER scholars often make critical misjudgments regarding ABER. Therefore, young scholars entering the field, who wish to explore ABER, would be wise to attend to the road markings those who have forged the path have left, as guides and warnings. These can be often found by examining the work of scholars at universities where ABER has flourished. Attending the conferences were ABER scholars gather is also key. One does not need to present at these conferences, but one needs to be prepared to listen to understand the multiple possible pathways.

To follow the career arc of these scholars and their engagement with ABER, we asked the seventeen former ABER dissertation awardees to participate in this edited volume by sharing an essay. Fifteen responded and ten share their stories in this book. We invited them to consider the following questions:

- Where is your ABER work now, and if you no longer engage in ABER scholarship, why?
- What are you currently working on?
- How does ABER impact your current work or not?
- Was your ABER scholarship an asset or a detriment after your Ph.D.? and how so?
- If you continued on to become a tenured faculty using ABER scholarship, what lessons did you learn?
- If you followed a non-academic path after your Ph.D. how has ABER scholarship impacted your work in the world, or not?
- How have you evolved as a scholar? Did you continue with the ABER methodologies you worked with in your Ph.D. and if not, where did your research trajectory lead you?
- What foundational or innovative aspects of your ABER scholarship would you like to share?

Our contributors have each taken up the questions in their own way. Their paths, since receiving their ABER award, have been different. Some have become seasoned ABER scholars in their own right and mentors to a new generation of scholars, but not all obtained the coveted academic position or chose to remain in the academy. One can only speculate as to why some award winners did not respond to our invitation. As our focus is on these particular scholars who chose to respond and contribute, this book is not a survey of the full scope of the intellectual endeavor of the ABER SIG over the past 30 years, nor the larger field of ABR as it has moved across the social sciences. We address the delicate issue of the distinctions between ABER and ABR as it manifests itself in the arts only to the degree that our dissertation awardees chose to frame themselves within this debate.

1 Origins

ABER is a relatively new field of educational research methodologies. As originally envisioned by Elliot Eisner and his students at Stanford University, the methodology would build on the literary criticism of I. A. Richards (1939, 1948) and the contribution of Edmund Burke Feldman (1972, 1994) to art appreciation, to construct a research methodology that would understand the life of a classroom as a work of art and the role of the researcher as an art critic to unfold this aesthetic achievement to a lay audience. Rather than focusing on how much or how many instances of an educational phenomenon could be counted, Eisner wanted to focus on the quality of educational experience. The researcher, like the art critic, would render a definitive judgement on the goodness of an educational performance.

Although Eisner argued that narrative based art forms like novels, dramatic performance, or film could rise to the level of research, he never envisioned that educational research would be regarded as serious achievements of art (Eisner, 2008). He thought the arts could produce insights that would build on the work of qualitative research to expand the envelope of acceptable inquiry within the social sciences. Eisner's approach to educational research, although incorporating the arts, was still strongly rooted in traditional epistemology: true and certain knowledge of a stable, phenomenological external world that could be discovered, described, and thematized.

Eisner's former student and later collaborator Tom Barone pushed Eisner's thinking about ABER in a new direction (Barone & Eisner, 1997). Barone suggested that education was influenced more on what people believed—on the stories they told about themselves and others—than on educational facts that had been shown to have an exceptionally high degree of statistical probability (Barone, 2001). This narrative shared with Eisner's original project a focus on the goodness of individual experience, with an important focus on how the individual engaged with education.

This shift ushered in the ontological turn in ABER. Rather than pursuing an understanding of true and certain knowledge, ABER became interested in how individuals situated themselves in the world. In particular, the ABER methodology of a/r/tography (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Springgay, et al., 2008), developed at the cusp of the new millennium by scholars at The University of British Columbia, focused on *being* rather than what was true and certain. This move from epistemology to ontology accelerated through the increasing post-structural interest formed out of post-modern Deleuzian theory (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) that challenged the traditional epistemological underpinnings of inquiry. This shift offered an approach where inquiry could begin in artistic practice itself—rather than being primarily concerned with close adherence to predetermined social science methods and data that tend to regulate the arts — while also providing alternative pathways for data representation. An ontological stance was soon embraced by many arts-based approaches. The momentum for scholarly validation and incorporation of ABER in the field continued.

Leading into the millennium and shortly thereafter, other arts-based methods articulated by a diversity of arts scholars impacted and expanded the field. The art therapy program at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts in the United State brought Art-Based Research (ABR) to light in research, questioning the imposition of research methods found outside the arts and encouraged the unique practices of artistic inquiry that include the principles of artistic knowing through ABR (McNiff, 1998). The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto, Canada, became home to the Centre for Arts-informed Research in 2000, incorporating the arts to inform qualitative research methods and publishing arts inquiry anthologies (Nielson et al., 2001).

As ABER itself has evolved in different forms, art-based methods have spread across the social sciences, including health sciences, communications, sociology, anthropology, and geography. Indeed, fifteen percent of the chapters in the 2005 SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research (Denzin & Lincoln, Eds.) addressed performative, artistic, and poetic methods of inquiry. By 2008, ABR scholarship merited its own handbook marked by a SAGE *Handbook of the Arts on Qualitative Research* publication (Knowles & Cole, Eds.). In 2017, a *Handbook of Arts-Based Research* (Leavy, Ed.) was published with Guilford Press. Moreover, in 2012, the ABER SIG was invited to submit a proposal to Springer for the Studies in ABER book series (for which this book is part), and since then other ABR book series and ABR journals have been established, such as Arts/Research International (2015)[3] published through the University of Alberta in Canada. These publications have sparked new ABER/ABR scholarship and critical debate, providing valuable publishing platforms for emerging and established ABER scholars.

From the fine arts and design, the growing acceptance across Europe, Australia and New Zealand for the doctoral studies in Studio Practice has witnessed a proliferation of artistic research forms often understood as a Deleuzian venture into unanticipated lines of flight and future becomings (Manning & Massumi, 2014). Here we see the promise of something that Eisner did not foresee: the prospect of practice based/led research rising to the level of art. Various forms of artistic research have increasingly become more adventurous and self-consciously challenging to the conventions of social science. The ABER SIG dissertation award recipients who share their stories within this book offer insight into the inner markings of adventures and challenges that an arts scholar may encounter or experience on their own scholarly path.

2 Overview of the Chapters

As editors organizing the flow of this book, we began by organizing the chapters into themes. This proved to be difficult with the diversity of themes, approaches and experiences. We instead chose to present the chapters as chronological by year,

[3] See https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/ari/index.php/ari.

beginning with the most recent awardee in 2021. In this way the reader meets the new shoots of ABER while making one's way to earlier roots.

In the first chapter, story keepers, tellers and listeners are at the heart of **S.R. Toliver's** chapter as she traces roots of Black storytelling traditions through their families and community. Stories held through time by ancestors who know and protect the memory and spirit of communal connections within Black families, within Black history. Stories that are absent, neither sought nor found in traditional North American schooling. Titling the chapter *In Search of My Mother's Stories: (Re)membering Endarkened Storywork* she includes her own storywork telling to directly engage the readers/listeners in a method of Endarkened Storywork, leaving the reader with the responsibility of becoming a keeper of the story.

Witness to the arrest and detainment of a Black student in the reference/resource section of their University library at the end of her first year as an Assistant Professor, **Victoria Restler**'s chapter *Reference/ Referents: Studies in and Against the White Space of the Campus Library* takes the opportunity to engage an arts-based and textual inquiry that is aesthetically and critically reflexive as a means to "~~make sense~~ be/make/question/learn with the discomfort of the ongoing hurts and harms of racism as a white cis woman/ artist/ mother/ educator/ scholar" (this volume). The at times obsessive second by second visual and textual replay of the event brings the reader to question their own place in the story—inviting all to interrupt the ruptures we reside within.

Focusing on reflection-in-action studio practice research, **Natalie LeBlanc,** in her chapter entitled *Vital & Nomadic Materiality: A Cartography of Arts Based Educational Research,* presents three emergent and transdisciplinary arts-based educational research projects that are impelled by visceral encounters with raw media colliding with the tangible and intangible. Positioned within an ontological framework, these projects seek to share a fluid sensibility of movement ideas, memories, perceptions and experiences through a material cartographic practice of making that exploits a *nomadic materiality* (Siegesmund, 2018).

Guiding the reader through a trajectory of her ABER scholarly work, **Adrienne Boulton,** in her chapter *The Nomadic Implications of an Arts Based Methodology of Intuition,* encounters thought through embodied disruption and new experiences within visual inquiry based on three methodological rules expressed first by Bergson (1946) and further theorized by Deleuze (1991). These projects in turn demonstrate how the embodied, artistic event encounter brings memory into the present and alters "perceived timeless existence," advocating for experiential learning that is complex, boundless and challenging of limitations placed on ways of knowing and coming to creative thought.

Brooke Hofsess takes us on a walk. Finding gifts in the natural world she attends to the threads of becoming-scholartist in the academy in her chapter *Afterglow Anthotypes: Throwing and Threading Light on my ABER Journey.* The relational beauty of this visual essay invites the reader to consider their own woven journey threads—to slowly engage with the light and darkened moments found therein as lingering material to learn with.

Richard Siegesmund, a mentor to **Karinna Riddett** from undergraduate to PhD. degrees, interviews her for the chapter *Sustaining an Arts of Living: An Interview with Karinna Riddett.* With life circumstances radically altering her dissertation experience and not allowing her to enter academia following its completion, she pivoted into a new career in data visualization. She adeptly transfers ABER methods and teaching skills to the corporate world of technology where her skills are used every day in business. Throughout the career transition she has had to step through uncertainty and fear drawing upon the dissertation's focus on teaching care and empathy and applying it to herself and when needed to those she now manages and teaches.

Answering concerns that ABER scholarship could not support an academic career, artist-scholar **Barbara Bickel's** chapter entitled *Carriance: Stitching an Artist-Scholar Through Cyclical Time* reflects on how ABER sustained her on her academic odyssey to becoming an Emerita professor of a United States research university. Working with artist, psychoanalyst and philosopher Bracha Ettinger's concept of *carriance* that assumes an ethical aesthetic stance to making a world—descending into crisis and disorder—more bearable, she stitches her personal a/r/tographic journey into an artist book that now narrates her spiritual feminist story of how she has carried and been carried by ABER into retirement from institutional-based life.

Through actively absorbing "urban and cultural geographies, natural histories and environmental science" (this volume), **Kathleen Vaughan** sets forth a place-fed colour-infused palette through an artistic and scholarly journey with research creation. By telling her own story of evolution as an artist researcher teaching others through art, she interweaves teachings and learnings working within decolonial, post humanist, feminist and Indigenous epistemologies.

To share aspects of the learning journey with ABER, **Pauline Sameshima** engages the reader through her chapter *Seeing Red: A Pedagogy of Parallax to Parallaxic Praxis: An ABER Interview*. Through this conversation, she unfolds learnings that have informed rich interdisciplinary research utilizing her Parallaxic Praxis, a practice she continues with in the Canada Research Chair position obtained five years after completing her dissertation. Through her own research and career examples, she offers wise advice for emerging and established scholars while conveying passion for art as a gift and pedagogical tool that can lead us to better understand the human condition.

Douglas Gosse, who was the inaugural recipient of the ABER Outstanding Dissertation Award teams up with two current graduate students **Jeffrey Thornborrow** and **Kari Janz** to discuss their research. In their chapter, *Mentoring a New Generation of Arts-Based Researchers,* the reader is invited directly into this mentoring professor's office to learn of the student's journey from quantitative to qualitative to arts-based dissertation studies. This conversation highlights the significance of mentorship for ABER scholars to undertake this form of scholarship within the academy and to engage it with full passion.

Interestingly, in returning to the initial prompt questions, we found four distinct themes unfolding in the chronological order of the book. The first four chapters

respond to the prompt questions of "What are you currently working on?; and what "Foundational or innovative aspects of your ABER scholarship would you like to share?" In these chapters we are invited into younger ABER scholars' stories who address historical racism as it presents itself in present day university research and settings. The tone then shifts as the next author sifts through unforeseen struggles and unexpected turns made on her ABER journey as she responds to the question "If you followed a non-academic path after your Ph.D. how has ABER scholarship impacted your work in the world, or not?; Was your ABER scholarship an asset or a detriment after your Ph.D.? and how so?; and "Where is your ABER work now, and if you no longer engage in ABER scholarship, why? The reader is left to consider how ABER might fragment, yet still retain relevancy as it evolves in unexpected directions. The three chapters that follow this story where academia did not become part of a career track story, include more seasoned artist-scholars who have had varying degrees of successful careers in the academy. These stories respond to the questions "If you continued on to become a tenured faculty using ABER scholarship, what lessons did you learn?; How have your evolved as a scholar? Did you continue with the ABER methodologies you worked with in your Ph.D. and if not, where did your research trajectory lead you?; and what Foundational or innovative aspects of your ABER scholarship would you like to share? In these chapters we hear stories of the successful navigational skills of arts-scholars. The last awardee chapter leads us into the fourth and final section of the book with its focus on the importance of mentorship in the field of ABER. This chapter and the Afterword respond to the slightly altered question "How did you evolve as a scholar? How might you continue with ABER methodologies and where might your research trajectory lead you and the larger field of ABER scholarship?

Since the beginning of the ABER SIG, we can all celebrate the vast achievements of our field and it behooves us to pay attention to the struggles of emergent and new ABER scholars. Arts-based educational research and the many related forms of inquiry, have become well known and practiced over the last three decades. This work has changed the possibilities and potentials for research and inquiry, offering enhanced ways of knowing and being in the world for individuals and communities of practitioners. Yet, many fall through the cracks where resistance, academic competition and dominating forces remain in place. Just as there is a need for continuing arts education advocacy, those of us working in arts-based educational research circles need to ensure all voices are heard and able to remain passionate and enduring whether inside or outside the academy. In this way our theories, research and mentoring practices will continue to grow and change for the betterment of all.

Looking back on the distinguished list of award winners and reading about their work and experiences since receiving their awards, it is both thrilling to know how far we have come, yet it is rather sobering to consider how far we still need to travel. ABER does not replicate itself. It does not provide methodologies to replicate. Rather, ABER methodologies are launching points to invention and creation. ABER presses forward to that which is not yet. It does not verify that which has already been thought. This can be challenging to new ABER researchers, as they must invent their own paths of inquiry. In that, we offer this book and the stories told herein to initiate critical

reflective thought for all those within the field of arts-based educational research. This book invites all to be the best students, mentors and scholars of arts-based educational research that they can be as we continue to celebrate the coming years of awarding Outstanding Arts-based Educational Research Dissertations to emerging scholars.

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In Search of My Mother's Stories: (Re)membering Endarkened Storywork

S. R. Toliver

Abstract In this chapter, Toliver explains how her dissertation led her to the coining of Endarkened Storywork, a research storytelling format that builds on Endarkened Feminist Epistemologies, Indigenous Storywork, and Afrofuturism. To detail the history of the terms' creation, she highlights familial storytelling influences that asked her to grasp at the roots of Black storytelling, at the foundations of Black qualitative research presentation through story. Rather than explicitly detail the fullness of the concept, Toliver provides a storied example that presents Endarkened Storywork in action, enabling readers to not only read about the method, but to also engage in the work of story alongside the author.

Keywords Endarkened storywork · Endarkened feminist epistemologies · Indigenous storywork · Afrofuturism · Storytelling

My mother was my first storyteller. She regaled me with narratives of adventure, love, and family. She entertained me with stories of Black life, Black excellence, and Black triumph. She explained our ancestors' struggles for freedom and helped me understand the deep-rooted communal connections cultivated by my ancestors throughout time. These stories protected my family history and ensured that my life would be surrounded by the foundation of my people. These stories preserved the lives of family members who were no longer located within the earthly realm. These stories helped me to locate myself within the larger histories of my family. As a story protector, my mother was the keeper, choosing to engage in 'the telling'–the process through which history is passed down through story–as a way to form connections across time and space. As story apprentices, my siblings and I were responsible for the work of story, for ensuring that we engaged in the sacred practice of story listening.

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Of course, as I grew older, my mother's stories and my storytelling ability were not a priority, as my elementary and secondary teachers often foregrounded explanatory and argumentative writing. We read narratives, but we didn't write them, as narrative and story were reserved for deconstruction, for extraction, not for remembering. In schools, I learned that being a story listener was not prized and being a storyteller was a hobby, not a life-giving and history-fortifying opportunity. So, I chose to forget the work of story. I wrote what was required by my teachers, but I refused what was required by my ancestors. I forgot the importance of my mother's words.

For decades, I held on to the forgetfulness as I traversed traditional schooling, but my dissertation brought me back to my roots. Dillard (2006) said that in spiritually guided qualitative research, "we are visited by powerful desires in the course of our work, desires that we can't explain but that almost mysteriously move us to do something we never imagined" (p. 81). I felt this deeply as I came to the dissertation. Something I couldn't explain was pulling me toward story, and whatever it was refused to let me go. Now, I realize that the something was spirit, my ancestors guiding me back to the work of story. They were reminding me that Black storytelling traditions passed through the door of no return, survived the Maafa, and continued on "through Jim Crowism, to the Civil Rights movement, and on to present-day America" (Champion, 2003, p. 3). They prompted me to consider how they retained their stories in the midst of antiblack racism, how they refused to let whiteness destroy their connection to the past and to their homelands. They helped me remember how Black storytelling practices are meant to teach, to heal, and to bring life, so forgetting the work of story was not an option. Story was life itself.

Grasping at the roots of Black storytelling traditions was not easy. For so long, I refused my history, working diligently to find myself in the realm of academia. Of course, storytelling is not rejected in the academy because stories are vital to qualitative research. What was rejected, however, was my storytelling history, Black storytelling histories. Storytelling is a critical component of Black life, a component so ingrained in Black societies that many African nations had their own storytellers, or griots, who were positioned as the community's teachers, historians, advisors, and genealogists (Hale, 1998). Griots were responsible for cultivating intergenerational connectivity, analyzing the people, places, and worlds around them, and protecting the histories of their communities. Griots were scholars. And yet, when I arrived in academia, storytelling was not considered 'scholarly.' In fact, I was told my writing had too much narrative influence, that my work might be considered a fad instead of true scholarship. Thus, I was constantly at war, trying to find my place within an academic system that was still debating on whether or not it had room for me to exist.

I do not use war lightly, as traditional academic knowledge was consistently at odds with my ancestral knowing. My work centers Black girls, Afrofuturism, and social justice in the context of education. My scholarship is foregrounded in the thoughts, ideals, hopes, and dreams of Black people. Still, my course papers, my journal articles, and my conference presentations were molded by white methodological forces because I knew what it would take to be published in the journals valued by my field, to be accepted to speak at academic conferences. So often, my work would push back, telling me that it was being constrained by the tools I'd utilized, but I

didn't listen. I continued to mold it into respectability, smoothing the Black edges of the work that might have been shunned by those who did not understand. As I journeyed toward my dissertation, however, my work started to refuse me. I tried to shape it into the traditional mold of dissertation presentation–five chapters, clearly outlined structure, centuries-old guidelines–but my work resisted. It forced me to remember my mother, my childhood, my apprenticeship. It asked me to (re)search Black storytelling and (re)connect to my roots.

After conversations with my mother and after reading the work of scholars who refuse traditional methods of gathering, analyzing, and representing data, I started to remember the 'telling.' I realized that even if academia restricted the broad use of these methods, Black people have consistently created alternative sites for learning–through song, through dance, through quilt, through story. Just as my ancestors did not need permission from Eurocentric stakeholders to engage in their research, I did not need permission to foreground my work in Black storytelling methods. And so, after taking time to consider this idea alongside my ancestral push, I arrived at what I call *endarkened storywork*, a methodology built from the confluence of endarkened feminist epistemologies (Dillard, 2000), Indigenous storywork (Archibald, 2008), and Afrofuturism (Womack, 2013), a way of honoring Black storytelling traditions in academia.

Endarkened storywork made space for my ways of thinking, knowing, interpreting, and representing my work. It centered community and forced me to interrogate my writing and consider how it aligns with or against methods used by the communities I am blessed to work with and for. It acknowledged spirituality as paradigm by honoring the sacred work of story and storytelling that is woven into the intricate fabric of Black life. As a storied method, it asked me to consider the values and beliefs behind the stories of my research partners and create enough space within myself to welcome my feelings and questions about the stories I received even when traditional approaches asked me to establish objective truths, eschew the subjective nature of feeling and belief, and create clear delineations between researcher and researched. It forced me to consider what it means to remember the cultural stories that shaped me and use these stories in a process of freedom that refuses to uplift Eurocentric research methods to the detriment of ancestral methodologies.

1 An Example of Endarkened Storywork

As I came to this chapter, I realized how hard it would be to detail the whole of my work within a short space, especially as readers may not have read my dissertation or the book that came from that research (Toliver, 2022). As a storyteller, I realized that outlining my process without including a story would be a disservice to the story listener. Yes, I could have provided a synopsis of my storied dissertation and used this chapter as a way to detail the intricacy of the work that underpinned the story's creation, but I believe that a story *must* accompany endarkened storywork. It cannot be endarkened storywork if story is not foregrounded in some way. So, this

section includes a story that details the importance of Black storytelling, specifically the passing down of story amongst family members. Then, in the conclusion of this chapter, I detail the work that went into the story's creation. By including a story alongside the concluding section, my hope is that readers not only understand the intricate cultural and historical work necessary to engage in endarkened storywork, but also to understand the work required of the story listener who is now responsible for protecting the sacred story they just read.

2 "The Telling"

The telling always begins with a dance. The elders—tall, dark-skinned and dressed in white—hold tight to each other. Arms connected, but hands free. Light drumbeats sound in the background, ambient noise providing the metronomic rhythm the elders need to begin. Their slow, undulating movements are ethereal, seen in this world, but amplified across the transcendental plane and into worlds beyond. They gather energy across realms to make sure they have enough life to complete the task ahead, for the telling requires much. Forget a story, lose a thread, or fail to connect across time, and the ancestral link could falter.

Slowly, mindfully, they encircle the younger women, for the telling must always have an audience. Today, these young women–Asha, Layla, Subell–have been chosen. They are the select few granted permission to listen. Training for this moment was not easy. To become a story listener, one must learn to listen to others, to the world, and to the self. One must learn to consider the essence of story and learn to respect the storying process. One must agree to become story protector, and later, when they are called to become, learn the dance and engage in the telling elsewhere. Story listening is a lifetime commitment, so the women do not make their decisions lightly. They engage in sacred work and know that once the telling process begins, they assume a great responsibility. They feel the energy pulsing in their souls, and they see the opening of the feedback loop. The telling soon comes.

"You remember November?" Layla asked. She sat at the picnic table with her hand smashed against her tawny-colored face.

Asha and Subell shook their heads. "You know… she was a young girl, like 14 or somethin. She went through the telling when she was real young. Her grandma was passin on and she was lookin for someone to start tellin to, and she chose her." Layla paused a moment to see if the other two remembered anything. When they didn't respond, she said, "Like, in their family, only one person has the history at a time, and November didn't want to be the one to carry that weight, but she was chosen, soooo…".

Asha had been staring at her hands for quite some time, but she perked up at Layla's statement. "Only one?".

"Only one." Layla responded.

"I can't even imagine that." Asha glanced down at her shoe. "Passing down the stories of our lives isn't just something we do for fun. Like, that's our history. The history of our people. It's life giving, but it can also be life taking. I wouldn't want the responsibility of holding all the stories. That's a lot of weight."

"True, true," Subell chimed in. She looked toward the cloudy gray sky. "It breathes life into the ancestors, keeps them alive. You know, in the Black community, we keep our ancestors alive by talking about them." She moved her hand to her chin as she shifted her gaze back to the other women. "In telling…and listening… we know the ancestors we've never met. Their heartbeats reverberate in our minds, and we see images of their faces because they're not just these lifeless things. They are alive within us… within the telling."

The April breeze swirled around the table, ruffling the coils of the women's hair and tousling the dresses of the elders still circled around the women as they continued to make preparations for the event. Save the continuous drumbeats, nature was ominously quiet, as if it knew what was to occur, as if it waited for the event to be complete.

"You know," Asha began, "for so long, I cleaved myself from our stories. I don't think I wanted to, but like, as soon as I walked through the learning center doors, I felt loss, like the ancestors couldn't follow me in there. I was alone."

"Yes!" Layla's eyes widened as she looked at Asha. "It's like, immediately you're totally alone cuz you don't' belong. And, you don't belong cuz how you learned doesn't belong. The learning center instructors, for some reason, didn't see our stories as something cultural. But, tellin a Black person that their narratives aren't significant is not a statement about an individual's way of writin or thinkin. It's a statement about our culture." She clapped her hands to enunciate her syllables.

"Right." Asha gazed at a bird that silently landed in the tree above the picnic table. "Telling stories is my way of analyzing what's going on in my life, and it's therapeutic for me. But, I think about how many times I needed to write, to sing, to tell stories, and I was told it wasn't appropriate."

The elders move in closer, but only slightly. As they gather energy from beyond, they move as one to concentrate it on the women in the middle of the circle. The eldest woman hums and the others join her. Their vocal cords a collective song that pushes the telling ever nearer.

Subell looks to the elder women circling around them and gives a small, but noticeable point in their direction. "They used to bother me when I was younger. I mean, I know I get power from them, and that my role was to eventually deliver their messages, but still. I couldn't really understand them. I used to sit and say, 'I want to hear what you're trying to say,' but then they wouldn't come. When I stopped trying, that's when they'd come."

"I remember when Layla would talk to them when we were younger." Asha said nonchalantly.

"Yes!" Subell exclaimed. "She would be dancing, doing the same movements they're doing now, same rhythm and everything." She turned to Asha and mimicked

the movements. "You'd close your eyes, put your arms to the side, and twist to the left and the right as you sang. I would ask who you was talking to, and you would just... run away. You were so peaceful, and it always made me smile."

"I remember that." Layla said as she gently brushed a fly from her arm. "But, what I also remember is the elders tellin me to be quiet. I wasn't supposed to tell anyone yet. What's fascinatin to me about this whole process–recognition, selection, preparation, instruction–is that none of this is written down. Like, they told me stories when I was little, and I couldn't tell, couldn't write them. What they told me wasn't supposed to be written. It was like it was for my ears only."

"What's funny is that I tried to write it down once." Subell slapped her light brown hands on her thigh as she laughed. "I tried to write down a story they told me, but when I sat down to write, I got stuck. That's when I learned that sometimes, the story you're told is not yours to write. Once we get them, we are responsible for them, but we do not own stories. They let us know which ones we can share, and which are to be held within our mouths."

"That makes me think about who owns stories." Asha looked back down at her palms and began digging dirt out of her fingernails. "When we write certain stories down, there's an ownership that comes with it. When you got stuck, Sue, and when Layla was told not to, I think the elders were just reminding us of that. When the telling ends, we are responsible to the stories, but we don't own them. I don't know if I'm even making sense, but I think the elders were just letting us know that our storying power comes with a great responsibility."

Subell put her hand on Asha's shoulder. "I do feel responsible to the elders, whoever they are and wherever they came from. I feel a responsibility… and an honor. I'm honored to be chosen. I was chosen for this, and it used to scare me, but it doesn't anymore because when they come, if there's something they want to tell me, I drop what I'm doing and listen."

"The listening part is so important." Asha responded as she lay her head across her folded arms. "I mean, the story is important, and the storyteller is important, but the story listener? I think their job is the hardest."

"Yea." Asha stood up to stretch. Her long arms seemed to touch the sky. "Like, our ancestors had to truly listen to understand the coded messages other Black folks put into songs, quilts, braids, stories, you name it. We had such a strong oral tradition. Our enslaved elders would just be telling Anansi stories right under the plantation owner's nose, and that man had no idea that they were relayin messages of strength, freedom, and rebellion. They thought we were singing dumb little songs, like 'follow the drinking gourd'… thought we were just talking about a sip of water. It was a cultural language… a Black coded language, that spread all across."

Eyes closed, Asha said, "Without the telling, you wouldn't know any of that."

"Yea… I know." Layla replied as she cut her eyes at Asha. "Even without the ability to write it down, the tradition of tellin is what kept us going. We have all these different ways to record things now, all these ways of preserving things, but voice is really important. The tellin is important. It's a way for us to protect our stories. They can burn books, but they can't destroy the tellin."

The elders are so close to the three women that they're almost touching. But not quite. The energy is concentrated now, a small space vibrating with pulsing energy. The sky is gray, but the young women are glowing, gold flecks appear on their cheeks and rays reminiscent of the sky shoot from their fingertips. The telling soon comes.

"I wonder if they'll ever let us write the stories." Layla said as she wiped sweat from her forehead.

"They let me." Asha smiled as she finally lifted her face from her arms. Subell and Layla stared at her with mouths open. "I don't like talking much, but that doesn't mean I can't engage in the telling, too. That's why I was talking about the responsibility of it."

After finally closing her mouth, Layla said, "you know, for so long in this country, we weren't allowed to write anything down, so I guess writing it down is kind of like takin back our power. Not like it was ever lost, but like, we had to hide what we could do, and if the owner found out, we could be maimed or even killed. To openly write is a counter to that history."

"Yea, there are a lot of ways to preserve our history. The tellin can happen in multiple ways. My way is going to be through writing." Asha once again nuzzled her face into her arms.

Subell was quiet for a moment, face pinched and deep in thought. After several moments of silence, she spoke. "You know, the telling is Black history. For so long, we've had to tell it because it wasn't written. We carry those stories because that's all we have. You both know my mother, your grandmother, even though she moved on from this realm before you were born. The image you created of her in your mind comes from the stories. You channel her through story. Those were told to you, but even when you're reading something, you see images of what you're reading because of how it's described. So, I think, if we wrote down the stories of your people–Susie, Lizzie, Shelly, Reese–then it would just be another way to keep them alive. We are responsible for their stories, their lives. We are the protectors of their memories."

The elders' hum increases, reverberating off the sky above and creating a cacophonous roar. The clouds open and rain pours down, but the young women remain untouched. The elders dance has ended, and the older women fly above the younger ones, blocking the downpour, protecting them from the deluge. The telling has begun.

Asha, Layla, and Subell sit in silence. Once the work of story has begun, they must listen. They must be responsible to story and prepare for the day when they will dance, and their work will begin.

3 Engaging in Endarkened Storywork

"The Telling" is not a story based in imagination. Instead, it is a story created from a conversation that occurred between my sister, my mother, and I. Due to the pandemic,

we chatted via Zoom for a few hours to talk about my dissertation and Black storytelling traditions. I did not have specific questions to guide the conversation. Instead, it was a regular chat we would have had any other day. My goal in having, transcribing, and analyzing the dialogue was to recreate the data collection, analysis, and representation methods I used in my dissertation research. Specifically, the conversations found within my storied dissertation were taken directly from conversations I had with six Black middle school girls who participated in an Afrofuturist writing workshop with me in the summer of 2019. I recreated my process and analyzed my data in the same way I examined dissertation data. I utilized the same storying process I engaged in during dissertation writing to transform our family conversation into a speculative narrative. As I did in my dissertation, I intwined scholarly research (endarkened feminist epistemology, Indigenous storywork, Afrofuturist characteristics), real-world occurrences (literacy and enslavement, literacy and Black liberation, kitchen table talk), conversation data (from the discussion with my mother and sister), and my personal life experience (my feelings about storytelling and Black life) into the story. Thus, rather than simply outline the innerworkings of my dissertation, I presented an example of endarkened storywork to showcase what it looks like in action.

My dissertation was my way of dreaming otherwise about the possibilities of data representation, a way of providing an alternative site for me to exist in the academy (Dillard, 2000). It was also a way for me to engage in the work of story, the work that I tried so hard to run away from. Dillard (2012) argued that Black women must restore our cultural memories and remember the activities, communal experiences, and spiritual traditions we have been encouraged to neglect. Numerous scholars contend that the telling of stories is sacred, something passed down from generation to generation, and they remind us that accessing these stories requires a break from Eurocentric knowledge processes (Archibald, 2008; Smith, 2012; Windchief & San Pedro, 2019). Afrofuturist scholars highlight intergenerational connection across time, space, and reality, and they prompt people to consider how Black people have historically used storytelling and dreaming to sustain our communities (Eshun, 2003; Hopkinson & Nelson, 2002). Endarkened feminist epistemologies asked me to consider alternative sites of research, analysis, and representation, Indigenous Storywork asked me to put in spiritual, communal, and self-work, and Afrofuturism asked me to dream beyond the confines of traditional qualitative research by connecting my past, present, and future.

In remembering these teachings and reconnecting to my mother's stories, I was better able to see the academic discourses embedded within Black people's everyday talk and construct a story that mirrored the scholarly rigor of my family's daily discourse production. Remembering allowed me to imagine my ancestors gathering around me, my sister, and my mother to begin the work of story. Remembering helped me to grasp at the roots of my history and weed out the methods, theories, and knowledges that do not serve me and my people. My mother was my first storyteller, and for decades, I ran from this history. I am done running, done searching. The telling has begun.

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Reference/Referents: Studies in and Against the White Space of the Campus Library

Victoria Restler

Abstract This chapter is a three-part window into some of my own unsettled wonderings, tethered to the events of April 30 2018 when I witnessed the arrest and detainment of a Black student in a campus library with my then three- and five-year old children. It is a series of attempts to ~~make sense~~ be/make/question/learn with the discomfort of the ongoing hurts and harms of racism as a white cis woman/ artist/ mother/ educator/ scholar. The writings, poems and images presented here are studies as in arts-based and textual inquiry; studies as in small-scale creative experiments; studies as in unfinished; as in preparations, laying the ground for other ongoing work.

Keywords Research-creation · Critical whiteness studies · Arts-based research · Critical qualitative methods · Critical race spatial analysis · Critical library studies · Self study · Embodied research practice

Reference/Referents

Campus Library, Northeast public college: Up the concrete steps, stone retaining wall, state-school mid-century cost-cutting. Through the double doors (two sets), butter yellow walls (Fig. 1) *and the geometries of carpet tile. Past circulation to reference–thick volumes in blues and faded charcoals, pressed leather and vinyls. A series that spills across three vertical stacks. Who's Who in America, 62 editions (out of order) from 1899 to 2008* (Fig. 2). *Wondering across the faded wine and cranberry spines who was not (referenced, recorded, remembered).*

On April 30 2018, I witnessed the police detainment of a Black student in this public college campus library where I was completing my first year as an Assistant Professor. High-backed mod-print fabric bisecting the frame, cakey ceiling tiles and

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Fig. 1 Butter yellow walls,[1] campus library photos, Providence, RI United States, 2018–21. Copyright Victoria Restler[2]

Fig. 2 *Who's Who*, campus library photos, Providence, RI United States, 2018–21. Copyright Victoria Restler

[1] The official college name for the wall color, "Nazarian white" pays homage to a past college president who favored the hue.

[2] Throughout this chapter I use footnotes in ways inspired by McKittrick (2021), Rankine (2020), Berlant & Stewart (2019), Pindyck (2018) and Wing (2017). Here, the footnotes work as a layering device, inviting a back and forth between these two text streams, evoking a sense of dialogue (with myself, memories, colleagues, works, and ideas). Less a hierarchical relationship between the 'main narrative' and the small print below, the footnotes encourage movement and interruption, breaking (up) the text and smooth flow of reading.

fluorescent oblongs coming in on a slant. Shifting scenes as two-and three-and five-campus and city police officers questioned the student, led him through the library in a pack, and handcuffed him between two sets of entryway double doors.

Up close and close to home, this incident followed on the heels of a string of spring reports of Black and Brown youth being stopped—detained and arrested on college campuses for being and doing, attending a campus tour (Colorado State University, April 2018), eating lunch (Smith College August, 2018), napping (Yale University May, 2018).[3] These campus-specific events were not new, instead they became broadly visible at a moment when questions around institutionalized white supremacy in colleges were fomenting alongside national dialogues addressing the murder of Black people by police. This library scene speaks with scenes of what Michael Harriot (2018) has called 'White Caller Crimes'—white people policing the 'white spaces' (Anderson, 2015) of public parks, fancy hotels, apartment lobbies, Starbucks, often willfully endangering the lives of Black children and adults. This scene plays in and through the police brutality and murder of Black people captured with the shaky screens of handheld cellphone cameras.

In reverberating dialogue with these other events/ images/ structures, this library unfolding spurred in me a series of collective and independent inquiries and animations—educator workshops, writing, and art-making aimed at spaces and bodies and the intransigence of whiteness on college campuses. The 'I' of this chapter is linked with 'We's'—we's of the event (people who shared breath in the library lobby during finals week), ongoing dialogue with faculty, students, and staff, and with four other artist-educator collaborators and friends—Vivianne Njoku, Jessica Hamlin, Asilia Franklin-Phipps and Maya Pindyck (Njoku et al., 2018; Franklin-Phipps et al., 2019; Hamlin & Restler, 2021). This chapter is a three-part window into some of my own unsettled wonderings, tethered to the events of April 30, 2018, as a moment in looping recursive time, present histories and future commitments. It is a series of attempts to ~~make sense~~[4] be/ make/ question/ learn with the discomfort of the ongoing hurts and harms of racism as a white cis woman/ artist/ mother/ educator/ scholar. These are studies as in arts-based and textual inquiry; studies as in small-scale creative experiments; studies as in unfinished; as in preparations, laying the ground for other ongoing work.

[3] And how many, many other incidents like this one went under-reported in local and national media.

[4] Make sense is the phrase I keep coming back to. I like its plainness and its connections to 'making' as in creative practice and "sense" as in the overlaps between understanding and sensory knowing. It both resonates here (as I am making, sensing, working to understand) and also falls short/flat. How to 'make sense' of the senselessness (of antiblack racism, police violence, white supremacy)? And the imagined endpoint in that phrase–as if one day, sense will be made (and I will have been the maker).

1 What is/ How is Whiteness?

This work grows from and with scholars, writers, and artists who map critical race theory and whiteness in the American context. A slippery and encompassing concept, Bree Picower defines whiteness in this way:

> Within this system of white supremacy, whiteness is the ideology and way of being in the world that is used to maintain it. Whiteness is not synonymous with white people; instead, it is the way that people--generally white people—enact racism in ways that consciously and unconsciously maintain this broader system of white supremacy...white supremacy is the what, white people are generally the who, and whiteness is the how. (2021, p. 6-7)

This chapter takes root in the 'how' of whiteness, how it takes hold, how buildings and bodies seem to stubbornly resist change, even as discourse on a mostly 'progressive' college campus comes to incorporate the race-conscious language of privilege, white supremacy, and antiracism. This work owes to artists and scholars who center the how of critical race and whiteness in our bodies—Resmaa Menakem's somatic abolitionism (2017), Shaun Leonardo's "I Can't Breathe" participatory workshop and performance as self-defense class (2017); Sara Ahmed's bodily Phenomenology of Whiteness (2007). This work owes to critical race scholars who trace the how of whiteness in school spaces through affect and emotion–Ohito's pedagogies of discomfort (2016); Franklin-Phipps, (2020) sticky pedagogies; and Matias's white emotionality (2016). This work owes to scholars of racialized space–Lipsitz's, (2011) "white spatial imaginary" as ideological and structural; Gusa's, (2010) framework of White Institutional Presence; Schlesselman-Tarango's edited *Topographies of Whiteness* in the library (2017); and Morrison, Annamma & Jackson's coalescing of *Critical Race Spatial Analysis* (2017). In different ways, all of these works take up the pulsating tangle of whiteness as individual and systemic—how it operates and how it is lived in fleshy, physical, emotional, bodies and spaces.

In the following pages, I trace a series of studies in and around the events of April 30. I use photography, collage, and poetry to slow down and sense into the echoing day, to linger with words and images, to feel into what is unsayable or hard to picture. This research-creation approach (Truman & Springgay, 2015) takes inspiration from Tina Campt's, (2017) "Listening to Images," practice of attuning to the quiet frequencies in "the photographic archive of precarious and dispossessed black subjects" (p.11). She writes of her approach:

> Engaging these images as decidedly haptic objects is a method that requires us to interrogate both the archival encounter, as well as the content of archival collections, in multiple tenses and multiple temporalities and in ways that attend to both their stakes and possibilities. It is a method that reckons with fissures, gaps, and interstices that emerge when we refuse to accept the "truth" of images and archives. (p.8)

Turning this haptic attunement to the records of April 30—five short cellphone videos and transcripts—and to a portion of the space (campus library) and collection (reference) that held these events, I knit together text with art with experience with theory as a way to feel into the invisibility/hyper-visibility of institutional whiteness; as a way to stay with the pain and discomfort of racialized violence and white supremacy[5]: as a way to tell a story which trails behind and loops ahead of the particular afternoon.

2 Orientations: Where Do We Begin?

Ahmed (2007) writes that "Whiteness could be described as an ongoing and unfinished history, which orients bodies in specific directions, affecting how they 'take up' space, and what they 'can do' (p.150). Orientations in her telling are about where we start from and all the personal and social and structural histories that lead to the many moments of beginning; the 'what comes before' that shapes what is and might be. In other words, racialization is spatial, temporal, and bodily. It grows from stories, events, experiences and dynamics that precede us—laws on the books and color-coded lines on a map that dictated where our grandparents could/not live; the ability to amass and pass down rubber band balls of capital that grow slightly larger over generations.

Orientation is about directionality—the way we face, what is hard and easy to see from here or there. Ahmed reframes the well-documented near paradoxical tug of whiteness as both totalizing and unapparent to white people by locating it in and between bodies and spaces. In her phenomenological analysis, white people are turned away from their own whiteness. "Whiteness would be what lags behind; white bodies do not have to face their whiteness; they are not orientated 'towards' it, and this 'not' is what allows whiteness to cohere, as that which bodies are orientated around" (2007, p.156). White bodies carry violent histories of exploitation, the stockpile of intergenerational wealth accumulation and access to objects within reach. White bodies inherit ease of movement, spaces that bend towards us, spaces that "also take shape by being orientated around some bodies, more than others." These orientations are dialogical—in conversation with bodies and places, individuals and structures.

[5] Reading an early draft of the chapter, my friend-colleague Maya Pindyck commented, "Is there a privilege to "staying with the pain" when it isn't directly your pain? What does it mean to stay with the pain one feels from experience and the pain one feels as a witness? Are you referring to your own pain or what you see as the pain of the man cuffed in the library? It starts to conflate here, and I think it's a good place to be clearer about what/ whose pain you are staying with, and the implications of that… what you see that painful staying doing." And I think, *yes, whose pain (as if this can be neatly parsed)? And what can the painful staying do and not do?*

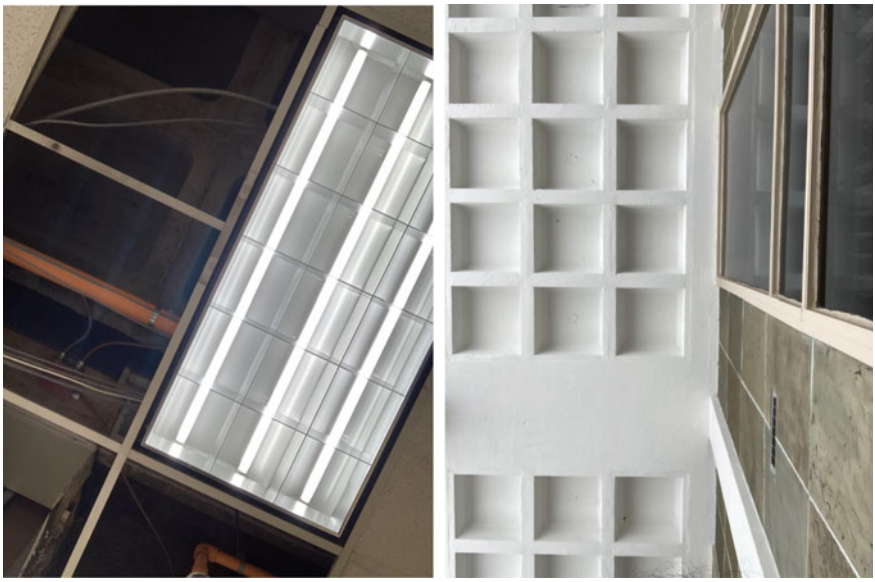

Fig. 3 *Inside/Outside Ceilings,* campus library photos, Providence, RI United States, 2021. Copyright Victoria Restler

If orientations, as Ahmed writes "are about starting points," (2007, p.150) then where do we begin?[6]

We begin in the atrium, past the slate clad facade and eight square white painted columns (mid-size city courthouse vibe). In through the metal detectors and up into the vaulted space, skylit sun streaming through the egg crate white stucco ceiling. Built into the side of a slope, you are on the ground floor, but also technically, the third.

We begin through the heavy metal doors at the back left, wire grids slicing the vertical glass panels. The small hand palming your left extends out to the arm and body of a bowl-cut just-turned five-year-old white boy (did he still pronounce girl like goil?); and squeezing your right fingers, a three-year-old impish white girl who

[6] Where did I begin in the days and months after April 30? One beginning was in years-long conversation (one-leading-to-the-next) with my friend-colleague Jessica Hamlin, feeling and talking and looking and making about this day and more broadly about the dynamics of whiteness in our classrooms and campuses. One of our beginnings was with the text described above, Sara Ahmed's, *A Phenomenology of Whiteness* (2007) We read and re-read, spoke and drew and wrote about these seventeen pages together for more than a year (Restler & Hamlin, 2019) In this work, we engage a looping process of returning (to Ahmed's text; to our own sense-making/ slipping) as a way to document our nonlinear learning and as a training ground for teaching on race and racism in multiracial and predominantly white settings.

favors mismatching prints. You might be feeling proud to be a new professor and like a good mother (this afterschool time together) and slightly electrified by this clash of personal and professional in the campus library.

We begin through the 2 × 3.5 inch rectangular screen of your cell phone, five videos, five hundred and sixty-eight seconds that document the sometimes muffled police interrogation of this Black student, interspersed with slow/ impatient/ insistent shushes set against the children's whispered whiny calls, "mommy. I want to goooooo."

We begin with our early school years–kindergarten, elementary, up through high school and college. All your semesters of racist standardized testing and sorting regimes, white supremacist curriculum, racist inequitable school funding policies, racist disproportionate disciplinary procedures, classrooms at all levels led mostly by white women.

We begin with the duty-desire of good intentions. With your idea of yourself (white woman) and of your field (education) as "entangled in particular notions of the self as good" (Franklin-Phipps, 2020, p.128).

We begin with spectacles of public anti-Black terror. With lynching photographs that circulate to inspire both fear and repudiation of white supremacist violence (Apel & Smith, 2007) and an expanding archive of cellphone videos documenting the abuse and murder of Black people by private vigilantes and the state.

We begin in the recursive present of "the afterlife of slavery." The "racial calculus"… of "skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment" that persists for Black Americans (Hartman, 2008, p.6).

We begin in the 1963 building, designed by architect Lester J. Millman with later 60 s and 70 s mid-century and brutalist-inspired additions. We begin with the rectangles of books that fit easily into fingers and bloom out to larger and larger rectangles—tiles, walls, roofs—in fractal-like form.

We begin with whispers and shushes.

3 Return

I return to this space many times over three years (broken by gaps of wondering whether this story—which story?—is mine to tell, or what it means to linger with it, or whether I know enough of what I don't know to tell some portion.) I wander the four and a half floors taking photographs. It's almost always almost empty. I search for the book that Sylvie had pulled off the shelf and placed in my hand moments before we decided to make our way out and down the steps—Little Black Sambo (Bannerman 1899) –which I forgot about for more than two years in the fog of all that

unfolded, and later learned was subsequently 'weeded' out of the library's collection. I return to the place where I was standing with my children on April 30 and make a line drawing of the scene on notepaper, then I travel 15 feet to the place where the student and police officers stood and make a matching sketch. Mostly I return to the reference section.

Reference like "the act of mentioning something in speech or in writing" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) ***Reference*** like the sources of information that we use to back up our assertions and build scholarly claims. ***Reference*** like the support services that librarians provide to help students (and others) navigate the library and carry out research. ***Referents*** like "the thing[s] that a symbol (such as a word or a sign) stands for" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

The reference section of the library comprises a compact set of stacks just off to the right when you walk in. A series of twenty-six triple-wide vertical shelves (along with several open flat file units for oversized volumes) set into the shape of a walkable rectangle with bites taken out of the upper right and lower left corners. I come back to this section because it is the first block of books you encounter in the space, because together with the half-moon reference desk it framed one edge of the encounter of April 30, because this collection speaks in several registers with whiteness and the white space of the campus and campus library.

A library's (print) reference collection is typically a small grouping of books directed at facts, dates, statistics, technical instructions, timelines, definitions and overviews. Often reference books don't circulate, they are meant to be accessed in the library space and many academic libraries describe the purpose of this collection as a first stop in researching new topics, a place to begin. As one academic library website advises (Shawnee State, n.d.),

[Reference] resources are an excellent place to begin research because they provide background information about a subject. Checking reference resources first will help you

- get an overview of the subject.
- note key concepts/developments.
- identify significant individuals.
- see a chronology/timeline.
- discern connections/interrelationships with other developments.
- develop a list of search terms.
- find bibliographies – sources for more information.

In this framing, reference volumes offer orientation, signposts, and maps in the bigness of new learning and research.

The reference section is filled with encyclopedias, almanacs, atlases, indexes, directories, censuses, chronologies, handbooks and manuals. Books dense with information, where information is positioned as neutral. This is generally not the part of

the library to find critical analysis, case study research, writing in the first person, or perspectives at the margins. These are fat volumes, thick with 'facts.'

There is a claim towards the exhaustive in reference titles and in the framing of reference collections more broadly. As Britannica's encyclopedia entry on encyclopedias explains, "The word encyclopaedia is derived from the Greek enkyklios paideia, "general education," and it at first meant a circle or a complete system of learning—that is, an all-around education" (Preece & Collison, 2016, n.p.). A closed loop. A library's reference collection is also aimed at general education and totality. Another academic library (Illinois University, 2005) describes their reference section this way, "As a whole the collection provides the reference underpinnings for comprehensive research in all subject fields (n.p.)."

Of course, this desire-claim-pretense of comprehensiveness is impossible! Perhaps it is bold or thrilling or hubristic to try to catalogue all of the curse words in the English language as in Hughes (2006), *An encyclopedia of swearing: The social history of oaths, profanity, foul language, and ethnic slurs in the English-speaking world*? We may know as we try to write *An encyclopedia of swearing*, to read *An encyclopedia of swearing*, to conceive of this kind of entirety, that we fail, that other Englishes are excluded from study, or the meanings are partial, and that the language continues to evolve. Maybe we still gain something in this effort (in the reading, writing, conceiving). But there are things we pointedly don't learn when we approach reading and research in this way. Things we also lose. This frame for reference—as total, as neutral—covers over in some ways, the vast omissions. The missing titles and people and maps and imaginaries and languages and authors and views and songs and stories and violences and celebrations and leaders and artworks and ways of being, thinking, learning, teaching, telling, living, and dying. What is not/ cannot be contained in these stacks?

I walk it in 37 by 79 steps. I note the textures and colors of spines, the color block of long-running series. I feel cozy, comforted by the volumes, I call back to feelings of loneliness in college and the memory of kneeling on the floor inside short walls of book piles, being with the words and images and old fonts, in community with the writers and artists and hands that had thumbed the pages. I open up a large ochre census book from 1860 displayed on the gently sloping ledge of a flat file to find only records of 'free white men' and 'free white women.' I write down the names of titles, and reshelve those titles as poem, with my own questions and noticings in pale grey dialogue:

Somehow, putting them next to each other this way, like a row of mis-shelved titles, brings forward new questions and observations. It surfaces issues of omission and perspective—questions that Hartman writes, "of the power and authority of the archive and the limits it sets on what can be known, whose perspective matters, and who is endowed with the gravity and authority of historical actor" (2019, p. xiii). It raises questions and tensions about frames of knowledge, representation, and structures that extend beyond this patch of books and shelves.

The college's reference collection is in some ways a heart-center of the institution. As a symbol of scholarly study, positioned as the first station on the research journey, this group of texts references the aims of higher education—acquiring, dispensing, creating and producing knowledge. And the kinds of texts that form the collection reference a situated epistemological history—a positivist framing of knowledge and what's knowable, a project of breadth and quantities that Mary Poovey traces to sixteenth century mercantile capitalism in what she calls "A History of the Modern Fact" (1998). Poovey's literary history illuminates the profound epistemological shift embedded in these kinds of texts, the idea that knowledge can be parsed from context, the imagination of a category that is "preinterpretive or somehow noninterpretive" (xii).

Although in her volume, she "devote[s] almost no attention to race" (or class or gender), explaining that "with very few exceptions, the writers [she] is concerned with were not primarily engaged with these issues" and citing gaps in the archival "accounts of people hidden from history" (Poovey, 1998, p.24), this epistemological project cannot be disentangled from whiteness. The embedded unspoken belief that white thinkers, authors, subjects can comprise the "underpinnings for comprehensive research in all subject fields (n.p.)" (Illinois University, 2005). Whiteness as the in/visible, ever-present referent; whiteness as white wall, as normal, as neutral, as encompassing.

4 Relational Ratios

And here, how does the composition and framing of *this* particular (and nonspecific) reference space/collection speak to the ways that whiteness operates in *this* particular (and nonspecific) Predominantly White Institution? We might consider a series of proportional relationships, a tethered ratio between the reference collection and the broader campus. We might ask this square footage of carpet, floor, air, and books a series of questions like:

How many of these books were written by white authors[7]?

Center white subjects?

White stories?

White histories?

How many lines and pages and volumes are racist or anti-Black?

How many grow from the rotten roots of the pseudoscientific classification system that positions whiteness as the model for human worth?

[7] We don't have to perform a complete audit of the collection to know that the subjects and authors of these reference texts are likely (certainly) largely white (centered in whiteness, white stories and histories) because of the disproportionate whiteness of [American] authors today–80.7% in 2019 (Datausa, n.d.) and in the past.

How do these proportions speak with the percentage of white faculty on this campus?[8]

And other higher education institutions in the US?[9]

And how do these numerical and affective correspondences talk to the limited course offerings that specifically address issues of race in the institution?

Or trickle out to the whiteness of authors, scholars, and artists whose work is referenced on syllabi and read in the classrooms of the college?

How do these absences and omissions live out Cheryl Harris's, (1993) concept of whiteness as exclusion, as characterized largely by "the legal right to exclude others from the privileges inhering in whiteness" (p.1736)?

How does the exclusion of Black, Indigenous, Asian, and Latinx authors/ voices/ histories/ knowledges from the reference collection speak in time with the exclusion of Black, Indigenous, Asian, and Latinx faculty, curricula, authors, students, voices, histories, and knowledges across the institution's spaces and structures?

And what cannot be articulated in those dialogical ratios about the ways that whiteness operates, moves and stops in the institution?

Of the ways that whiteness is woven with the fabrics, lodged into the rectangles of buildings, planted into the habits and inhabitings of bodies, student bodies, campus bodies, institutional bodies?

What don't these numbers tell of whiteness as "a way of inhabiting space, which claims space *by the accumulation of gestures of 'sinking' into that space*"? (Ahmed, 2007, p.159, emphasis in original).

Or how campus spaces—library, quad, hallway, classroom—hold these impressions, "acquire the 'skin' of the bodies that inhabit them"? (Ahmed, 2007, p.157).

Of the well-worn grooves?

Reciprocal enforcement of bodies and spaces doing/ telling/ seeding/ guarding whiteness?

5 Out of Order/ Who am I to…

There is a lot I can't say, won't say, and don't know about the student, about what happened on April 30, about what was said and done, what took place before and after, within and outside the cellphone video frame. I spend time with the videos, transcribing, replaying bits of muffled speech to hear into words and tones. I listen into the rhythms and cadences, certain sections repeating like a song in my head. I freeze screen shots of the video–command, shift, three–and notice gestures. A white student at her laptop appears in one frame to be oblivious and 4 seconds earlier, she

[8] 83%.

[9] 75% (NCES 2018).

has her hand at the side of her face, blocking the scene from peripheral view.[10] With a 'lasso selection' tool[11] I trace the edges of the figures' forms, cropping them out/ whiting them out/ erasing to protect identities, privacies. Erased in this way, the silhouettes become both specific–the slouch of spine, the ruffle of pant leg–and archetypal diagrams of white power and subjugation (Fig. 4). These cut-outs speak with Kara Walker's black silhouetted scenes of past-present American racial oppression, with Kerry James Marshall's portraits of white women in the crowd at public lynchings placed into delicate lockets in his (2002) *Heirlooms and Accessories*, and Titus Kaphar's recent series of paintings of Black women holding and tending to the empty forms of white cut-out children and babies (2019–20). I continue to "lasso" bits of carpet, metal railing, a ceiling slab. These empty spaces are like ghosts, the afterimages of this event marking indelible memory into floors and fibers. The white-out bodies and structures are like the in/visible, ever-present referent of whiteness in this library, on this campus, in our bodies and structures. The empty space allows us as viewers to imagine into what might fill the forms, although we know the answers before we begin–shapes and colors that have already been determined (overdetermined) by so many other shapes and colors that are and came before.

What I can say about the events of April 30 is that the student is an activist and was a vocal opponent of arming campus police (a decades-long perennial debate in state and campus politics). I can say that he was never arrested, not actually charged, although he was detained at the police station for several hours, transferred for psychiatric evaluation and released. I can say he never returned to the college as a student. I can say these are some of the phrases that were spoken out of order by the student, by a bystander, by police officers, by my children within the five hundred and sixty-eight second recording:

What's your name?
Are these your kids?
You're being disruptive.
Am I being arrested?

I'm being very honorable with you.
I'm being very patient with you.
I'm taking it right now that I don't have to file civil action against you
because you didn't
put your hands on me

[10] In reviewing an early draft, my friend-colleague Asilia Franklin-Phipps writes, "Even though she was not at risk, not implicated, even the sight of the scene needed to be physically blocked from her view. I think this is a useful metaphor to discuss the gulf separating black and white people." Is this gesture somehow humanizing (she is not immune to what is taking place)? Does it motion towards annoyance, disturbance, distance? And what is the gulf? The gulf of disproportionate risk? Of mattering? Of caring? Of proximities?

[11] Haunting echo in the tool's name.

Fig. 4 *Cut-out/white out,* campus library photos, Providence, RI United States, 2018–21. Copyright Victoria Restler

Even though,
you have treated me like a slave.

Mommy, Mommy.
I Want to go.

You may not want to go in there right now.

I want to go. I want to go, I want to go.

He was here earlier,
he was ranting and raving.
People in poverty need to get paid.
Black kids are being shot and killed, unarmed.
Are those your kids?
He doesn't want them arming cops on campus.

Are you a student of this campus?
Identify yourself.
What is your name?
What is your name?
What is your name and are you a student here?

We received several-

Several?

Calls about a man screaming out loud.

A man?

He said a man and not a boy?

A man?

A man.

Let's talk about the basis of my constitutional rights.

How much did you pay for your constitutional rights?

You're not answering my question.

We're not assuming anything.

You're disrupting the library.

I want to go.

We're not doing that.

We're gonna do it buddy,

We're going to do what you want.

All we ask-

You are refusing-

There's a description.

and you fit the description.

I fit the description?

and that is the problem.

In this non-chronological transcribed telling/ poem, you may not know who says what. Who asks about constitutional rights and whose questions go unanswered. For me, as witness, as scholar, as artist, the clarities and confusions in this telling speak to what was and remains clear and muddled and unknowable in the radiating events of this day. "You're disrupting," "You fit the description,"—these phrases land like glass breaking, clinks of metal, tinny lucidity. The boulder blow of the word "slave." My young white children's impatient, unsettled calls to me, a haunting mirror to George Floyd's call out to his dead mother in the moments before his own death at the knee of the state. A spectral reminder, two years into the future of how this event might have/ has unfolded.

I wonder where *I* am in this telling and how my struggle in writing this work is connected to the ways I resist locating myself inside the frame. Some of this is the persistent tangle of being a white woman writing about whiteness, and the risks of recentering (myself, whiteness). Some of this is a recognition that the meanings and ramifications and fallouts of this day are almost irreconcilably different for me than for others who were present in the past-future moment of that afternoon. But there are other things too. When I showed some of the images I was working with to friend-colleague, Kay Gordon, four-ish years ago, she posted this comment in the margins,

> There's something powerful about these photos, knowing you took them—it raises so many questions for me about how spaces make us feel powerless. What do we feel empowered to do as teachers? When do we feel able to intervene, to resist, to insert our bodies (and for us white people, to mobilize our privileged bodies to help others?)—and when do we feel scared and dominated by a space, an authority, an event we can't believe we're seeing but really can believe because we see it all the time (personal communication, Gordon, 2019).

I didn't let on during our writing group discussion, but I was ashamed to recognize that not only had I never thought to intervene, I hadn't realized until she said it that I didn't actually do anything. I had equated the recording with a form of action.[12]

I noticed (on April 30 and in the days and months after) the inaction and bad actions of other white people in the space. The bad (white) cops, the bad (white) students who called the police in the first place, the bad (white) library workers who allowed this to happen in their space, the bad (white) students who carried on with their print jobs or finals study, barely looking up from books and screens. I set myself apart as a good white, because I had my young children with me, because I filmed the incident and shared it widely, with faculty, with the student.

Since this day, I have thought a lot about who I am/ was/ can be in the space of the encounter, of the video, of the library, of the campus. Who am *I* to…? Who am I to ____? I am me but I am also more than me. My form references other forms. "There's a violence that precedes the encounter" (Hartman 2018, n.p.). I am lady bountiful (Schlesselman-Tarango, 2017), I am shushing librarian/ teacher/ spinster,

[12] And recording can be/ is action. See Ramsey Orta and the harassment he faced after filming and sharing the video of Eric Garner's murder. When I spoke with friend-colleague Jessica Hamlin about this moment and the question of in/action, she said, "the point is to keep asking the question. Not to answer it. To wonder, did I do enough? How can I do more? How can I reimagine (or remake) my future actions in the space of the library?".

white civilizing savior, I am the white progressive lawyer who later sits down with this student and says "Tell me about your past, tell me your story, your hard life, your experiences. I need that to humanize you for the judge that you will face" (Bery, 2018, n.p.). I am consumptive white empathy (Bery, 2018). I am the purity and vulnerability of white womanhood as the "banner under which the murder of men and women of color was condoned" (Smith, 2006, p.78). I am white women "as the literal and symbolic reproducers of a racialized nation" (Smith, 2006, p.76). I am the nice white teacher who cares, doesn't see color, who has a Black boyfriend, who is Jewish/ Irish/ Italian, who evades "ownership of these stereotypes," (Picower, 2009, p.203) who "never owned a slave" (Picower, 2009, p.205) who is the true victim of reverse racism/ aggressive antiracism/ the imperative to feel guilty (Picower, 2009, p.204), who grows frustrated when POC refuse to accept "that things are equal [now]" (Picower, 2009, p.206). I am these white women, these tools of whiteness (Picower, 2009), these forms of white emotionality (Matias, 2016), these histories of violence and inaction because I am interpellated this way, and because some of this is/has been in me—in the doing and thinking and saying of my kin, in my own thoughts and actions and utterances. Claudia Rankine (2014, p.14) talks about a "battle" in the sometimes collapse between "the 'historical self' and the 'self self.' She explains that within interracial friendships,

> You mostly interact as friends with mutual interest and, for the most part, compatible personalities; however, sometimes your historical selves, her white self and your black self, or your white self and her black self, arrive with the full force of your American positioning. Then you are standing face-to-face in seconds that wipe the affable smiles right from your mouths. What did you say? Instantaneously your attachment seems fragile, tenuous, subject to any transgression of your historical self. And though your joined personal histories are supposed to save you from misunderstandings, they usually cause you to understand all too well what is meant.

These are the looping, recursive, time-traveling conditions of American life in the wake (Sharpe, 2016), in friendships and classes and campus libraries. I am these white women in the collapse of my historical self and self self, but actually the borders between the two are not so rigid and it is all present (and past) and there is no truer self, only all of it.

When I re-watch the videos now, I am keenly aware of my distance (roughly fifteen-feet from where the student and officers stood) and of the diagonal slice of high-backed upholstered bench filling the camera frame like a barricade (Fig. 5). I notice another figure in the mix–a young Black man who weaves continually into conversation and bodily proximity. He places his body next to the student's. He gets beckoned into whispered conversations with individual officers. He approaches the group asking, "We good? Everything good here?" He interrupts, sharing his own experiences, "I'll be honest with you, I'm a Black man," before the officers cut him off and cuff the student moments later. And outside the frame in the days and weeks following April 30, I see another Black man, a colleague in student services who I didn't know until he was no longer a colleague, who took his critique about the administration's mishandling of this event directly to the college president and later resigned in protest.

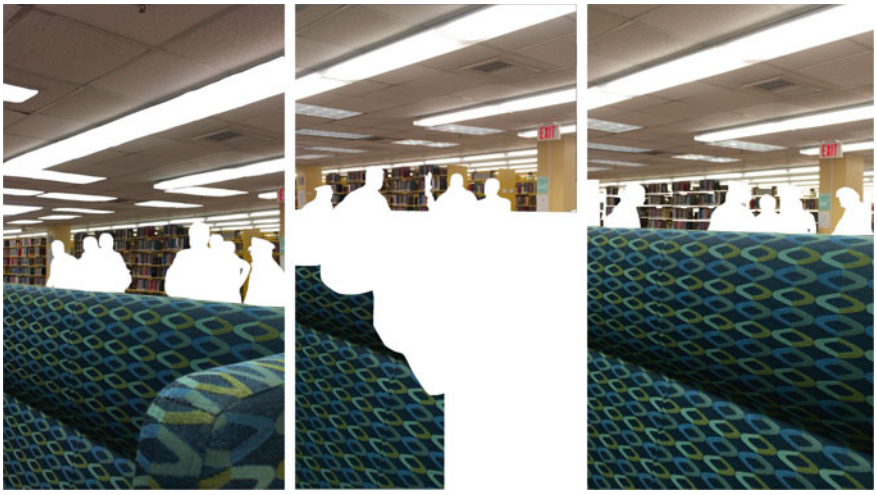

Fig. 5 *Cut-out/white out, barricade* campus library photos, Providence, RI United States, 2018–21. Copyright Victoria Restler

6 Endings and Beginnings

Sara Ahmed closes her (2007) article, 'A Phenomenology of Whiteness' with a story. She is giving a talk on whiteness to a mostly white audience and the question she is always asked comes up again: *what can white people do?*

What can white people do? How can white teachers/ students/ faculty/ authors help? What can we do? Where do we go from here? How does this end?

We end with the 'white solipsism' of this question. "To speak, imagine and think as if whiteness described the world" (Rich, 1979 in Ahmed, 2007, p.164).

We end by worrying "over what sticks, what lasts, and for how long" in race education and antiracist pedagogy. "With the desire for a kind of stickiness that is difficult to both name and imagine" (Franklin-Phipps, 2020, p.122).

We end by "showing how we are stuck" (Ahmed, 2007, p.165).

We end on the columned portico, white–grey sky and the student being led away in handcuffs, sounds of clicking children's tapping feet, moving unselfconsciously with the freedom of being outside.

We end with beginnings and returns.

"And if there's anything like a promise in that scene, the possibility is the promise of the abolition of whiteness. The promise is the end and the breaking of the world.

And that's what we should be hoping and wishing for, not feeling good, empathic union, groovy intersubjective domain" (Hartman, 2018, n.p.).

We end with rupture, "This world must be broken. This world is impossible" (Hartman, 2018, n.p.).

Dissertation Award Information

ABER Outstanding Dissertation Award Year: 2018.

Dissertation Title: Re-visualizing care: Teachers' invisible labor in neoliberal times.

Supervisor: Wendy Luttrell.

Committee Members: Ofelia Garcia, María Elena Torre, Claudia Mitchell.

Granting University: The Graduate Center, City University of New York.

Dissertation link: https://www.proquest.com/openview/01de44b7a1fd56c3cd1ae8c0fd34869c/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750

Digital Assemblage link: https://scalar.usc.edu/works/re-visualizing-care/index

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Vital & Nomadic Materiality: A Cartography of Arts Based Educational Research

Natalie LeBlanc

Abstract This chapter traces my Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) journey through visuals and text in order to consider how it has offered and continues to offer multiple and emergent approaches to research and art practice. To do so, I re-examine projects that I conducted as part of my masters, doctoral, and postdoctoral studies that inform my current and particular position as an assistant professor in art education specializing in studio art. I take up Braidotti's (Theory, Culture & Society 36:31–61, 2018) conceptualization of the posthuman knowing subject and the methodological role that cartographies play in processes of becoming (Deleuze & Guattari in A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia, University of Minnesota Press, 1987). The process of curating my ABER journey allows for an examination of active encounters with vital matter that when presented together form a conceptual or ontological layering that Siegesmund (European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry Proceedings, pp. 101–110, 2018) posits can be best understood as a *nomadic materiality*, an affective, embodied, and ethical mode of inquiry created through a fluid sensibility.

Keywords Arts-based educational research · Posthuman knowing subject · Vital matter · Nomadic materiality · Ontological layering

> Vital matter is driven by the ontological desire for the expression of its innermost freedom…
> (Braidotti, 2018, p. 34)

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1 Introduction

In this chapter, I trace the trajectory of my Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) journey through visuals and text in order to consider how it has offered and continues to offer multiple and emergent approaches to research and art practice, provoking affective, embodied, and ethical processes of learning that are capable of illuminating various educational issues along the way. The process of curating my ABER journey is more than simply selecting and juxtaposing projects that I have engaged in chronologically. Rather, re-turning to these endeavours, allows for an examination of active encounters with vital matter that when presented together form a conceptual or ontological layering that Siegesmund (2018) posits can be best understood as a *nomadic materiality*, a mode of inquiry created through a fluid sensibility. I take up Braidotti's (2018) conceptualization of the posthuman knowing subject in order to examine how arts based educational inquiry is grounded on an emergent and ontological framework (Irwin, 2008, 2013). To do so, I re-examine projects that I conducted as part of my masters, doctoral, and postdoctoral studies that inform my current and particular position as an assistant professor in art education specializing in studio art.

2 Visceral Encounters with Raw Materiality

As an assistant professor in art education at the University of Victoria, I teach studio-based courses to undergraduate students across the entire university and graduate students enrolled in a studio-focused Masters of Education program. The studio component of our art education courses makes it unique to the country. My specialities reside in introductory and advanced practices in drawing, painting, ceramics, and digital arts (among a long list of other studio courses offered in the department such as design, photography, printmaking and sculpture, to name a few). These are 300 and 400 level courses that I would not be able to teach unless I had a strong knowledge and understanding of studio practices and processes coupled with the ability to contextualize these practices within curriculum and pedagogy. I have come to realize that this requires understanding the implications for learning and teaching visual art in the K-12 system and higher education in particular.

In addition to teaching, I am an interdisciplinary artist and researcher, working with paint, photography, printmaking, textiles, and digital technologies through a wide range of artistic processes and practices. My interest resides in how visual and artistic inquiry actualizes ways of seeing beyond the ordinary and habitual, providing opportunities for learning that are relational, performative, and complex. As such, my teaching, research and art practices are deeply intertwined. For over three decades, my artwork explored the concept of abandonment. I produced thousands of photographs of abandoned buildings that punctuated the Canadian landscape as they stood mid-collapse and many of these photographs in turn, inspired many large-scale

oil paintings. As a practicing photographer, I documented abandoned buildings that were deteriorating due to neglect, weather, and other natural forces such as erosion, corrosion, and disintegration. Situated as a learner, I am committed to ongoing inquiry in and through art practice and I find inspiration in the inventive engagements that art practice makes possible. This is a stance that I adopted at a young age. I started drawing at the age of two, according to my family members, before I could talk. As a child, I loved to draw and did so, often for hours on end. I started painting on my own, using mostly watercolors. When I was fourteen, I enrolled in oil painting lessons where I further developed my skills in painting and I learned how to paint from a photographic source. It was during this time that I acquired an even bigger appetite for learning about art. This led to my formal studies in a two-year pre-University college program (known in the province of Quebec as Cégep), where I studied 2D and 3D foundational artistic practices and processes, and to the pursuit of a Bachelors of Fine Arts, where I studied graphic and industrial design before focusing on Art Education.

The central focus of my master's thesis examined the relationship between my practices as a painter and photographer by documenting and analyzing the act of re-creating a photograph in paint (LeBlanc, 2008). Using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to studio inquiry, I observed and analyzed this process, and I contextualized it within the context of visual arts and art education. To begin, I reviewed all of the paintings that I had created from a photographic source material and I analyzed them alongside one another, where the final painting and the reference photo were seen side by side and at the same scale. It is important to note that my paintings are large scale—on average 4–6 feet. Staging this review in this format and in a chronological manner enabled me to realize that as my skill in painting increased and my paintings became closer to the likeness of the photograph, I became *less* satisfied with the result.

I questioned *why* I felt compelled to paint my photographs and I began an arts-based inquiry that sought to build an understanding of the practice of painting through the perspective of a painter who relied on a photograph for reference. I examined how the dialogue between the photograph and the painting had significance to my development as an artist and I described the implications that this study had for art education. Through my art practice, I documented the unfolding of the painting process and I reflected on the three interrelated aspects of time, space, and language. In examining this process, I was able to gain understanding of myself as a learner and how I make meaning through this structure. Finally, through comparing the two images in an installation format, I revealed my process for a viewing audience.

My inquiry revealed that the photograph captured a moment, and the painting allowed me to reflect on that moment, to re-create and extend it, providing me with opportunities to look at my subject through various lenses and frames of reference. The installation, in which the source imagery was enlarged, digitally printed on canvas and stretched on a stretcher in a manner that echoed the painting (including the same dimensions), granted viewers the ability to see the photograph and the painting side-by-side as I do in my painting process and as I did in my inquiry. This pairing demonstrated my personal view of the subject in two different media

that when presented simultaneously brought forth more reflections, more insights, and more questions than when the painting was seen alone (Fig. 1). The installation demonstrated how the photograph affected my painting it allowed my audience to see what I kept, what I omitted, and what I modified.

I called this work "*Beauty in Abandonment*," because I wanted to focus on the vibrant colours, the rich textures, and the unique compositions that can be easily overlooked in abandoned buildings and in forsaken objects and materials. However, the title also drew attention to the major finding of my inquiry—that during the painting process, I abandoned the photograph for the sake of the painting. In producing this

Fig. 1 Images from my MA thesis entitled, *An investigation of the space between the painting and the photograph: Deconstructing the process and reflecting on the two media that constitute my art practice* (2008). Photo credit and copyright: Natalie LeBlanc

work, I came to realize that if my intention was to copy the photograph, then the photograph would be perceived as an ideal that the painting was attempting to duplicate. But where space and time was concerned, there was a give and take—a push and a pull—between the two media *in* and *through* practice, *in* and *through* time. This became most evident as I worked *towards* the painting and *away* from the photograph. This inquiry not only revealed the relationship that as a painter, I had with my source imagery, it juxtaposed several points of view as a way of exploring the relationship between the two media that at that time, constituted my art practice since I was a young adolescent.

For my doctoral research, I engaged in a practice-led research project in which I photographed 16 de-commissioned schools in various regions in Canada (LeBlanc, 2015, 2017, 2019). Through this endeavor, I realized that in searching out abandoned places, I was actively seeking to replace the commonplace with the uncanny, the boring with the magical, the loud with the quiet, the expected with the unexpected, the regulated with the unregulated, the normal or the sterile, with the strange and the fecund. Inside these abandoned schools, I was on a journey led by discovery and wonder. I opened drawers, cupboards, and closets; I read paperwork and writing left on chalkboards, walls, and corners. I inspected objects left in classrooms, halls and offices. I searched for traces and remnants of things that had been removed. I imagined how the school might have looked in its open state; I contemplated reasons why things had been taken away and alternately, why things had been left behind (Fig. 2). The experience placed emphasis on my individual sense of freedom. It called for movement different from the linear or rigid paths that I normally take in and through architecture. It called for crouching down low, stepping over things and weaving around through darkness. It demanded a slower, more careful, and more intimate engagement (Irwin, 2006; Triggs et al., 2014) than is normally performed in an everyday space.

Being with the ever-present absence with/in these abandoned schools inspired me to include the perspectives of a community who had been moved to the margins, in the wake of their school's closure. As such, a small rural community located in British Columbia, who witnessed their school close a year short of its centennial anniversary, was invited to take part in an immersive event in which their own stories, memories, and imaginations became an integral part of the artwork. On this occasion, I projected images that I had taken inside a de-commissioned school and projected them onto the outside physical structure, in four different areas. Visible for one evening, the projections could be viewed from street level and I took part in the reception of the work, where I visually documented the installation and observed viewers' reactions. As I talked with them, I learned about their experiences and memories of the school and its closure, and to the meanings that the abandoned school had for them and their identity as a small community. When asked, I also shared with them some of my experiences documenting abandoned schools in Canada.

The layering of the images and architecture created a rich fabric of associations. For cultural researcher, Muir (2007), digital installations have a spectral appearance in which the layering of images is a folding of time in which time is not a continuous line, but a spatially (re)imagined place. For Muir (2007), this visual layering process

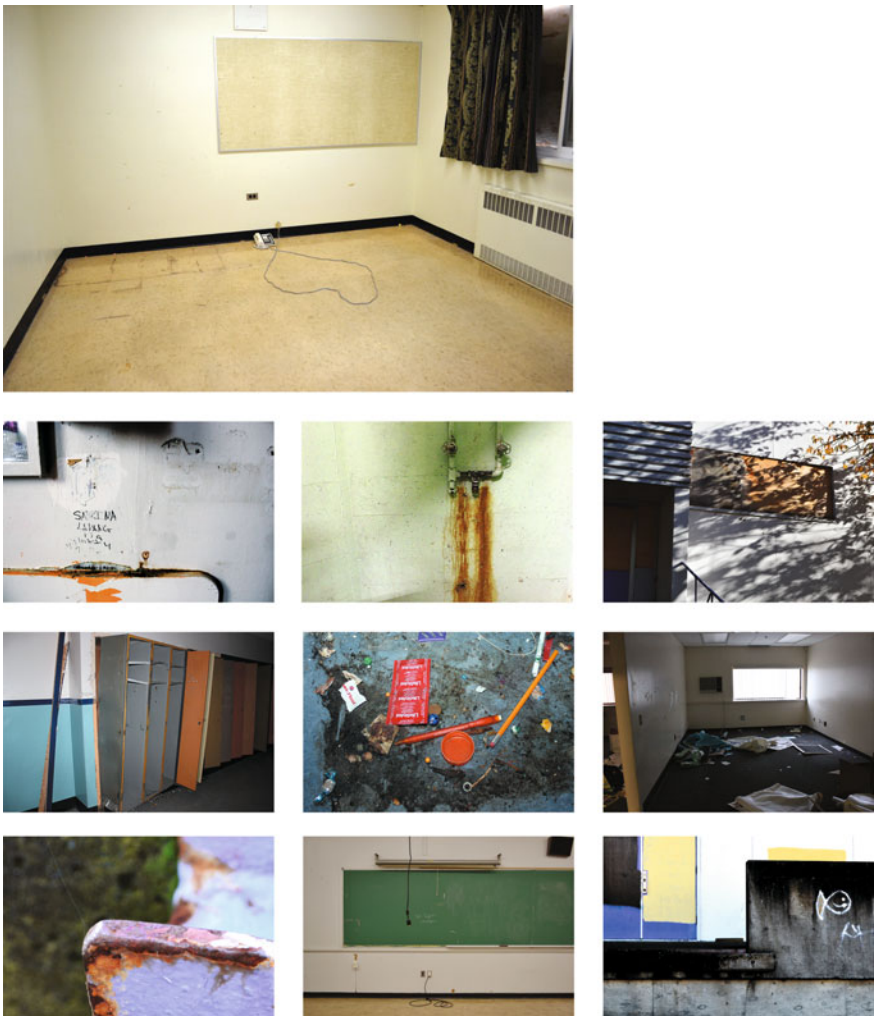

Fig. 2 Photographs from my PhD Dissertation entitled, *In/visibility of the abandoned school: Beyond representations of school closure* (2015). Photo credit and copyright: Natalie LeBlanc

creates the potential for carrying events forward into new and unknown circumstances. In projecting the inside of the abandoned schoola place locked off from the community in which it once served—I virtually created openings onto a closed and neutral-looking façade. Rather than a monument that silently validates institutions and states of authority (Ascher, 2010), my work opened a dialogue, an exchange between ideas that produced a more open-ended and complicated way of dealing with the representation of history (Beer & Chaisson, 2019) and with the condition of school closure that at the time, was greatly impacting communities.

Instead of creating a binary between the past and the present, the inside and the outside, and the private and the public, the installation linked two disparate times and places together by virtual means (Grosz, 2001). My projections disrupted the static building, creating openings into new spaces, new thoughts, and new worlds (Fig. 3). As an event, rather than something that was meant to endure or to last, it was staged *to come down*—an invitation to think about the process of life itself, to the temporal and to the fleeting, and to provoke viewers to imagine other cracks, crevices, and cavities into (and under) things that normally go unseen or unnoticed—spaces that can make connections with people, places and events in our memories and in our imaginations.

Fig. 3 Images from my site-specific installation entitled, *In/visibility of the abandoned school* (2015). Photo credit and copyright: Natalie LeBlanc

3 Vital and Nomadic Encounters

Braidotti's (2013) nomadic ethics is dependent on Deleuze's neo-Spinozist ethics in which the immanence of life is dependent on a generative and vital force referred to as *zoe*—a term borrowed from the Greek word to denote the nonhuman life that surrounds us (Trafí-Prats, 2018). Braidotti (2013) argues that nomadic ethics prioritizes relation, praxis, complexity, and processes of ontology that privilege change and motion over stability. Through an ontological lens, my MA and PhD studies underscore Braidotti's (2018) approach to knowledge-production that renders subjects as being nomadic and in-process, engaged "in perpetual motion, immanent to the vitality of self-ordering matter" (p. 36). My master's inquiry allowed me to investigate the value that I had attached to the structure of painting from a photograph, which created the opportunity for me to venture into installation art, that consequently changed my painting style. My use of color became thicker and bolder. My shapes more ambiguous. I began to use more layers, to make more surface manipulations and to create more depth. My painting became more deliberate, more gestural, and more daring. My doctoral inquiry allowed me to continue my fascination with abandoned structures and to explore some of the social, cultural, political, and psychological attributions connected to abandoned places. In this work, I ventured into digital and site-specific installation, another new platform for me to develop and explore ideas and to attend to new insights when and as they emerged in and through the involvement with materials, methods and ideas of practice.

Drawing from Braidotti (2014) and also Bennet (2010), Siegesmund (2018) argues that *nomadic materiality* favours ontology over epistemology because as artists begin their inquiry, they are less certain and even concerned about their destination or conclusions—and more open to emergence—producing more fluid and nomadic sensibilities. Braidotti's (2014) nomadic vision of the subject for which the subversive set of conventions and "the critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour" (p. 182) allows for a more *fluid sensibility* forging new alliances between philosophy, the arts and science—marking a "qualitative shift in perspective" (Braidotti, 2014, p. 163).

In pursuing these projects, I realize the importance of the space of emergence (Irwin & O'Donoghue, 2012; Massumi, 2002, 2011); the spatial and temporal aspects of practice that have generated important insights, provoking me to rethink my understandings of teaching, learning, and research. My research, has taught me that art practice enables a particular form of *sight* (Irwin, 2003) that emerges *in* and *through* the processes and practices of artmaking and in the handling of materials.

As practice-led researcher Bolt (2006, 2013) argues, the handling of materials reveals a certain kind of knowledge that is neither merely perceptual nor rational. For Bolt, theorizing from practice is very different from applying theory to practice. It is a 'material thinking' that invites consideration for the relations between and within the processes of making. Sullivan (2010) refers to this as "thinking in a medium" (p. 135) that, rather than imposing ideas *in* materials, artists allow forms to emerge

from the activity of working *with* materials and by attending to the subversive possibilities afforded to them through the immediacy of this engagement. In Sullivan's (2010) opinion, this method of working creates openings, "inferences, intuitions, and opportunistic connections" (p. 136) that function beyond symbolism and cognition. Yet where Sullivan examined art practice *as* research, I look for pedagogical moments for which art practices and processes teach—where they provoke me to question and attune my attention—attending to what such forms of engagement can *do*. As my doctoral research demonstrated, this takes into consideration a multiplicity of lived experiences implicated in the process/event.

Bolt (2006) argues that there is 'magic' in the handling. Drawing from Martin Heidegger's notion of handlability, Bolt (2006) argues, "we come to know the world theoretically only after we have come to understand it through the handling" (p. 4). This counters instrumentalist conceptions of human-tool relationships and underscores the relational qualities of art practice. Bolt posits that "'skill with' rather than 'mastery over' technologies, materials and processes" (p. 4) have implications for understanding creative and artistic practices in posthuman terms because the relationships that artists have with their materials is a *co-responsibility* where the artist and the materials become co-collaborators in the revealing of Being. This is the 'magic' that Bolt argues material practices embody as a mode of engagement dependent on the specificity of the artist's experiences and particular sensitivities that provoke them to question, search for, and ultimately create the approaches—that will enable them to attend to *what* emerges—as they work *in* and *with* materials.

Working *with* materials resonates with how relationships between humans and non-humans are being taken up in the context of posthumanism that are challenging human exceptionalism and anthropocentric dominance (Barad, 2003, 2007; Kind, 2018; Penti, 2018; Roussel, 2018). Thinking in materials evokes particular invitations and inventions, where something unexpected and generative takes place, thereby contributing to self-knowledge while forming and informing the research (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019a). Bennet's (2004, 2010) vital materialism and notion of 'thing-power' as a type of agency is a concept that has greatly informed this stance because it helps speak to the continuum that creates a kinship *between* people and things. Thing-power is a force and an intensity that *activates* (Hofsess, 2017)—as a vital power of life. Thing-power is a reminder that *things* are always more than mere objects. It is also a reminder that being human is also materiality for which we possess a thing-power of our own. In this sense, the lived body is an active source of knowledge-making (Springgay, 2019; Zaliwska & Springgay, 2015), rendering the body's being-in and being-with the world as an immersive relationality (Irwin, 2008) with a trajectory towards unknown places, people and things rendered on infinite possibility.

4 Neo-Materialist Cartographies

In proposing a theoretical framework for the critical posthumanities, Braidotti (2018) argues that the posthuman subject is an entity that is relationally embodied, embedded, affective and accountable. This claim draws from the two following interrelated assumptions: First, that the Anthropocene is multi-layered and inclusive to the environment as well as the affective and psychic dimensions of the subject. The second pertains to the methodological role that cartographies play in processes of becoming and discursive *objects of exchange* (Braidotti, 2018, p. 32) that form nomadic *assemblages* of a multiplicity of forces (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

For Braidotti (2018) and also Irwin (2013) a cartographic account is a theoretically-based and politically-informed stance located in the present that maps the production of knowledge and subjectivity. Drawing from Deleuze's analysis of the present and its interplay between the actual and the virtual, Braidotti (2018) argues that a "cartography is the record of both what we are ceasing to be and what we are in the process of becoming" (p. 37). For Irwin (2013), a cartography "is about experimentation: altering, reversing, modifying, among individuals and groups, across time and space" (p. 211). Although both my Masters and PhD studies certainly reveal an element of becoming that was embedded within flows or processes of differentiation—this became most prevalent in a study that I engaged in as a post-doctoral scholar that resonates with the more nuanced concept of *becoming-world* that Braidotti (2018) describes as a "thinking of, in, and *for* the world" (p. 39, italics added).

O Canada! Reimagining Canadian Identity: A Cosmopolitan Approach to Teaching and Learning was the title of a federally-funded research project comprising of an interdisciplinary team of scholars spanning across arts education including the visual arts, drama, music, and poetry. For the purpose of this chapter, I would like to focus on some of the work that emerged in working closely with Drs. Rita Irwin (primary investigator), co-investigators George Belliveau, Peter Gouzouasis, and Carl Leggo, as well as collaborators David Beare, Ching Chiu-Lin, David Murphy and William F. Pinar, in which we staged workshops to investigated how art could create a space for exploring and also strengthening identification with place.

Contemporary artists were invited into the Bachelor of Education program as artists-in-residence to provoke complex understandings of contemporary national identity with general and secondary pre-service teacher candidates (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019b). This was particularly potent given that 2017 was Canada's 150th anniversary as a country. For example, in a drama education workshop, student teachers with little to no prior experience in theatre, were introduced to the concept of a *viewpoint*, which emphasizes the idea that in K-12 drama education, the most important thing to remind students is not to act, but rather, to play a character who speaks from a specific viewpoint. Teacher candidates were encouraged to share an individual viewpoint of the Canadian identity such as being ethical, polite, bland, accepting, apologetic and frustrated. They shared how their viewpoints were framed from their own lived experiences as Canadian residents from different provinces, cities, and towns as well as

being Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and visitors, temporarily studying in Canada from other countries. The dialogue that unfolded allowed each person to recognize how everyone in the class had a viewpoint that was different from their own, becoming a springboard for other exercises in which students were encouraged to draw from their individual and collective histories that culminated in a collaborative and emergent drama production (Fig. 4).

A *cosmopolitan imagination* (Meskimmon, 2010), was a pivotal concept throughout this study for which we came together as a group of artist-scholars to provoke taken-for-granted conventions, beliefs and values that govern our country, ultimately finding that as an immigrant nation in a world of constant change, we still had much work to do as citizens to ensure we work toward even greater understanding of one another and as we attend to our differences.

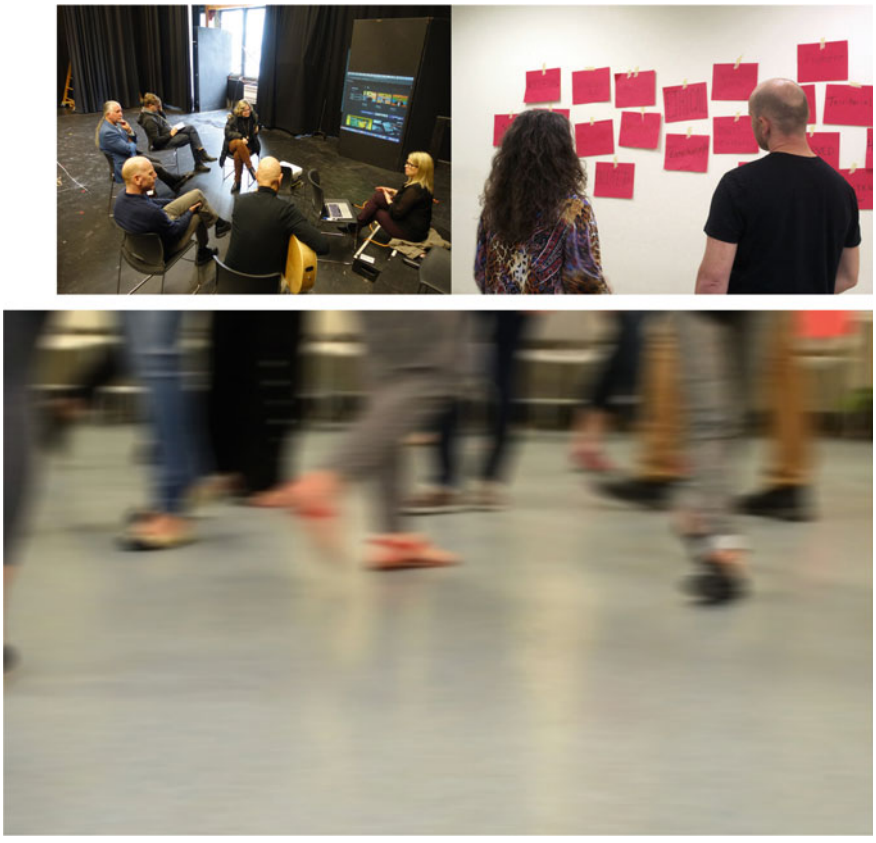

Fig. 4 Documentation from *O'Canada! Reimagining Canadian identity: A cosmopolitan approach to teaching and learning*, Artists-in-Residence, UBC (2016–2019). Photo credits and copyright: Natalie LeBlanc and Ching-Chiu Lin

In addition to staging and documenting events at the University, I spent one day a week for three months in an elementary school working with approximately 300 students from kindergarten to grade 7 alongside artist-in-residence Alison Shields. We used this time to talk about Canada and what it means to be Canadian as we performed weekly workshops, providing opportunities for students to look at art, to talk about art, and to make art. Students made portraits and landscapes (both figurative and abstract), and they experimented with a variety of materials such as paint, pastel, and collage. The final product combined photography, where each student held an artwork in front of their face, and technology, where the green screen behind them was replaced with another artwork, thereby immersing the children in their artwork. The final exhibition was a school wide event that coincided with their end of year performance on the theme of 'Being Canadian' that displayed the images by the children that came to represent an emergent process of coming to understand diversity through a multiplicity of interpretations, representations and potentialities.

In the summer of 2019, I exhibited a body of artwork that addressed some of these ideas involving my own studio practice including painting, photography, printmaking, and installation (Figs. 5 and 6). For one of these works, I collaborated with musician-scholar David Murphy to assemble experimental video with sound compiled and artistically re-mixed from several of the artist-in-residences and pedagogical events. Recorded conversations, voices, and musical tracks were woven in and between an assortment of visuals made and documented by various participants engaged in the study. This was very much an emergent project in which the product was not a predetermined entity with outcomes clearly stated or even imagined beforehand but one that unfolded through a shared process of sensibilities, ideas, and practices.

In another one of these works, I made a series of four large-scale acrylic paintings inspired by the images produced by the aforementioned elementary students. Situated somewhere between portrait and landscape painting, they are a nod to the historical significance that landscape painting has come to play in the nationalization of the Canadian identity, particularly by artists such as the Group of Seven who popularized wilderness painting in the twentieth century (O'Brian & White, 2007), which has become a staple in the K-12 art education curriculum in most Canadian provinces, making it almost impossible to parse out the Canadian identity from the iconography of a wild, empty and northern landscape.

These paintings, share a similarity with what contemporary Canadian artist Douglas Coupland (2014) in his exhibition, *Everywhere is Anywhere is Anything is Everything,* refers to as an *antiportrait,* in which the visual resemblance of the subject has been intentionally obstructed by an object, modified, and painted over, playing with the surface and consequent depth of the pictorial plane. Instead of providing any definitive answers, these paintings ask viewers to think creatively about what it might mean to be Canadian living in a globalized world. In each *antiportrait,* a small landscape is carefully held in place, masking the subject's face, creating an entirely new world. Ambiguous shapes, forms, colours, tones, and lines replace what-would-be facial features, removing any defining characteristic or likeness. Yet, some elements

Fig. 5 *Canadian antiportraits*. Acrylic Paint on Canvas (2019). Top: *Linda,* 48″ × 70″ Bottom: *Mansha,* 50″ × 67″. Photo credit and copyright: Natalie LeBlanc

can still be seen in the perimeter of the landscape—clothing, hair, hands, and skin—telling us *something* about who each subject *might* be. Each painting is named after the student who helped inspire it—*Linda*, *Mansha, Elizabeth*, *Prath*—each one as radically different as it is similar to the others in the series, a strange hybrid of a portrait and a landscape that is both real *and* imaginary; virtual *and* real; figurative *and* abstract.

Along with the other works in the exhibition, this series invited viewers to draw on their faculties of imagination to address the complexity of being Canadian during

Fig. 6 *Canadian antiportraits.* Acrylic Paint on Canvas (2019). Bottom left: *Elizabeth*, 44″ × 62″. Bottom right: *Prath*, 54″ × 62″. Photo credit and copyright: Natalie LeBlanc

and post Canada 150 without attempting to define it in any one, singular way. Such engagement asks that viewers draw on their own situated and lived experience, offering a non-universalistic perspective (Braidotti et al., 2013; Meskimmon, 2010), one that emerged through an exploration of the specificity of experience as well as the affective, embedded and embodied perspectives of students, teachers, pre-service teachers, artists, faculty members, researchers, and community members who actively and openly engaged with a multiplicity of ideas, creating new affective assemblages and ethical codes (Braidotti, 2018).

Massumi (2011) argues, "art is the technique of living life *in*—experiencing the vitality of it more fully. Living it more intensely" (p. 45, italics in original). This speaks directly to the affective and embodied qualities of art as a *world-making* practice (Manning et al., 2019) provoking engagements based on "potentialities rather than procedures" (Irwin, 2008, p. 72)—something that Irwin (2008) has long argued as a *commitment* to a way of being in the world and something that I have come to understand within the context of Braidotti's (2018) posthuman subject as a faithfulness to *potential*—an empowering mode of becoming that respects difference while countering established, institutionalised modes that do not.

Drawing from conceptual artist Joseph Beuys, Lucero (2017) proposes that we should "think of art as a science of freedom" (p. 208) that *can test the pliability of the world* as an active engagement with materiality that is both formal and conceptual. As an assistant professor in art education in the department of curriculum and instruction at the University of Victoria, I realize how my current artistic research practices have directly benefited from my previous experiences with visual forms of arts-based educational modes of inquiry. The unifying theme of my current research explores the intersections of art, research and education in which I focus on the potentiality of contemporary art, inclusive to visual art and other artistic/creative/digital media in order to engage art educators and art education students in critical discourses through creative processes and shared experiences. My hope is that such forms of engagement can strengthen relationships between artistic practice(s), social engagement, and knowledge production, while continuing *to test the pliability* of arts-based and arts-based educational modes of research.

In the wake of the projects discussed in this chapter, I have grown concerned with examining the potentials of contemporary art to better understand human and non-human agency in the context of neo-materialism. It is my intention to emphasize how a vital and nomadic materiality can advance engagement with a diversity of ideas, questions, materials, and pursuits, while appreciating the complexity, uncertainty, partiality, and generativity of the *thick present* (Haraway, 2016). As such, many of the research ideas that I am entertaining reflect a shift towards multi- and transdisciplinary approaches to artmaking, teaching and learning that will enable explorations of the experiences of students who are learning to teach and learning to learn (Irwin, 2013; Irwin & O'Donoghue, 2012), many in an international setting, through the creation of 2D and 3D visual forms and new and multi-media including, but not limited to, sound, performance and digital art. I would like to further explore how such practices connect (and disconnect) with the posthumanities, technoscience, environmental and Indigenous epistemologies, creating rich sites for artistic and educational inquiry with the potential of mapping new cartographies.

5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I shared three research projects that demonstrate how arts-based educational modes of inquiry produce multi- and transdisciplinary modes of teaching and learning, allowing for experimentation, improvisation, and exploration with an openness to emergence—the unfolding of events, in and through practice, in and through time. Vital and nomadic materiality requires affirmative ethics (Braidotti, 2018) ontological movement that propels the individuation of ideas, memories, perceptions and experiences. In this chapter, I demonstrated how each project brought me into new territories of learning, teaching me that when I trust the process, I come to new understandings. As a cartography of practice, this chapter reveals how forces, desires, and values can shift, change and mutate through the particularities of practice and the encounters that it provokes. Re-visiting these arts-based projects in the context of the posthuman subject, has made me realize that I am exactly where I need to be.

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Dissertation Award Information

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Dissertation Title: *In/visibility of the abandoned school: Beyond representations of school closure.*

Dissertation Supervisor: Rita L. Irwin

Committee Members: Dónal O'Donoghue & Anne Phelan

Granting University: The University of British Columbia.

Dissertation Link: https://open.library.ubc.ca/soa/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0223121

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The Nomadic Implications of an Arts-Based Methodology of Intuition

Adrienne Boulton

Abstract The Methodology of Intuition reconceptualizes Bergsonian/Deleuzian methodological rules for creative thought to articulate the ways that art and art practice within arts-based educational research and pedagogy offers a potential to facilitate: (i) the restructuring of the framing and constitution of questions; (ii) the understandings of how particular experiences might stratify or disrupt static knowledge; and (iii) how the disruption to thought occurs in a durational experience of time rather than space. Drawing on this primary finding of my doctoral research, I explore the implications of these rules through two separate research projects and a scholarly inquiry to examine the significance of these rules in creating the conditions for new and creative thought in research and pedagogy.

Keywords Arts based educational research · Teacher education · Becoming · Affect · Intuition · Art practice · Memory · Methodology

1 Introduction

In 2015, I completed and defended my doctoral research, *An Arts Based Methodology of Intuition: Secondary Visual Art Teacher Becomings and Encounters with Schooling* (Boulton, 2015). The premise of this work was that through artistic inquiry, secondary visual art teacher candidates could explore their memories and perceptions of teaching by returning to their high schools to film their responses to two conceptual prompts: to explore the pedagogical value of school space and to imagine the school as an installation designed to teach. In this chapter, I would like to examine an outcome of my dissertation, namely the Methodology of Intuition, through the ways in which it has influenced my subsequent arts based educational research and

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scholarly projects. I will explore the ways that participants' memory and experience are reencountered through artistic inquiry, allowing the basis of inquiry and research questions to emerge during the re-inhabitation of memories produced in the encounter with thought. This primary understanding has fueled my continued curiosity about art practice, pedagogy, and the implications of artistic practice in curriculum and pedagogy and it has contributed to the ways in which I approach arts-based educational research as well as teaching at the post-secondary level.

To explore the Methodology of Intuition, I will highlight two of my recent research projects and one scholarly project, all involving art practice: *Visual Inquiry with Art Teacher Candidates* (2015–2016) which involved 75 art teacher candidates' visual inquiry and place making at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO; *Walking Home: International and Domestic Students' Film Making As Mapping Place* (2018–2021) which involved domestic and international students' film making of their conception of home at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Surrey, British Columbia; and *The Pedagogy of Loss* which draws on theoretical constructions of trauma and loss by considering my experience and photographs of roadside memorials as sites where creative thought was activated in loss. Drawing on the three precise rules of methodology as articulated by Bergson (1946) and then further theorized by Deleuze (1991), I will reimagine these three rules as an arts based methodology of intuition through vignettes of works produced in each project.

This methodology offers fundamental considerations for artistic research, visual inquiry, and pedagogy, that suggest that embodied, artistic, and visual inquiry can produce an encounter with thought, for participants, researchers, and students, as a durational event which brings memories into the present where new thought disrupts their perceived timeless existence. Embodied, artistic inquiry may generate these events where diffuse understandings in and of experience are created.

2 Preamble

I belong to a family heavily laden with secondary and elementary school teachers including my Grandma Clements, my parents, Linda and Ross Boulton, my aunt, Shelly Anderson, my brother, Jeff Boulton and sister-in-law Shelly Stamm, and my niece, Tanya Hansen and so conversations related to teaching and learning were a constant. I grew up in a small town where I was lucky enough to have an art classroom and a trained and dedicated art teacher who continued his art practice while teaching. I spent a lot of time in the art room and as a result of these histories and experiences, I went on to pursue my education degree at the University of Saskatchewan, majoring in Visual Art (Sculpture/Metals) and English.

The event of leaving the small town where I grew up following graduation and going to university had a fundamental impact on my perceptions of the world and myself in that it was one of the first times in my life where I encountered my opinions and beliefs related to social justice and diversity through new friendships, course work, and art practice. Leaving home required a new set of practices

and ways of living while simultaneously learning in and through progressive and thought provoking courses. Years later I recognized that both aspects of experience, an embodied disruption and new knowledge, needed to be present for what I now articulate as an encounter (O'Sullivan, 2006) with thought. The ways that I had felt and thought prior to leaving home and going to university became unrecognizable to me. This confrontation with thought became the pedagogical model I believed I was developing later in my teaching, both as a high school teacher and as a post-secondary assistant professor. I believed my role as a teacher was to create situations where students could encounter their own thought, although I would not have articulated it this way until I completed my doctoral research.

Following the completion of my education degree, I taught Visual Art, English and Social Studies in Saskatchewan and then British Columbia for roughly thirteen years, until I entered graduate school in 2007. I completed a Master's degree where I looked to the ways that art teacher practice was shaped by the pedagogical and curricular constraints of Traditional Schooling (Boulton, 2009a, b) in Abbotsford, British Columbia. I had read a work by Grauer (1998), which argued that teachers are the curriculum and that their beliefs and perceptions, more than anything else determined what was taught, and how it would be taught. This idea was fascinating to me and I began looking to my own perceptions of practice and where these beliefs came from. I was interested in how these beliefs formed and if and how they could change. The findings from my MA research (Boulton, 2009a, b) indicated that the progressive teaching practices of the teacher I studied, Ms. Terri, in the Traditional School were shaped by students' passive responses to contemporary and controversial understandings of art practice. Their silent, disengaged responses to seemingly provocative teaching shifted the teacher's practices away from group work and inquiry to more structured and traditional art projects based on the principles and elements of design, rather than inquiry (Boulton, 2009a, b).

When I completed and defended my MA work, a colleague in the Ph.D. program at the time, Juan Carlos Castro asked, in relation to my findings, "So now what?" (Personal Communication, June 2009). I knew that teaching practices could be shifted through students' responses, but the teacher's beliefs about teaching and art practice remained consistent. Ms. Terri's students' responses had not disrupted her perceptions and beliefs about contemporary and progressive curriculum and pedagogy in the senior art classroom and so I was left wondering if foundational beliefs could be changed.

As mentioned in Boulton (2014a, b) and as the prelude to my dissertation, in 2010, I supervised my daughter's field trip to the Surrey Art Gallery, where I watched Yam Lau's contemporary film, *Room: an extension.*[1] I sat with grade two children in a darkened screening room as we watched Lau's film begin with a minimalist, three-dimensional, virtual architectural framework of a room, rotating clockwise, emerging from a darkened space into light so that the activities of people within the room came into focus. In the lower right-hand corner, a video loop of two people played on what I later recognized as a TV within the interior room. As the room continued to rotate,

[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3pc-n6h6EU.

further details began to unfold. I was able to view details of the digitized material qualities of the space as well as Lau in the midst of being in the space.

The film was a non-linear, repetitive, and fragmented account of Lau's embodiment in/with/at home. When I began watching the film, I anticipated a traditional narrative, as the works in the gallery's show were didactic accounts of domiciles and human habitats. When my expectation of a standard narrative form did not transpire, I became more attuned to the choices he made and the movement and repetition in the film. I also paid attention to my own responses to my un-met expectations and the ways that this feeling played in my body and the shift in my perception of his work. In the lack of representational form, I was left to examine my own responses and develop new connections to engage with his work. The loss of the traditional form shifted my engagement with his work, creating opportunities to develop insights in and through a disrupted narrative form. The "So now what?" became the rhizomatic meandering of my research to explore the pedagogical implications of artistic inquiry as having the potential to disrupt normative perceptions of teacher practice. I articulated this experience as an encounter (O'Sullivan, 2006) where our own thought becomes unrecognizable and we are compelled to learn more in order to satisfy the loss of certainty created in our bodies. This compulsion became my doctoral research.

3 Doctoral Research

My doctoral research involved two secondary visual art teacher candidates,' Christen and Kelsey, and their return to their high school to film their responses to the prompts that asked them to consider the pedagogical value of the school space and to encounter the school as a form of installation art. In watching their films produced during the research I came to argue that in the return to school as artists, rather than as a student or teacher or teacher candidate, Christen and Kelsie functioned as nomads (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) who's paths were determined by the affective response to the space as well as the memories that emerged through the embodied art practice rather than by recollection.

The participants returned to their high schools and traversed the school space following the sensorial activation of memory rather than their original pre-plan for the narrative that each had constructed prior to their return. This activation of memory was produced through the smells of the school, the sight of the lockers, and the remains of their high school art work in hallways and classrooms. This was a significant moment in the research process, where I recognized that the candidates had developed an initial plan to film their schools in relation to primarily two aims: (i) Hoping to please me as their instructor/researcher, they were attempting to find the correct answer to the abstract prompts and (ii) using recollection, they attempted to plan how to capture their memories of the school space where they recollected their perceptions of teaching were formed. The affective and somatic memory activation in the return to school produced alternate memories that were brought forth, separate from recollection. This sensory embodiment and affective engagement set a different

course for the participants to move through and so alternate spaces in the school were explored, activating unique memories in and through the body. The original plan was forgotten and a new plan driven by affect was formed.

4 The Arts-Based Methodology of Intuition

The formulation of the arts-based methodology of intuition emerged from Christen and Kelsie's nuanced films and articulation of their experience as artistic inquiry practice and Deleuze's (1991) discussion of Bergson's methodology of intuition as a precise methodology involving three distinct acts: "The first concerns the stating and creating of problems; the second, the discovery of genuine differences in kind; the third, the apprehension of real time" (p. 14). As a philosophical method, intuition is a "*problematizing* method (a critique of false problems and the invention of genuine ones), *differentiating* (carvings out and intersections), *temporalizing* (thinking in terms of duration)" (Deleuze, 1991, p. 35, emphasis in the original). Drawing on Christen and Kelsie's accounts of the return and the ways in which their filmmaking provoked alternate memories and thought in the durational moment, I developed an arts-based methodology of intuition. The precise Deleuzian/Bergsonian rules serve as the basis for the design of an arts-based methodology of intuition, including how art practice may facilitate: (i) the restructuring of the framing and constitution of questions; (ii) the understandings of how particular experiences might stratify or disrupt static knowledge; and (iii) how the disruption to thought occurs in a durational experience of time rather than space. The precision of the rules, can at first read, seem counter-intuitive to a process that is so deeply contingent on non-linear processes of memory, experience, and affect in the disruption of highly individualized thoughts and beliefs. It is this precision that challenges a number of aspects of artistic and qualitative research, including the centered "I" of narration, the authority of memory, and the potentials of experience in learning (Boulton, 2015). Intuition draws memory from a psychical event into the real, indicating embodied artistic practice as a continued process of individual differentiation through experience. My argument is that artistic practice enables and is enabled by the rules of the methodology by providing a distinct insight into how embodiment and engagement in the arts can offer alternate understandings of knowledge and knowing.

In the following sections I take up each rule through my subsequent research and scholarly work. These rules are untangled in a somewhat disingenuous way as all three are present in each research project, but for the purposes of exploring the impact of my ABER doctoral research, I have selected those projects which best articulate the rules of the methodology and those projects that were designed through the arts-based methodology of intuition.

5 The Restructuring of the Framing and Constitution of Questions: Visual Inquiry with Art Teacher Candidates

The first rule (Bergson, 1946; Deleuze, 1991) of the methodology of intuition specifically looks at how and when questions, as problems to be solved, are constituted and constructed. This rule indicates a fundamental concern for arts-based research and pedagogy, as the conditions for the emergence of questions as well as how problems are framed and stated, have a direct impact on how and what knowledge might be created. Within my doctoral work, I explored the ways in which narrative inquiry shaped the types of stories that could be told through discursive production of the teacher. I argued that the narrative form demands cohesion of the character's identity while the Deleuze/Guattari concept of becoming offered something more nuanced and generative. The concept of becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) is distinct from the narrative identity as becoming posits a perpetual return of difference rather than sameness and cohesion. Difference is produced through experience and disrupts the notion of fixed identity. Becoming, within the durational event, expresses acts of re-inhabiting memories as shaping understandings of practice and perhaps, in relation to my study of teacher candidates, the teaching practices themselves as memory shapes the body's capacity to act. Christen and Kelsie's emergence of memories outside of official plans for the return to school, activated by the affective response to place indicated that artistic practice allowed an alternate engagement with space and memory, producing alternate understandings of their K-12 schooling. It was this understanding that continued to develop in my research project, *Visual Inquiry with Art Teacher Candidates* (Boulton, 2018).

In this project that began in 2014, I worked with roughly 75 teacher candidates in three projects designed for them to pursue visual inquiry through their art practice. The term *visual inquiry* initially described a mode of inquiry that prioritizes the visual, yet this form of inquiry looks to the excess of the visual and the sensorial affective qualities of artistic practice that provoke a shift from the primacy of the visual. Drawing on Zepke and O'Sullivan's (2010) discussion of contemporary art as an experience, I suggest that art practice within visual inquiry similarly draws art practice as a type of experience rather than a specific time period, media or medium of art to provoke a new 'expanded field' that utilizes and critiques the sensations produced by cognitive 'immaterial labour' (pp. 5–6). Visual inquiry through artistic practice enables experiences that potentially allow alternate perceptions and memories to emerge that resist the early foreclosure of representational thought produced by interpretation. Artistic practice instead creates a delay where new and creative thought may emerge through the encounter with static and habitual perceptions through an affective jolt to thought.

In this project, students focused on the prompt, *When did a Place become a Space?* Utilizing this prompt, students photographed spaces imbued with personal meaning derived from a unique experience, thus rendering it an anomalous space in Springfield (Figs. 1, 2 and 3). These photo(s) were brought to class to discuss how

Fig. 1 Photograph by Ashley McMillen 2014

the space became a place through their interactions with it. Drawing on recollection, students began their response to the prompt by determining a site to return to think about and photograph the event of transition from a space to a place. They returned to the site, photographed it, and then brought the photos to class to discuss what they then believed would be the experience that shifted the space/place relation. Instead, the discussion turned to the ways in which the process of photographing and the return to the site with the specific aim to photograph produced alternate memories and inquiry on site. Ashley described the process as a site of active meaning making.

> *I immediately knew the space that I wanted to document. I moved to Springfield the summer before fifth grade, making Sherwood Elementary my sixth elementary school to attend. At this point in my life, I didn't have a 'hometown', but that is what Springfield has become to me.* (Ashley McMillen, Personal Communication, 2016)

> *I began this documenting process submerged with memories and feelings attached to each place, and I ended with this overwhelming feeling of the passing of time. I remember this feeling of change as I kept repeating in my head that within this space, I am the only thing that has changed. And I had never truly felt the passing of time as I had in this moment. I have watched my niece grow and I have watched the passing of time in others, but until this moment, I had never stopped and recognized the passing of time within myself.* (Ashley McMillen, personal communication, February 2016)

Fig. 2 Photograph by Ashley McMillen 2014

The spot I chose as my transitional point to Springfield is the place where my brothers and I used to play. I was 14 when we moved to this city from the Philippines. The apartment by this area is where we stayed. The image above shows a place where my older brother and I would go to play. However, things that were there are no longer there. There used to be a baseball field to the left and decrepit playground equipment beyond the trees. There was a carrousel-type ride that was tilting on its side. The seesaw was not attached to the base anymore. Nevertheless, it was our playground when we were young. Coming back to this location, all I saw was the remnants of a childhood in Springfield. I took a picture of a drinking fountain hidden by a tree. This to me, is symbolic of my experience there. There is no physical object of memories left, but the memory itself was buried, hidden and stuck to this place.

Ashley's return to the school and her path through the playground created unique memoires that were initially unavailable to her through recollection. The embodiment of the return for both her and Rob articulated memories as submerged, buried, hidden and stuck, made available to them in the return. The questions and their construction began in the emergence of the memory. "We don't remember grief or ecstasy, but recalling a situation that produces those sensations, we can produce a new bout of emotion. In other words, affect, properly conjured up, produces a real time somatic experience, no longer framed as representation" (Bennett, 2005, p. 23). This proper conjuring Bennett refers to creates the opportunity to reinhabit memory, producing alternate understandings of particular experiences, in many instances pulling understandings gained from other aspects of life into those durational events. For Rob

Fig. 3 Photograph by Rob Ramos. 2014

and Ashley, the return to their place created the opportunity to explore the event of transition but also to produce understandings that involved their current stance in life, shifting the fixity of the memory through lived experience of the event of the return.

6 Understandings of How Particular Experiences Might Stratify or Disrupt Static Knowledge: Film Making and Home

In 2017, I started my position at KPU, a polytechnic university in Surrey, British Columbia where I primarily worked with students who did not identify as artists nor were they in a teacher education program. The students were primarily 1st or 2nd year students in course designed as an introduction to being a student in higher education. This is a teaching intensive university and so my research shifted to explore the pedagogical potential of visual inquiry rather than art practice, a tricky distinction that continues to need my attention. At this point, I make this distinction through the participants' intent. Is their intention to document through video or

create through film? I term the former visual inquiry and the latter art practice. This distinction serves a practical purpose as the courses I teach do not include art practice in their overarching aims, yet may include novel pedagogical practices including visual inquiry.

In this project, that I entitled *Walking Home: International and Domestic Students' Film Making As Mapping Place* (2018-present), I continued to develop the understandings of visual inquiry that I gained during my dissertation where inquiry exceeds the visual through embodied, affective engagement with place. I was curious to learn how students who do not identify as artists would draw on the embodied moment of their filmmaking and if the potential to disrupt their static perceptions of home through embodied inquiry would occur.

The research began as a course project for students to use their cell phones to film their concept of home and to bring these films to class to discuss their conceptions. The campus I was teaching has a student body composed of primarily three geographic areas described as home by students from India, China, and Canada. Over the course of the semesters, I and other faculty noted an increase in tension and in some cases hostility between International and Canadian students and so the film project I designed was an attempt to develop community in the classroom where students could discuss a common concept of home while developing understandings about each other on a human level. We discussed aspects of what a concept was and that each student could film what they conceptualized home to mean.

> *For me home is not a word it's feeling, its feeling which directly connects me with my parents, my siblings and my family. In home I feel joy and enjoy every moment of my life, where I never feel like some awkwardness. Sometimes a soothing feeling of a person can make us feel like home* (Shehneet-reflecting on home)

From these students' works (Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), I began to consider filmmaking as what Blum-Ross (2013) describes as a "means for young people to reconstruct and reimagine both familiar and unfamiliar spaces. The heightened auditory and visual registers required for filming encourage young people to extend and enhance their embodied experiences of place" (Blum-Ross, 2013, p. 89).

> *The community here does not feel like home because in India we used to meet our neighbours almost daily and greet each other, whereas here people do not talk to their neighbours that much and I myself have no idea who lives next door to me. Although, my new home is not the same as my home in India, I have installed some lights and brought some flower-scented candles to make me feel like home. I have my mother's photograph in my bedroom right in front of my bed so that I see her face when I wake up in the morning. I have mini flower and plant decors at home. My cousin and my friend make me feel loved and I feel safe with them now.* (Darpandeep discussing home).

Both Shehneet and Darpandeep describe the feel of home while walking in a residential urban space where their current brick and mortar home is. Rather than filming the interior of the space or the tangible materials/spaces/objects that constitute the physicality of a home, these participants filmed a neighborhood while contemplating home. In developing this project, I looked to the nomad[2] (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)

[2] The nomad, according to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) traverses a particular space with known entities and specific behaviours, such as a school, as neither insider (as a student, teacher or teacher

Fig. 4 Still from Shehneet Sandhu's Film, 2019

to explore how as a filmmaker, the students disrupt the highly structured striated spaces of what home is by focusing on the affect of home, where rules and habits of home are disrupted for the feel of the space rather than the space itself. The striated spaces of the representational home conform movement that codes and decodes spaces according to known rules and approved movements, while visual inquiry produced through a conceptual exploration of home is produced, without aim or destination, an authority against normative structures of experience.

The films made utilizing their phones, readily captured the participants' movements, which responded to momentary modifications produced through memory and affective sensory experiences, creating minoritarian or nomadic opportunities for individuation of their experience, the place, and the path they wanted to take. For Deleuze and Guattari (1987), the nomad moves through smooth spaces without

candidate) nor outsider offering critique. Instead, they might navigate through a sensorial experience that offers a mode of inquiry, which would put them in motion both physically and cognitively as well as psychically. This mode of inquiry, according to Garoian (2013), resists the need to organize the experience around the teaching identity or to raise the mundane to the level of critique. Instead, art practice produces nomadic tendencies-responding to affective intensities. The concept of the nomad in my works suggest that art practice enables a nomadic inquiry produced in and through memory and affect disrupting static individuated and majoritarian perspectives—creating the potential for new thought.

Fig. 5 Still from Darpandeep Kaur's Film, 2019

being shaped by known possibilities for navigation but through alternate and diffuse potentialities for movement that offer alternate understandings, disrupting dominant discourses. The majority of participants' films in this project focused on the feeling or atmosphere of home rather than on the understanding of home as simply a material space. Pink et al. (2014) argues:

> Walking with video, moving with research participants through their homes can be said to entail 'moving through a surface, leaving a trace of footprints, breath and scent and, more significantly, inscribing one's route on the videotape.' (p. 365)

Rather than documenting and representing experience, studying participants' mobile media films offered insights into the ways in which media and technology mediate the ways in which we make meaning of the surroundings, shifting from a representational capture of a concept. The phone in these instances created an extension of the visual to participate in the embodied movement of and through the encounter. Berry (2017) argues:

> mobile filmmaking moves beyond the purely representational aspects of filmmaking techniques and practices into phenomenological domains, where the implications of having constant access to the means of filmmaking and image capture are manifested through tangible creative expressions and works that engage with and reflect local and personal conditions. (p. 312)

Both the familiarity of the use of the cell phone to capture moments and the familiarity of the idea and memory of home was disrupted by the process of filming their conceptualization of home. Student participants drew on novel memories and perceptions of home through their visual inquiry. The filmmaking itself was the catalyst to provoke memories that were disassociated with the actual material capture of place and served to disrupt the static understanding of home. The camera formed extension of the body actively participated in the durational event and the second rule of the Methodology Intuition, differences in kind.[3]

7 How the Disruption to Thought Occurs in a Durational Experience of Time Rather Than Space: The Pedagogy of Loss

In this project, *The Pedagogy of Loss,* I explore the third rule of the methodology, the apprehension of real time as a lack of permanence encapsulated in the concepts of identity and linear memory. This understanding has been key for both my research and pedagogy in exploring art practice as an opportunity to create new thought through a disruption to entrenched beliefs rather than pursing practices that rigidify identity, including reflective practice that explores memory as discreet and in the past, rather than as inhabited in the present, open to change. In this section, I take up material and theoretical experiences of trauma and loss as the conditions of a pedagogical event. I explore the creative acts of roadside memorials at the site of loss as an expression and process of meaning making while I simultaneously explore the creative thought produced in the loss of certainty to teacher candidates' perceptions of teacher practice during their artistic inquiry of school spaces. In both sites of loss, artistic practice functioned as a means to mediate loss through the creation of new connections reshaping memories and perceptions.

The Pedagogy of Loss project began during my doctoral studies during the long commute to my university, but was not a project that I took up until years after I had completed my dissertation. At the time that I returned to these photos (Figs. 6 and 7), I was in the midst of processing a loss in my own life. It was understandings that I had gained in those moments about making sense *in* loss that I came to appreciate the embodiment of loss as pedagogical. In loss, I formed new meanings in my past, present and future; a deterritorialization (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of my perceptions of my life's experience though an embodiment of time as montage (Boulton, 2019) allowing a reinhabiting of memory to create alternate meanings and connections.

[3] Difference in kind refers to difference in and of itself, which is key to the concept of Deleuze and Guattari (1987)Deleuze, Gilles concept of becoming. Rather than establishing boundaries between groups through apparent differences, or looking at difference as different from an original, difference in kind refers to the ways in which difference occurs as individuated through particular types of experience.

Fig. 6 Photograph by Adrienne Boulton, 2011. Copyright A. Boulton

During my PhD, I commuted two to three hours per day to the university to teach and for course work. I started to notice the changing appearances of the roadside memorials that dotted my commute. I noted that the municipality would mow the grass around the sites, leaving them largely undisturbed and at other times it appeared that someone had stopped to fix items that had fallen off or broken. Sadly, new memorials appeared, with their new materials and objects. These older sites changed in the west coast rain and weathered conditions and even with care, becoming faded and tattered over the years. Like memories, they became reshaped through time. In my car, passing by, I wondered about the person who had passed away, who had constructed the memorial and I wondered how they were coping with their loss. I began stopping at the memorials to photograph them and to read the information that loved ones had left as a memorial to a life lost at the site. These roadside memorials functioned in many ways as public art that simultaneously documented the initial loss while embodying time passing through its changing appearance. The memorials aged and become faded but continued to activate the re-constitution of the past in the present through the images and sentiments expressed on site. The memorials included links to YouTube videos of the deceased in their day-to-day, ordinary, and mundane acts of living, including times with family as a nostalgic remembrance lived in the present.

For me, the memorialization of the loss itself created the potential for an encounter with the day to day, where normal and ordinary are disbanded yet continue to act and be acted on the site itself. These sites exceed the fading memorial of what was lost and through the lives documented in photos and videos; I was brought to the past in

Fig. 7 Photograph by Adrienne Boulton, 2011. Copyright A. Boulton

the present. The videos, watched later at home in my office, no longer capture the time contained in the moving image or at the time of loss, but in the durational event. I looked to these markers/memorials as sites of creation for the friends and families of those who had lost, while I simultaneously wondered why the site of the loss was marked with a memorial rather than the site where life began, a maternity ward or a home for example. What is the connection between the site of loss and creative acts?

It is most recently that I have returned to my photographs and early considerations in a particular moment of my life where it became important to me to think through these memories and re-inhabit them. Roadside memorials, hasty graves, shrines, deathscapes, and crosses have found a place in a number of research disciplines. Clark and Franzmann's (2006) suggest that roadside memorials are a somewhat non-official response to grief, differentiating itself from more official and sanctioned Western grieving practices including public memorials and funerals. They argue that grief provides a permission to resist certain authorities, to express loss as a means to perhaps understand it. I suggest that loss becomes a site for creative acts, as with trauma, the ways in which meaning was previously made are lost and thus new relationship formations begin to occur. The ways in which meaning was made as

well as the ways in which knowledge and knowing formed were disrupted, rendering normative ways of knowing lost.

This asignifying rupture produced in loss displaces previous forms of meaning making as the rupture severs the process of recognition and interpretation. In those moments, loss creates the potential for new connections to form creating difference, not from an original or in resistance to a previous form of thought but through a type of exploration that creates something new. This suggests a neo-aesthetic that presents a "claim for a materialist aesthetic, premised on the affect and sensation, where subjectivity is rendered subjectless" (Kennedy, 2004, p. 17). In this durational event, affect intercedes with the virtual recollections and memories that form perception as well as with the permanent record of video by disrupting perceptions and desires with the introduction of the durational present. O'Sullivan (2006) argued, via Bergson, that:

> we are caught, as beings in the world, on a certain spatiotemporal register: we "see" only what we have already seen. We see only that which we are interested in. At stake with art might be an altering—a switching—of this register. (p. 47)

The drive to find meaning in loss, to reinstate order and the desire for optimism is what Berlant (2011) describes as the attrition of the very thriving that is supposed to be made possible in the work of the attachment to the object in the first place. The loss of the object makes visible and visceral our attachments. The return to the site of loss is a return to the loss of *normal*, which rests as a need to restore, beneath the surface of memory. In these moments of loss, the concept of *what was and what was normal* grates raw those traversing life after loss as wandering in spaces that lack markers and touchstones of familiarity. These paths must be traversed to form connections and familiarity, not as a return to what once was or what is normal, but to create and build something differentiated in the real.

8 Loss as a Condition of Pedagogy in Teacher Education: The Apprehension of Real Time

I conceptualized loss as a site for creative thought and extend this understanding to explore loss as a condition of pedagogy in teacher education. The loss in teacher education, rather than the material death of a loved one is located in what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to as trauma to thought. Pedagogy, as a condition for learning, is found in the loss of normative and representational knowledge, in the encounter with ordinary and mundane aspects of teaching, where new and creative knowledge becomes possible. In the previously mentioned research projects, participants' art practices functioned as a process of meaning making during their loss of certainty produced through the affective jolt to entrenched understandings of place, which allowed for their encounter with their perceptions.

Clark and Franzmann's (2006) work indicated that the trauma of loss as grief provided the permission to shift away from the official forms of expressions of

grief, including funerals and that the creation of the memorial at the site of loss resisted these sanctioned expressions of grief. Similarly, the participants in the previously mentioned research projects, who returned to the events of learning, including schools, parks and playgrounds, found that their practices of art making allowed them to return to the memories and perceptions of learning and re-inhabit them. The pedagogy of loss and the affect of grief produced in loss allowed alternate perspectives in learning.

As a methodological rule, new and creative thought is activated in durational events that both disrupt through affective engagement and create and connect new and alternate meanings in and through artistic practice. In thinking through my own losses, which seemed to compel me to return to the photos of the memorials as well as the videos and images from the sites, understandings from teaching and researching with teacher candidates and from photographing the memorial sites intertwined with my own processes of creating meaning as a process of grieving and becoming.

9 Conclusion

The Methodology of Intuition provides generative concepts in the form of precise rules that compel my continued exploration of artistic inquiry in research, in teacher education, and in generalist and graduate level teaching to experience and understand the multiple ways that art practice shapes creative thought. These rules function in research and pedagogy to build questions through embodied experiences, to advocate for learning as expansive and unknown, and to engage in artistic/visual practice as enabled by and enabling creative thought. The focus on ontological meanderings that look to the event of learning continues, for me, to create opportunities to build new questions and experiences. The three rules bring to the fore how conceptions of time, memory and experience might fix or disrupt entrenched ways of knowing and being as a researcher and teacher. Perhaps it is the ostensible contrast of rules and intuition that provoked my curiosity and pursuits in fieldwork. These rules challenge the perceived haphazard, ethereal, and inconsistent nature of intuition but not to merely expose a falsified and illegitimate concept. Rather, I have found that under sustained study, the complexity that rests beneath the feel of intuition disrupts rather than forecloses on new potentialities for inquiry, made available by challenging many aspects of qualitative and ABER research, that in their taken-for-grantedness can preclude ways of knowing and being that limit thought.

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Afterglow Anthotypes: Throwing and Threading Light on My ABER Journey

Brooke Anne Hofsess

Abstract In this visual essay, the author unfolds her process of making-with *afterglow anthotypes* as encouragement to pay attention to the threads of becoming-scholartist in the academy. She creatively offers those threads as potential invitations or gifts for others to consider a slow, iterative engagement with their own ABER journeys.

Keywords Anthotypes · Reciprocity · Gift culture · Scholartistry · Slowness · Unknowing · Compost · Afterglow

> The poet speaks to the shimmering after-burn images that linger in the advents of interruptions.
>
> (Quinn-Hall, 2016, p. 116)[1]

[1] The images made in the crafting of this essay are not numerically ordered here, so that they may shimmer and linger and flow in and through this body of text. Image copyright: Brooke Anne Hofsess.

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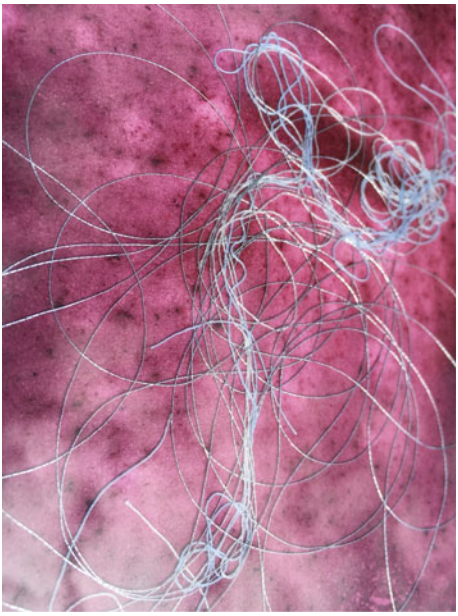


1 Throwing Light

This visual essay imaginatively, reflexively shares glimpses of my ABER journey through what I conceptualize as *afterglow anthotypes*. It began along gravel roads where I set out to walk with the poignant questions posed by the editors of this book. I found myself thinking with wild blackberries instead. My home in Southern Appalachia is set into a deep cut of earth requiring a steep gravel driveway to access the road above. This road—so gritty in summer and autumn that the front windows of our home must be kept shut due to passing vehicles unsettling the air and rock in pillowy waves of stone-dust—cuts sharply up a mountain. I climb it daily, in various fits of weather, calling the steepness and elevation to work on my body and spirit, quickening my breath and heartbeat. Along this steep swath, wild blackberry thrives. The arching canes flourish between the forest and the roadway, accessible mostly to deer, birds, and striped skunks. Tangled within and locked behind these thickets, styrofoam cups, greasy paper sacks, neon green plastic bottles sit, brightly refusing composting and decay.

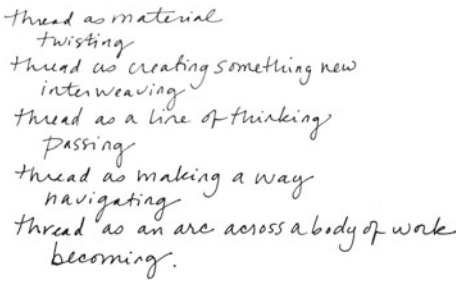
Having noticed these wild bramble fruits, I returned with a small ceramic dish, a pinch pot that I formed and fired years ago. A dish exactly the shape of my hand. In this dish I gathered one handful of wild blackberries to smooth into photographic emulsions for anthotypes. Anthotypes are images created using photosensitive material from plants, and, depending on the available local light, they require a long, patient exposure (Enfield, 2013). For months after this berry picking, large contact frames

were scattered in sunny patches around my home, outside when the near constant rain and fog cleared. Most days caught between the thorns of work and home obligations I would often forget to set the frames out. For me, these obligations mimicked the vine-trapped garbage thwarting dissolution; places for encountering stuckness, rather than the composting that nourishes gift economies and creative ecosystems. Somehow my body sweating in the frame of a sunny window or noticing a peach-hued zinnia leaning away from a shadow would call me to remember the awaiting anthotypes and place them outside again. This forgetting and remembering continued into fall, the only time of year I see orb weavers at work around here.

Stepping outside to retrieve the frames one night, I stopped suddenly as the porch light unexpectedly highlighted the artistry of an orb-weaver crocheting her apparatus. In the morning, a strong slant of sunbeam alerted me to the web I had all but forgotten from the previous evening as I nearly walked right through it. The quick stop of my body startled and invited me to admire the sticky silk threads, luminous with beads of dew. In that moment, overcome with gratitude for light thrown upon those silken threads, I was reminded of a concept that arose from my ABER dissertation, *afterglow*. Afterglow envisions the illuminated space created in our on-going commitment to openness and inquiry, which invites us to continue "throwing light" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 301) upon our understandings of ourselves and our ever-changing world (Hofsess, 2016). Here, I use the concept of thread to bind afterglow and anthotypes together in a reflexive contemplation of my trajectory in ABER over the last decade.

2 Threading Light

In my ABER dissertation, I wondered: "… can we learn, as artists do, to speak through the many languages of thread? Can we learn to stitch, wrap, braid, and weave our sense of purpose as the years pass and everything swerves and shifts around us?" (Hofsess, 2016, p. 70). Contemplating these questions in relationship to my ABER journey, I recall navigating through grayscale publications, negotiating with reviewers less familiar with the aims and qualities of ABER, laboring over promotion dossiers, and creating meaningful webs of relationships with kind and generous ABER scholars. The origins of the word *thread* connect with the verb, *to throw*, and this recognition led me again to afterglow—throwing and threading light. Light is elemental to the making of anthotypes when you consider not only the sunny exposure, but also the light that nourishes the plants used to make the photosensitive emulsions. Although my scholarship has taken many shapes and forms, there is a consistent pulse, an overarching ethic that positions the materials I take up—such as thread, or handwritten letters, or cyanotypes—as all at once *medium, doing,* and *possibility.*



Here, I explore anthotype in this way too—*medium, doing,* and *possibility*. Making dozens of long exposures co-composed of wild blackberry juice, threads, sunlight, time, and handmade paper. During each exposure, I revisited processes, memories, and learnings that have continued to throw and thread light on my understanding of ABER broadly, and reveal salient moments of my own becoming an ABER scholar. I revisited various publications written over the past decade, (re)searching for threads of insight. For me, an important thread of ABER scholarship is engaging with a *multiplicity of doing*: reading, teaching, listening, making photographs, journaling, mulling over, and so on (Hofsess, 2015).

Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013) reminds us that the word berry is rooted in the word *gift*. Describing the layers of reciprocity between berry plants and place, she encourages that "A gift creates ongoing relationships" (p. 26). Her writings connect me to another encircling thread across my ABER endeavors—the thread of the gift and the invitation. From my dissertation forward, I have explored "an inquisitive and invitational form of writing that holds space, produces affect, and moves with intensities through its composition" (Hofsess, 2015, p. 4). In doing so, I have held close the words of Nicolas Bourriaud, curator and philosopher of relational aesthetics, who said: "Each artwork is a proposal to live in a shared world, and the work of every artist is a bundle of relations with the world, giving rise to other relations, and so on and so forth, ad infinitum" (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 22). *Gift to berry, berry to critter, critter to seed; seed to sun; sun to emulsion, emulsion to image, image to inquiry*—the relations unfold, entangle, compost, reconfigure.

As a scholartist (Neilsen, 1998), my approach to crafting inquiry (Vagle, 2014) involves leaving pieces messy in places, allowing for the whole to stay a little bit unfinished. I've learned in a deeper way to accept—even embrace—this quality; to make space for hoping that readers might pick up a loose thread—or two—and in doing so, touch into the unfinished, emergent, dissonant aspects of ABER work. In this embrace, I cannot untangle my wonder from the canes of wild blackberry—from the nourishment, seeds, hungers, decay, compost, birds, deer, put up jam, thorns, trash, and dusty gravel roadways.

Thinking with wild blackberry invited me to decenter my longing towards berries and their photosensitive juices, so that I might also consider the litter, the waste I found thrown, blown, and caught in the blackberry bushes (Bickel, personal communication; Nordstrom & Somerville, 2020). I wonder how other ABER scholars might relate not only to the gift culture of berries, but also to the persistent overflow of

capitalist culture in their work (Bickel, personal communication)? I imagine many wild brambles snapped off to make my work fit into existing academic metrics and structures: the lush, color photographs, the artmaking relegated as supporting figures instead of bodies of text, the nuanced, vibrant pieces of my scholartistry (Neilsen, 1998) that have either fallen away from the published work, or been cut. Unlike the petrol-made garbage that refuses decay, I hold a tender knowing that each of these pieces became generative compost for my unfolding process.

I have enclosed here a series of images illuminating the process of *afterglow anthotypes*. Each anthotype is paired with notes made as I revisited pieces of my writing.[2] These pairings bring to bear resonances, leftover threads, and learnings that linger in the "after-burn" (Quinn-Hall, 2016, p. 116) of the many interruptions, ruptures, connections, residues, and surprises that have occurred along my ABER journey. Much like bramble vines and meandering threads becoming-image across pools of sun-warmed blackberry juice, these responses move fluidly across various projects,[3] picking up and revisiting concepts like gifts, materiality, unknowing. To echo the slowness of the anthotype exposures, I've included the notes as they were written by hand.

Intensifying in the richness
of unknowing –
Blooming with rhizomatic expression
across art, research, pedagogy

[2] The visual qualities of this chapter were inspired by the unfolding community project *Say* by Shauna Caldwell, as well as by what Shauna continues to share with me about working in the realm of alternative photographic processes.

[3] These notes were taken in response to works including (Hofsess, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018a, b, 2019, 2020).

Dwelling at the intersection
of visual and verbal imagination,
entwining creative practice
and prose.

Holding here, what might be
seen and said
differently?

Applying pressure
the welding together of
art making and reflection
These questions,
Swimming in a poetics of materiality.

Reveling in the materiality of
data-creation, moving with
analytical inclinations?--

Repeated, whispered, walked.

Dear reader—
culling images and
words, playing
through curatorial impulses,
Offering relational gestures.

A gift continues
to give
Not only between
you and I, or
in theory or in practice

3 Threads of Becoming

Making-with *afterglow anthotypes* encouraged me to pay attention to the threads of my becoming in the academy, and to creatively offer those threads as potential invitations or gifts for others to consider a slow, iterative engagement with their own journeys. As this reflexive account slows to a close, I look at a stack of anthotypes lying on the table in my studio and wonder: what next? Returning to gift, returning to thread, returning to paper, returning to seed, and returning to light—my hands

follow curiosity and begin folding the *afterglow anthotypes* into small forms. These containers become filled with dirt, seed, a little water and set along the sill of a sunny window. *Inquiry to image, image to emulsion, emulsion to sun, sun to seed, seed to critter, critter to berry, berry to gift*. My thoughts drift toward poet William Stafford (1998) who mentored that there is an enduring thread following us through our lives, guiding us *if we hold onto it.*

Acknowledgements Here, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Barbara Bickel, Rita Irwin, and Richard Siegesmund for their supportive and generative feedback. Thank you all for your efforts in pushing my thinking and writing of this chapter forward, and for the opportunity to join this stunning collection.

Dissertation Award Information

Dissertation Award Year: 2014

Dissertation Title: *Embodied intensities: Artist-teacher renewal in the swell and afterglow of aesthetic experiential play*

Dissertation Advisor: Tracie Costantino

Dissertation Committee: Melissa Freeman, Carole Henry, Christopher Schulte, Mark Vagle

Granting University: University of Georgia, 2013

Dissertation Link: http://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/hofsess_brooke_a_201308_phd.pdf

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Brooke Anne Hofsess is an associate professor of art education in the Art Department at Appalachian State University. Commitments to creative, ecological, and relational practices inform her research in the field of art education. Her artistic practice occurs at the intersection of book arts and alternative photographic processes—influencing her approaches to teaching, learning, and inquiring. She is the author of *Unfolding Afterglow: Letters and Conversations on Teacher Renewal*.

Sustaining an Arts of Living: An Interview with Karinna Riddett

Karinna Riddett and Richard Siegesmund

Abstract In this interview with 2012 ABER dissertation award winner Karinna Riddett, she reflects on art education's claim for the development of empathy as an explicit instructional outcome in experiential curriculum (Dewey, 1934; Riddett-Moore, 2013). Authentic empathetic engagement and caring, that accounts for fear in both the care giver and the cared for, is necessary to sustain a life-long arts of living (Foucault, 1985/1986). ABER analytical skills are important across an array of disciplines beyond education, such as business and health sciences. As contemporary information disorients as much as it informs, the arts provide forms of engagement that can move us past paralytic fear of the unfamiliar. Poststructural theory (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000) implies strategies for dealing with disruption that have application in the business world when facing uncertainty. Art education skills, including the synthesis of disparate information and visual analytics, have direct application for making informed data-informed decisions. Storytelling is a skill that requires empathetic connection to an audience. The storyteller must listen to the concerns of an audience and speak in ways that the audience can hear. Storytelling—finding and sustaining narrative—is an important skill in the development of a competent workforce and maintaining client satisfaction.

Keywords Art education · Arts of living · Arts-based research · Care · Data visualization · Experiential curriculum · Poststructural theory · Storytelling

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1 Sustaining an Arts of Living: An Interview with Karinna Riddett

Richard: Your dissertation was an evolutionary journey. You began with a framework for a Foucaultian arts of living (Foucault, 1985/1986) that you wanted to teach your students in your own classroom. Your original research proposal was a classic curriculum study in which you designed a scope and sequence of instruction that moved towards a pre-designated horizon. You had anticipated it would be a/r/tographic (Springgay et al., 2008) as you would make art with and in response to your students. Then the wheels fell off the cart, and the dissertation became something different from what you anticipated. You found yourself in a place of authentic not knowing and your life had become unmoored. You were disoriented. You then committed to teach from that space you were in of not knowing. Could you talk a little bit about that pivot?

Karinna: That question transports me back into a time and place where I feel like I am looking back at a different person. You have a pivotal moment in your life and then think, how did I get from there to here? Would people recognize the person I am now?

I set out to write the dissertation mostly about how we can teach empathy, how it is a necessary component of the arts and how it can be a critical component of the curriculum of arts education. That the arts can teach authentic caring is a founding reason for including arts education in schools (Riddett-Moore, 2013).

My original approach for that was, let us focus on artists who are talking about caring, or who do environmental studies or, who are very intentionally focused on the topic of care. Then my personal life got in the way of that: when caring for somebody was hurting and I was being hurt by someone for whom I cared for very deeply. It completely disrupted what I thought caring was. To this day, I find myself still giving other people advice that detaching from people is still a way to care for them. Especially as teachers, we think we must give 100% of ourselves to students every day. It can be draining.

One of the first realizations in the writing was that there is a canned storybook notion of caring that we grow up with: these are the things you do to show care and therefore you are a caring person if you do them. At the time I was doing my dissertation research and writing, these things were being challenged in my personal life and then also in my teaching life. I realized that this was tied up in my ideal of teachers: that they can do everything and never have to reset or take care of themselves. At least not until they get burned out—and then they get reprimanded. We always pick on teachers who are just done: I am going to phone it in and just do my job every day.

Nevertheless, that was a realistic part of my teaching during the dissertation research. I did not have anything to give. It became much more of an authentic place from which to create art. I challenged everything. Then when I started inviting my students to challenge some of their cultural or philosophical norms, I found that their art became much more personal to them. Conversations in classrooms got more

engaging, and the kids were having more authentic conversations with me. It did not have that superficial, I am doing what my teacher wants me to do, type of thing.

Richard: You were intent on confronting your fear and deconstructing the person you were before this moment. That person was very prepared, very much somebody who felt that they could control the situation, and that that they would always excel. That person would be top of their class and achieve anything that they put their mind to. I had supervised you as an undergraduate and master's student and seen that person. Now nothing was working. We talked about going to a place in your own art making that was fearful to you: to consciously challenge your sense of control; to go to a place where you did not feel competent. One of the things that came out of that in your dissertation was a discovery of a sense of empathy to students in your classroom who did not feel confident. Your previous teacher-self would have challenged a fearful student for not trying hard enough. That teacher did not see the possibility of incapacitating fear in her caring classroom. Then living in a personal place of fear created your own empathetic shift.

Karinna: The minute you said the fearful part, I remembered sitting at the dining room table because I decided to choose an art medium that I was unfamiliar with to put myself in that position of learning something new that I knew nothing about. You can live in the space of fear of not knowing even if you have someone teaching you. My grandmother had taught me basic sewing skills. My dad had helped me sew a costume in fifth grade, but that was definitely not my chosen method of art. Up until that point, I was an expert craftsperson in drawing and painting. I could do ceramics pretty well. I could pick up any material and use it, except for fabric. Fabric was something I never embraced. I decided, that is what I need to do. That is what I must put myself in. Sittings at the dining room table, I decided that for my first task, I wanted to make an apron. I wanted to make something functional just to get my hands dirty and feet wet. I did not have a pattern; I was just winging it.

I took scrap pieces of fabric and ran them through the sewing machine over and over and over: testing the tension and doing it again. I tested the thread, it got stuck, and I would do it again. I thought, this is a part of my curriculum that I am missing: testing, try it, testing, try it, let them mess up. Figure out what went well. Have some bad examples before you get to the good example. I had forgotten those steps after teaching for so many years. As a teacher, you want your students to make a product. You want them to make a product that looks good for the school art show. When your students take their artwork home, you want it to be something they can be proud of. You do not show the messy work. You do not show the ten mistakes before they got it right. Or if you do, that is just supposed to be the sketchbook. That is the process; it is not the product.

That was the first part, just trying little things on my own. I did not have the voice in the material yet. I did not know how to invest fabric with meaning and take it to the next level. I did not know what the final thing was going to be. It was a much cloudier process.

However, I was in tune with just letting ideas come to me again: letting the things around me influence what I was going to do. The idea of producing the fabric birds

that became a central theme of my dissertation started as a very visceral part of a run one day where I was thinking, I just want to get away from the life I was living at the time. Birds have been a symbol of rebirth, but also, at the same time, destruction. The dual symbolism resonated in me. I started making fabric birds. That shifted into my wanting to deconstruct my wedding dress and make it a part of what I was going through. My fabric birds tore it apart — or maybe as in Disney's *Cinderella* (Geronimi et al., 1950), they were helping to put it back together.

Richard: None of this was in your dissertation proposal. You had gone off into another zone. However, you had the good fortune of having people like Elizabeth St. Pierre on your dissertation committee, who were totally understanding and supportive of how you were reinventing your dissertation on the fly. No one complained that what you were doing had not been approved or insisted that you had to resubmit a new research proposal if they were to continue on your committee.

Karinna: Bettie did make me rewrite a comp paper, but that was well deserved. I am glad you brought up Bettie because I needed somebody like her. You and the other members of my committee, Carole Henry and Tracie Costantino were working to get me through this—trying to get me through the next step and supporting me. Bettie was challenging me to do better. She was encouraging by telling me, "I know you can and know you are smart enough, but what you have given me is crap and do not ever write this again for me. Write this." And at the time, I remember being very intimidated by her, but at the same time I had a lot of respect for her as well because she was not going to sugarcoat it for me. She was not going to accept what I had submitted because this was all the writing that I could do right now. No, she said, "I know you can do better than this, so do it again." And that was that. Again, it was a different angle of caring. It is not that she did not care. She cared enough to know to push me even more than what I was pushing myself, and I needed that. I needed that balance. But I would have crumbled under her if I did not have you saying, "Karinna, we can do this, we will get it done."

Richard: Researchers working with arts-based methods encounter multiple forms of resistance. You worked to overcome these obstacles, and with the forms of mentoring and caring you received, created a resonant work. But those struggles did not end with the dissertation.

By the time you finished the dissertation, you had taught at all levels in K-12 education and afterwards also completed some adjunct teaching for a local university. You were still a single parent with responsibility for two young boys. So out of financial necessity, you explored career choices outside of K-12 teaching and academia. Your current work involves data visualization project management, which has allowed you to combine your natural gift for mathematics with your love and commitment to visual arts, the creative process, and education. Data visualization seems a natural fit for you.

Karinna: After teaching K-12 for several years, I was looking for options. I was considering private business. I was also considering moving up into higher education.

I was interviewing with another regional university and received an offer for a non-tenure track instructor with a renewable contract, but there was a strong possibility that it would eventually flip into a tenure track position. But the university's offer was lower than what I was making as a classroom teacher and not enough to support a single mom of two kids. I just could not move into academia at that juncture in my life.

At the same time, I was interviewing with Tableau, a data visualization company. The PhD got my foot in the door. For one of my interviews, they asked me to bring in my own data sets and teach from them demonstrating data visualization techniques—things that I had seen repeatedly in educational data studies—and explain the underlying statistical analysis. I brought my personal run Disney Marathon data. My mom and I were in the data set. You can go on the website (Every Mile is Magic, n.d.) and get all the race results like runner data time, distance, and other related race information. I used that data set to teach different technical concepts like histograms, box and whisker plots, and grouping. But I had this personal connection of telling the story about my mom and I running. How do I find an average in her age group? So, let us pull over the age groups and pull an average line. How do we make that stand out? Well, let us use contrasting colors. It was fun. It was the same thing I always did as an art teacher. I was just trading a paintbrush for a computer and data software.

Tableau saw me as somebody who not only understood research and data, but someone who also understood storytelling. That was a huge part of the role. They said, "we can teach anybody our software; that is not hard. You can learn our software in 12 weeks and be an expert. But what we cannot teach is how to tell a story with data and how to engage adult students. Not just use the tool, but help customers achieve a deep understanding of the application for how it relates to their business and the story our clients want to tell."

There were three parts to the job: (1) how do you use this tool, (2) how to apply the tool efficiently for the client's situation and (3) how to use the tool so that the client's message is visually engaging while effectively communicating. Tableau was struggling with the visually engaging part. You can always find people who are technically sound. In data and technology that is just not that hard to find. You can find people who have had a business background who understand what the technology might do commercially. However, you could not find people who could artistically and creatively produce ways to enhance the tool that would engage adults. Tableau was struggling to find people who could do all three parts of the job. My initial task at Tableau was to coach our consultants over a sixteen-hour training period so that they had the skills to genuinely help clients by using the Tableau software effectively in the way the tool was meant to be used. The job was a perfect fit even if it meant that I had to brush up on my basic statistics that I had not had since I was an undergraduate in college.

But I was definitely back in that space of being fearful because I had never worked at a company. I remember the first couple of times I moved out into the field and taught classes for customers. Participants were throwing these acronyms at me: "what if I want to see my KPIs?" And I did not know what a KPI (key performance indicator) is! I was so like a fish out of water. I had no idea what they were talking about. I had

to have that classroom presence of saying, "I am going to reach out to my team and get back to you." I had to continue with the lesson, trying not to stumble, and getting past a feeling that I was inept.

In the experience of teaching, you are trying to grab people's attention and keep them engaged for a certain amount of time. At the end, you also want to have them walk away being able to know something was helpful. That is what Tableau was looking for. Tableau wanted people to leave its training classes feeling excited, feeling like they learned something, feeling like they had a personal connection with the instructor. They believed I had all of that.

The next step for me was just learning how to take spreadsheets and turn them into visuals and then do it in a way that any audience would relate to it—whether they were in business, education, or health care. The skills I had as a researcher and as a teacher were the ability to listen to people and synthesize what they were saying. I needed to reframe conversations so that they made sense, while always being engaging by striving for an experiential connection. That is an aesthetic problem. Those were skills that I used over and over again. The important thread through it all in my teaching was tapping into human stories.

Richard: You have talked a little bit about how while you were running you found one of your dissertation narrative's that focused on birds. Now your work is about helping other people find the narratives in their data. Do you think your arts-based dissertation was a journey in finding narrative after you had lost your way?

Karinna: Yes, absolutely. That was probably one of the unexpected transitions into business. I was with Tableau for three years. Now I am a consulting manager at Informatica, where I run a team of consultants. They are hands on with the product and the clients. I work internally, helping to build the data dashboards and continue to apply the same skills I learned at Tableau.

Richard: So Informatica saw in you those same storytelling skills?

Karinna: Yes. We talked about mentors. When I started at Tableau, I had a couple of people who took a risk on me because I did not have a degree in data science. I did not have a degree in quantitative analysis and statistics. That is not what I did. But they wanted my teacher potential, and they knew I could learn the technical parts. They just trusted the process. And I had that attitude that I had something to prove. One of my bosses along the way was Joe who encouraged my pedagogical skills and then pushed me to become directly involved with clients as a consultant at Tableau. Joe felt that I should be more personally involved with customers on a longer term, as well as start taking a leadership role with our internal team of consultants and trainers. They saw that I could help clients have their own data journey of understanding where they needed to be. It was more than what we could build for them. Our clients had to experience their own data for themselves.

One of the last projects I did before going over to Informatica was for the Hawai'i Department of Health. I led a team of consultants and server developers to help take the Hawaiian vaccination data and make public dashboards. Joe put me on that team and believed that I could lead it. I got the whole thing going. Then Joe moved over

to Informatica and ended up recruiting me. They said, "we need you over here, there is a gap that you can fill." And they made me an offer that I could not refuse.

I loved working for Tableau. I still think it is a wonderful company. Their values are great. Everything that I did there was fun and engaging and involved a lot of problem-solving. That is another place where art and math intersect. You first must figure out what the problem is, and then there is more than one way to solve it. You have to come up with the best solution. Often that is not an issue of measurement. It is an issue of qualitative judgment. I really enjoyed that part about the job.

Richard: Tableau hired you because they believed in your skills as a storyteller and teacher would transfer to data analytics. Informatica, gave you more responsibility. Does your training in ABER, and the dissertation itself, continue to reverberate in your work?

Karinna: I think there are three parts of that. First there is the ability to synthesize: to take what I had in all this disparate reading I was doing. I was pulling in Foucault (1984/1985, 1985/1986), poststructural feminism (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000), Dewey (1934), and the recently published ABER literature (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Sameshima, 2007; Springgay et al., 2005, 2008). Eisner (2002) is in there, as well as Nel Noddings (1984). I had to apply theory to empirical experience, to take what I was reading, and say, this is what it looks like in real life. It does not matter whether data points are numeric or qualitative.

I am finding that a lot of people in the business world can record the data, and share the data, but they are missing that step of being able to synthesize it. They cannot tell the story of their data, or to analyze their data. That do not recognize that something is missing. Being able to see what is not there is a big part of it.

The second part is visual analysis. I had no idea how my art skills were going to translate to the business world, I thought I was going to have to leave the artistic and arts-based researcher parts of me behind. But I found that art training and then the skills I learned in writing the dissertation were applicable. The skills that apply in the creation of artwork and the critique of artwork directly apply to business. Those skills translate into my business practice almost every day. Everything we learned in art school about sizing, color relationships, and proportion contributes to the quality of visual data. How do you make a data point stand out? Well, you are going to go large to small because you are always going to look at what is large first. How do you do rule of thirds? How do you make something that attracts people's attention and then makes them want to stay and dive into your story? What we learn in art—basic art skills, that I taught in elementary school—translate all the time. I am finding people do not understand the power of visual elements in communicating data points. When I was assigned to the Hawai'i project, they did not have a color palette. They did not have font sizes. They did not have a graphic look. Everything on their website was just sort of what you could quickly build in Tableau, which is adequate and shares the data. However, data visualization is like making a cake. You can start with flour, water, and eggs, but how do you make it look presentable? How do you present evidence, so it is actually helpful to the audience?

As our consultants worked with the client to develop a design template, we talked about who's going to be using the final product. There were a lot of end user conversations. Artists do this all the time. Who is going to engage with my artwork? What message is my artwork sending? Is the artwork saying something different from what I intended? How can I use the elements and principles of design to convey what I am trying to communicate?

Richard: In art school, you have to listen to how other people are reading your work and make the decision whether you need to actually make adjustments.

Karinna: That is the third part. In art, at the earliest levels, we teach how to give and receive critique. I am shocked at how many people in the business world cannot participate in critique. They cannot do it, or they cannot take it. They do not know how to say things specifically enough. I think we are drilled as artists to not just say things like "that works." We say, "that color palette makes it a bold presentation," or we say, "that shading needs to be darker if you want this to stand out." We are very specific in how we critique. Not everyone learns that. Then when they get into a setting where their work or their projects or their business is being critiqued, they do not know what to do and what to say. They wind up saying the wrong thing, or they make broad generalizations. The first couple of times I built a dashboard and shared it with the customer, they said, "yeah, we like it." That does not help me. So, I had to make them a critique page where I said, "I want you to give me feedback on how it does or doesn't serve the functions you ask? Can you pull the data you need from it? Is the design easy to read?" I essentially gave them art critique questions and made them comment, the same as I asked my middle school students to comment. Then at the next meeting, we could actually have a productive conversation around what could be improved or what was working well. Saying, "Oh, we like it" does not do anything for me or their business. Those have been some fun, interesting transitions where I had no idea that my art skills were so vital to businesses until I got in there.

Richard: You spoke a little bit about how when you started at Tableau, the experience of the dissertation of being in a place of not knowing was somewhat comforting: I have been here, I can get through this again. Does that happen now to you at Informatica? Do you return to that place of fear, not knowing, and trying to work your way out of that again?

Karinna: All the time, every day. It is funny because it is always evolving, but it is always there. Now I have a team of people that report to me. When I was an adjunct university professor, I had a group of adults that reported to me, but that was very much a student teacher relationship of I am here to guide you and support you toward graduation. Now I have adults who have families and responsibilities. Some of them are much older than me. For some of them, I am the first female boss they have ever had. I have to navigate those waters. I am one of the few female managers for my company in all of North America. The field of data has been heavily male. There have been many meetings and days where I have felt very uncomfortable and very out of place. I show up in a meeting where I am the only female, and I am ignored, or I am blown over. If someone directs a question to a male component on my team,

I will speak up and say, "no, I know the answer to that." There are little things like that. In the space of the unknown, I have to believe that whatever I am bringing to the table is of value. That is the fire I had to get through when writing the dissertation and making it to that point of completion. That is what it came down to with my dissertation. I was telling a story that I felt had value and I had to take a leap of faith that it would resonate with others. It is important to share. It is important to believe that what I have is worth sharing.

To overcome fear, there are small things that make a big difference to other people. At Informatica, we have a team of associates. We hire them right out of college. Train them eighteen months and then they can advance to a consultant. A new batch of associates was brought on shortly after I joined. I started this job in August. Then in late September—I had been there a month and change—I reached out to the leader of the associate program, and I said, "I would be happy to talk to the associates just to say, I am here, reach out to me while you are learning your stuff, and I am happy to watch your demo presentations." I just wanted to give them some first job advice, share a bit of my own journey from education to business, and some tips of what I had learned along the way. I spoke to them for forty-five minutes. There were twelve in the associate team, but only three were females. That is fairly good for the data world. All three followed up with me afterwards. It meant so much to them to see a female leader. We only have a little bit of diversity in leadership. It is all men. I was the first woman who reached out to them.

I also wanted these new associates to know that I am still learning the tools too. I do not know much about large scale data governance yet or cloud migration. Those are all brand new concepts to me. I shared with them that I was not fully comfortable either. I was also there to learn too. So, I told them, when you give your presentations, I will be paying attention. That is what happened in my dissertation: I was struggling, and my students were teaching me. I shared my own vulnerability with the associates. They seemed to appreciate that.

Richard: You're back to your aprons once again.

Karinna: It is my apron. Testing, try it, testing, try it, give yourself permission to mess up. Figure out what went well.

I sat in on a webinar the other day trying to learn about what our cloud application integration was, and it made sense. Once I sat through it, I thought, I am glad I do not have to learn this and actually do it for a customer. If I decided to do it, I am sure I could, (testing, try it, testing, try it) but that is not my role now, but it helps me to empathetically relate to what our associates are doing.

Richard: The conventional idea of a dissertation is to put out a roadmap with a tested set of steps. Follow these steps and you get your cake. From listening to your story, it is not as much a cookbook as it is more about strategies for getting unstuck. It is a story of how to start a search; it is less about what was found. It is about how to move forward from the inevitable place of not knowing. It is about how to try to embrace that not knowing and not cover it up as a weakness or a failure. That seems particularly important in our world where knowledge itself is getting invented on the

fly. It is less likely that your research will be a brick of knowledge that you make and then pass on for someone to duplicate or follow. The next person will use what you do and transform it into something of their own—something previously unexpected.

Karinna: Knowledge is evolving faster than we can keep up. It is funny to think my son's high school social studies class is still very much like how my social studies class was. It should not be that way. Social studies should be about where the future going.

In a virtual professional conference session I attended, one of the discussions was around how data literacy should be a skill that we teach in high school because it belongs to the future of business, education, and health care. Everyone needs to be data literate. My own career path has moved this way. You have to think about the future.

I have always been passionate about teaching people. One reason I wanted to get into a manager position was it brought me back to professional development and helping people with their careers and what they want to achieve. Helping people grow is always a part of my educator brain. My dissertation unexpectedly forced me to face how I could grow. How does that happen? How does a person get beyond remembering stuff and instead grow and develop? I was chatting with Joe about why they recruited me for Informatica. I had never managed people in a corporate setting. I did not know anything about cloud governance. Joe said, "you are someone who is willing to take a risk." If risk taking is a key to professional growth beyond school, how do we teach so that our students are prepared with this skill?

People sometimes get in their comfort bubble. When I started my dissertation research, I was definitely in my comfort bubble as a teacher. What resonates from my dissertation is I was willing to let go of what I thought was real and step into another world. That is also what the job change felt like. I had no idea what to expect. The ABER methodology helped prepare me for those future transitions.

Richard: We've talked about what you have done professionally, but are there aspects of the dissertation that have informed your life outside of work?

Karinna: I had a huge, life altering experience dealing with betrayal, dealing with a disrupted family, and trying to make it work for a couple of years. It did not work. That second failure was even more of a harder blow than the first, because I believed this person could change and then they did not. I remember having a moment on the very last day of school, post teacher workday, when I thought, I have nothing to give anyone. I am completely empty. This person has completely drained me. At that moment, I was resigned that I was just going to be a single mom to my kids as they got older and then I would deal with my life later. But it turned out I had a whole circle of friends around me who were very supportive, and one of those friends was going through very similar life events. I ended up dating that person, became engaged, and now we are married. We both were forced to redefine ourselves, rediscover what it meant to have a future, to trust someone again, and to love again. A lot of that was just my own self-discovery of getting back parts of me that were lost. Something that I have talked about with women or men who have gone through betrayal, is the idea

that you feel that you are not worth anything. I had that for a long time, a feeling like I was not worthy, or desirable, or worth loving—other forms of nothingness. There were a lot of emotional things I had to get through by making art and following routines. Running was a big part of it, just to have time that was just for me. I was not a mom, I was not a friend, I was not a partner. I was just me doing what I wanted to do. And I think writing the dissertation helped me get to that place of saying it was OK to take time for me. And even to make this career change, to give myself the permission to ask what do I want to do? I am surprised by how much I enjoy data visualization. I really thought this would be a couple of years of doing a job, making some money, and then going back to teaching. Ultimately, I can see myself going into teaching again. But now it might mean I teach data visualization in academia when I retire.

Richard: It is a growing field. Academia may be after you to teach that skill: the ability to visually read data.

Karinna: And the storytelling. In addition, another art skill that business highly values is evaluation. Businesses collect lot of data collection, but our evaluation methods for the quality of the data do not always make sense. You must make qualitative distinctions about data. It is not just how much, how many, or how long but you want to evaluate how well you do your job or how well you communicate with customers. Then you have to reimagine those qualities in a way that you can then quantify them and gather data from them. It is what art teachers do when they evaluate student artwork. That is hugely important in what I do every day right now.

While I was on the Hawai'i account, we were trying to document vaccinations and share vaccination percent by population. You can get lost in the numbers. I had somebody building a server. That is very monotonous work. It is very technical. It includes lots of lines of code that have to be ready for your weekly meeting. I would remind my team: "why are we doing this?" And they would sit for a second in silence, and I said: "because we want people to be safe." That is the measure of our work. Our work is helping Hawai'i see who is vaccinated and who is not. Then people in Hawai'i can make healthy decisions about where they go, about their schools, about opening businesses because we are in the background, pulling the data and getting it out to them. It is easy to confuse the metrics involved with building something with evaluating whether it actually makes the lives of the technology's users better.

Helping people to live their lives better is the view I always had of education. As a teacher, my goal is to develop people, whether their children or adults, the best way I could. I continue to do this.

The dissertation received the Eisner award from the National Art Education Association (NAEA). I had an hour presentation, in a ballroom with what seemed like a couple of hundred people in the audience. I was going through a pre-check, making sure everything was prepared. I had my slides; I had my music. I looked out and saw Elliot, and his wife Ellie was with him. You were sitting close by too. I thought: "is this what teachers look forward to? To see someone who you taught, who has been touched by your teaching, and who made that teaching personally important to themselves." Students use what they have been taught to develop themselves—to remake

themselves through an arts of living. Mastering the skills to developing yourself is the goal of education.

The hope that my dissertation, my story, might teach others is what brought me to ABER. I could have done the research differently. I could have done a statistical analysis. I was smart enough to whip it up and still make it look good. But what I wanted was the flexibility to move back and forth between the detail, the story, and the big picture. I needed to be able to tell and share that story in a way that other people would relate to it, that would pull them in. It would resonate with them and encourage them at whatever point they are on in their life or in their teaching.

The goal of teaching is to help develop the best self and to spread that goal on. I thought that is what I did, and Eisner got to hear it, and you got to hear it. In the moment of that presentation at NAEA, it was totally worth it. It was worth the struggle. It was worth fighting for. It was worth having something that was not a boxed dissertation. ABER methodology spoke to what I wanted to share in my view of what education should be.

Any time that I have had a rough day as a teacher or even a rough day as a consultant or a manager now, I always try to step back and think, what is the end result here? What am I really working towards? ABER taught me that the story that I am trying to tell has value. I have a story that needs to be shared, and others will hear it.

Dissertation Award Information

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Dissertation Title: *Developing an Arts of Living*

Major Professor: Richard Siegesmund

Committee Members: Tracie Costantino, Carole Henry, Elizabeth St. Pierre

Degree Granting Institution: University of Georgia

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Richard Siegesmund is Professor Emeritus of Art and Design Education from Northern Illinois University. A recipient of Fulbright awards to both the National College of Art and Design, Ireland in Art Education and KU Leuven, Belgium in Visual Sociology, he is also an elected Distinguished Fellow of the National Art Education Association. He is a former chair of the American Educational Research Association's Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) Special Interest Group (SIG) and a recipient of its Tom Barone Award for contributions to ABER.

Carriance: Stitching an Artist-Scholar Through Cyclical Time

Barbara Bickel

Abstract This chapter remembers the lived curriculum of an arts-based educational research (ABER) in-fused life. The a/r/tographic writing stitches—stones, threads of memory, gifts, times, places, artists, teachers and theorists into a cloth book. Stones and books carry place and memory through and across time. Stitching the needle and thread carefully around the tiny stones I shift into an aperspectival state of consciousness. In this state I write artists, teachers and visionaries Bracha Ettinger and Hildegard von Bingen together across centuries to introduce the reader to the author's lived experiences of *carriance* within a Matrixial Divine feminine world-view. The a/r/tographic book-making process of *Carriance* offers a co-emergent and co-becoming borderspace to explore how I have carried and been carried within the field of ABER in the academy. It is my desire that the memory findings that surfaced through the stone-stitched a/r/tographic writing of this chapter offer emerging and established ABER scholars a shift of perspectives. To find and extend opportunities for carriance in their own ABER-infused lives that can lead toward an experience of compassionate hospitality and time freedom.

Keywords A/r/tography · Matrixial borderspace · Gift economy · Stones · Sewing · Time freedom · Divine feminine · Spiritual · Art · Ritual · Trance-based inquiry · Carriance

Stone Stitching With/in Time Freedom

> Matrixial trans-subjectivity
> hosts moments
> of coemergence-in-differentiation
> that weave

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their own time zone
a matrixial bordertime

In time
we are obliged to realize
not only a totally new
perception of reality
in time freedom
we are also compelled
to become
fully conscious of
times new components
receptivity
lucid time
presence
in full multiplexity

(poem found in Ettinger, 2005, p. 706 and Gebser, 1949/85, p. 287–288)

Walking the shoreline during an artist residency on Lake Ontario I found myself looking for tiny flat lake-tumbled stones. This became the first step in a making process that would open space for me to engage a/r/tographically[1] with my dissertation research material (Fig. 1). Material that included video recordings of women multi-faith leaders telling their stories, creating and sharing their art in exhibitions, private and public performance rituals and conferences. The collaborative a/r/tographic study revealed and solidified the presence of the Divine feminine (Clemént and Kristeva, 2001; Hildegarde, 1990; Irigaray, 2002; Newman, 1987) in each woman that supported their individual and collective journey of feminine-based spiritual leadership—in a world still dominated by male leadership in patriarchal religions. Sliding fifteen years into the future, as I write this chapter the left-over collection of tiny stones re-emerge from a box on my studio shelf. These stones hold memories in and through time. It is my desire that in sharing the stone-carried memories of my story as an arts-based educational research (ABER) scholar, this chapter's memory findings will shift perspectives toward embracing compassionate hospitality and time freedom as principles for both emerging and established ABER scholars.

[1] A/r/tography is a methodology that emerged in the early 2000s at The University of British Columbia in the Faculty of Education as students and faculty began to bring their arts practices to the forefront of their educational research (e.g., Irwin and de Cosson (2004), Springgay et al. (2008)). Emerging out of this community of practice, a/r/tography centers relationality between art, research and teaching, the artist, researcher, teacher, and the art (a/r/t) with the written word (graphy). Within relationality innovative thoughts and ways of making, knowing, learning and being can emerge.

Fig. 1 Barbara stitching lake stones onto canvas labyrinth. Gibraltar Point Artist Residency, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Digital photograph, 2007. © Barbara Bickel

To help traverse Matrixial bordertime (see opening poem),[2] as I write this chapter I return to a meditative process of stitching stones onto canvas. In time presence I turn the canvas pages of a button bound book. Pages that measure 15 × 9 inches; ripped rectangular remnants from a large painting on canvas saved from art school days. A painting based on the photograph I took of a Portuguese Queen I encountered in the form of a statue on a backpacking trip through Europe in my twenties. Her painted countenance and crown are deliberately placed as the last page of the book as I determine, while binding the book, that this will be a Matrixial—Divine feminine and spiritual feminist-based inquiry book (Figs. 2 and 3). I title the book *Carriance* (Fig. 3).

[2] Matrixial theory takes one into a womb-centered worldview that engages critically and care-fully with the phallic-centered worldview that has dominated Western thought for centuries. It is beyond the scope of this chapter and I highly recommend the study of it to all artist-scholars. For a brilliant guided entry into Ettinger's teachings see Griselda Pollock's (2020) edited volume.

Fig. 2 Last page of the book, *Carriance*. Canvas, acrylic paint, stones, and silk thread. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

Fig. 3 *Carriance* book cover. Canvas, acrylic paint, silk thread, buttons, lake stones. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

Stitching Together Visionary Artists and Teachers: Hildegard von Bingen and Bracha Ettinger

I open to the last page of *Carriance* (Fig. 2) and find two tiny stones, a round and an oblong one, to place on the canvas page to help stitch together the voices that underpin a Matrixial—Divine feminine worldview. Voices found in the art and teachings of twentieth century artist, philosopher, psychoanalyst and activist Bracha Ettinger and

twelfth century female mystic Hildegard von Bingen.[3] I slide a bright gold thread through the needle and tie a knot at the end. Directing the needle through the canvas I carry the gold thread across the stone multiple times. As I carefully hold the stone, time is freed from linear time and becomes amensional—a visionary (w)hole through which the voices and worldviews of these teachers co-mingle.

Carriance is a word introduced by Bracha and has captured my attention of late as I strive to create ethical and transformative art in a world of hurting people; living within a time of collapse and rapidly escalating crisis. In a Evans & Ettinger (2016) interview with Brad Evans, Bracha shares that '"one of art's most important functions [is] "[t]o bear" and "to carry"…. To make the world more bearable means to infiltrate the function of what I call "carriance" into the structure of subjectivity. It is to carry the burden of the suffering of others in the hope of a better time to come (n.p.)."' And I would add, drawing from poet philosopher Gebser (1949/85), in the hope of an aperspectival time to come, where we can see through and consolidate the present divisions between multiple states of consciousness, and ways of knowing, being and belonging.

Following my first-year teaching as an Assistant Professor of Art Education I found myself suffering through an existential art crisis, and discovered Bracha's writing and art while at an artist residency (summer 2009). I stumbled upon this feminine paradigm of Matrixial theory while reading footnotes of an article on the struggle of women artists whose art represents the female body in the contemporary patriarchal world of art.[4] That footnote led me to read an article by her, entitled *Copoiesis* (Ettinger, 2005). I quickly became entranced in an experience of catalytic reading and my heart opened wide, infusing me with a renewed sense of purpose for art. I had found an artist-teacher whose compassionate theory had emerged from her art. I recognize Bracha as a mentor as I continue to a/r/tographically study, teach, make art, research and write through and about Matrixial theory. Bracha's theory (2014) significantly leads us:

> to ask what kind of human subject and society was shaped in view of man's lack of womb not as organ but in terms of lack of a whole symbolic universe of meaning and value stemming from the matrixial sphere where the containing of and the proximating to the Other occur on a subsubjective and pre-subjective level, and the passage from non-life to life and sometimes from non-life to death, as well as birth *and birthing,* enter the unconscious *in the feminine*. (Ettinger, 2014, p. 2)

[3] Hildegard von Bingen is referred to predominantly by scholars by her first name. Sister and Abbess Hildegard being the form of address she received during her lifetime. Bracha Ettinger is referred to predominantly by her last name by scholars. I choose to use their given names throughout this chapter to signify the closeness I recognize and feel across time between each of them as sisters, who offer an empowered and liberating voice to the repressed feminine in a still dominant patriarchal world.

[4] The article was written in 1996 by Alison Rowley entitled "On viewing three paintings by Jenny Saville: rethinking a feminist practice of painting" as found in historian Grisdelda Pollock's edited volume entitled *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts*. Routledge, London, pp. 88–109. ISBN 0415141277.

As a collaborative artist, researcher and teacher searching for the relational healing purpose of art, Bracha's gift of restoring the symbolic universe of meaning and value in the womb was an embodied spiritual and artistic re-orientation moment for me. She articulates how the human subject and society, as currently shaped in the male-dominated world of art, disregards the womb as a symbolic universe while tragically erasing the feminine wisdom of birthing and creativity—the detrimental impact of this erasure on the souls of human subjects and the earth we witness each day.

Hildegard's prophetic Twelfth Century teachings align with Bracha's present teachings. Hildegard sees the womb in her visions as the source of the soul, and that through the womb of wisdom (Sophia) creativity is birthed in the world. Hildegard's wisdom teachings are transmuted through her visual art, music and books which cover a vast terrain of theology, science, ecology, education, creativity, and mysticism.[5] She was Canonized as a Doctor of the church by the Pope only in 2012. Her legacy as a female mystic, has been uniquely preserved for over 800 years by sisters of her order in the Rhineland of Germany (Fox, 2012). These archives enable her art and teachings to continue to inspire others regarding the importance of restoring the presence of the Divine feminine along with:

> women's deeply buried, culturally obscured feminine wisdom. She recognized that when women come into their own, there will be an end to the power-over dynamics that have blighted the planet. [As only] the integration of a healthy Sacred Masculine and a resurrected Divine Feminine can save us from our destructive ways. (Fox, 2012, p. xvi)

Visions found in Hildegard's book entitled *Scivias* (Know the Way), recorded in 1141, reveal her encounter with the Divine feminine as mother of the soul. She wrote:

> I saw the image of a woman who had a perfect human form in her womb. And behold! By the secret design of the Supernal Creator that form moved with vital motion, so that a fiery globe that had no human lineaments possessed the heart of that form and touched its brain and spread itself through all its members. (Hildegard cited in J. Noyce, 2019, p. 52).

Retracing my Germanic Christian and Lutheran lineage through a spiritual arts and trance-based process of inquiry in the year 2000 first led me to Hildegard. In this project I was working to reclaim my voice as a silenced daughter of a long lineage of Lutheran clergyman. I drew from Hildegard's strength as a woman who dared to name and honour the womb as the place of soul birth within the patriarchal confines of the Catholic church. Interestingly, she has been described by Creation-centered spirituality scholar Matthew Fox as a post-modernist thinker for her time. She was a female visionary speaking truth to power in her leadership role as magistra of a nunnery. She did this in a time when women's ability to preach, teach, heal and hold political power was being forcibly eradicated—culminating in the tragedy of the Inquisition. She illuminated a maternal-infused knowing "[w]here wisdom, and not just knowledge, is sought, [and] there the Divine Feminine is being sought" (Fox, 2012, p. 115). She understood and taught wisdom as a deeply feminine quality. This

[5] To listen to her music, see her life in film, and see her art: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6rghBbvQ34 https://www.hildegard.com/resources.php?page=hvb and https://www.artbook.com/blog-hildegard.html.

early meeting with Hildegard in some ways prepared me to meet Bracha, both of whom I recognize as artists-healers-teachers and precursors of a/r/tography.

Hildegard and Bracha both create terms or new definitions of words to articulate their teachings as they find phallic-centered languages lacking for the full expression of maternal-centered ideas. Hildegard re-defines the word of God as "living, being, spirits, all verdant greening, all creativity" (cited in Fox, 2012, p. 12). As such, she writes "Therefore, I—as your God—speak now through this human person rather than through the scriptures…. I speak the new secrets and the many mysteries which had previously been concealed within the scrolls" (Fox, 2012, p. 24). Hildegard's re-interpreting of biblical teachings allowed her to preach scripture through a maternal and interconnected relational lens. In turn, Bracha's emergent terms articulate and deepen her Matrixial theory and understandings of feminine borderspace(s) of vulnerability and fragility, as well as "a site of a primordial *being-with* something other that is a *becoming-with"* (Pollock, 2020, p. 3). I have experienced how *being-with* and *becoming-with* Matrixial theory through art opens potential for transforming and restoring the feminine through a worldview shift to one that holds reciprocal and caring relationships with qualities of the healthy masculine and feminine at its source.

Bracha is a notably Freudian schooled scholar and Lacanian schooled psychoanalyst and interpreter. Her scholarship and practices as a psychoanalyst and painter resurrect the feminine, in a theory that is post-Freudian and post-Lacanian and thus a "thinking apparatus for reconfiguring our understanding of subjectivity beyond both the current phallic paradigm and the anti-phallic paradigm of endless fluidity (associated with Deleuze and Guattari)" (Pollock, 2020, p. 4). Matrixial theory troubles and extends theories that remain premised upon the phallic cut of castration, and repression and opposition of the feminine. She instead posits that the matrixial co-exists with the phallic and is distinct "informed by touching, hearing, and moving" in the womb before repression (Barrett, 2000, p. 257).

My first cloth study-book is titled *Metramorphosis* (Bickel, 2019). Begun in 2009, it is still on-going and has helped explore the foundational wisdom and "sense-giving 'feel-knowing' mechanism" of Matrixial theory (Pollock, 2020, p. x). Metramorphosis, a term created by Bracha, describes the process of creating and co-becoming within matrixial borderspace(s) (Ettinger, 2006). The book of *Carriance* is my second Matrixial theory art-study book[6] and now offers me a co-emergent space to inquire into how I carry and have been carried by ABER. The countenance of the queen placed as the substratum of this book is an assertion that wisdom and not just knowledge is being sought in the unfolding ABER story of my co-becoming across time as an artist, a/r/tographer, associate professor, administrator, and independent artist-scholar.

With its metaphor of the womb, Matrixial theory holds the site of matrixial hospitality as a place of co-emergence—a pre-gendered holding space where we all experienced being carried and thus experienced originary compassion. The source of the word *carriance* comes from Ettinger's study of the Hebrew bible based on her interpretative reading of the original text (Ettinger, 1999). A text that still holds

[6] To read about the first Matrixial cloth study book see https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/atj/vol4/iss1/5/.

an intact description of the womb of God, written before the feminine aspects of the mother god were translated and completely re-ascribed to the father. Hildegard too translated biblical text; although her translations came from direct communication, arriving as God-mother-sourced words. Hildegard wrote of God being truly our Mother by whom we are "embraced, hugged, and carried" (Fox, 2012, p. 116) and that creativity [is] everywhere in the universe and the Divine feminine [is] hard at work giving birth." (Fox, pp. 115–116). *Carriance*, for Ettinger, is also hard work; a combination of care + carrying. Just as we have each been carried and cared for in the womb, we are creative beings meant to carry and care for others. Artworking too is hard work. The a/r/tographical writing of this chapter prompts me to pick up the book of *Carriance* and begin to stitch in-to-with its pages.

Carrying Stitches Through Time

Stitching tiny smooth stones onto the pages helps guide me through memories of my years living as an artist, researcher, writer, editor, teacher and administrator. Exploring this journey through the lens of 'a/r/tography as ritual' (Bickel, 2008, 2020a, 2020b) this cloth book ritually offers me the opportunity to carry and to be carried. Stitching and writing myself through time is not linear, as in chronos time, but rather in cyclical matrixial time that touches into time freedom. Hildegard wrote, "Divinity is like a wheel, a circle, a whole, that can neither be understood, nor divided, nor begun, nor ended" (Fox, 2012, p. 114). Books (like stones) are sacred carriers of knowledge on the wheel of time. They have evolved and been created from different materials and processes; carved into bones, chiseled into stone, written on papyrus and rolled into scrolls, scribed on parchment paper and hand bound with leather covers, mass produced on the printing press, and most recently digitally rendered in 3D. I was originally inspired to create canvas books from my old paintings after seeing the fabric books of artist Louise Bourgeois at the Tate Museum in London during my 2015 sabbatical.[7] Artists have a long tradition of making art books. Bourgeois' cloth books, all made in the last ten years of her life while in her nineties, were a way to circle round, weaving the fabric of her life together. She grew up with a mother who was a weaver and through art explored her relationship with her mother. My cloth books also weave, carry and hold relational moments of my life that circle round.

As I stitch, I follow the curve of the wheel and I am carried further back in time (Fig. 4). My BFA thesis exhibition of figurative paintings in 1992 launched me on a co-inquiry process with 17 males who answered my call in a local men's magazine to explore the theme "Men as Birthers Not Destroyers." In this project, the men became co-creators—modelling for and engaging in conversation with a female artist (Bickel, 1992). In 2002, after having lived a decade as a full-time practicing artist, the academy opened me to explore the expansive possibilities of creative research already begun in my collaborative inquiry-based art practice. Although I entered the world of graduate education with some trepidation, I found a unique and open doorway where artists and living inquiry were welcomed through the Aokian school

[7] To see images of this cloth book go to https://news.wsu.edu/news/2019/05/24/wsu-schnitzer-museum-presents-exhibition-louise-bourgeois-ode-forgetting/.

Fig. 4 Detail of stone stitched on a page of the *Carriance* book. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

of reconceptualizing curricular thought (Aoki, 2005), at The University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, Canada.[8] A Faculty of Education that recognized the value of an art practice in tandem with scholarly research (e.g. Butterwick, 2017; Irwin, 2013; Leggo, 2018; Meyer, 2006).

The autoethnographic journey through my M.A. (2004) carried my practice as an artist to that of a/r/tographer (Irwin & de Cossen, 2004; Springgay et al., 2008). Being carried and carrying with care marks my journey as an ABER scholar. While negotiating the disorientation of this transformation I was introduced to an international research community through my involvement with the Arts-Based Educational Research Special Interest Group (ABER SIG) at American Educational Research Association (AERA) conferences. My M.A. thesis was acknowledged through the ABER SIG Outstanding Master Thesis Award in 2005 and solidified my home with ABER scholars. Passing through the gateway of a Ph.D., I became an Assistant Professor of Art Education at Southern Illinois University in a School of Art and Design and moved to the United States. In 2009, I received the ABER SIG Outstanding Dissertation Award. The award presentation was followed by the Annual General Meeting where to my surprise I was nominated and elected Program Chair of the ABER SIG by acclamation. The year I stepped out of the Chair role I co-founded and became Editor-in-Chief (EiC) of the Springer book series, *Studies in Arts-Based*

[8] Ted Aoki taught at UBC and during his short time there founded the Center for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction (now named Center for Cross Faculty Inquiry). This is where I obtained my M.A and studied with a number of professors highly influenced by Aokian thought such as Lynn Fels, Karen Meyer, Rita Irwin and Carl Leggo.

Educational Research (SABER).[9] In 2020, I rotated out of my role as EiC and began to co-edit this book as part of the SABER series with Rita Irwin and Richard Siegesmund. Realizing it was coming close to 30 years of the ABER SIG's presence at AERA, we wanted to honour the legacy of the SIG, as exemplified in the dissertation awardees. I was picking up on an earlier suggestion from Richard Siegesmund at an Editorial board meeting, to have an edited book of ABER dissertation awardees. I too was curious how other dissertation awardee paths had unfolded. At the same time, I wanted to give back to the SIG for its generous support of emerging ABER scholars over the years; myself being fortunate to be one of them. I am honoured that Rita and Richard, having mentored many emerging ABER dissertation scholars in their long and dedicated careers, joined me in co-editing this book. A book that holds particular life stories of a few ABER scholars, that may also touch upon and reflect aspects of other ABER scholar stories. A book reflecting a small part of the larger whole.

From the perspective of travelling through time toward time freedom through ABER, I consciously illuminate and frame practices of the artist, teacher and researcher as gift-giver (Beittel, 1985/2003; Hyde, 2007). I recognize and understand the maternal base of all societies to be a gift economy (Jordan, 2017; Kimmerer, 2013; Vaughan, 1997, 2006). Birth is a gift from the mother. Care and carrying are gifts of motherers.[10] Just as modern humans take with little regard from the natural resources of the Earth (Eisenstein, 2011), the gifts of motherers are most often undervalued and taken from with little regard. The gift economy, similar to the Divine feminine in religious institutions, is ignored, suppressed and taken from without acknowledgement in the dominant scarcity-based market economy of "imperialist, capitalist, white supremacist patriarchy" (Hooks, 1994, p. 197). In contrast to the resource-taker, the gift-giver is one who strives to live relationally—aesthetically, ethically and politically with care for humans and more-than-humans. The artist, teacher and researcher in the context of gift-givers carries, is cared for and cares for others. As essential providers of material and non-material gifts and services they offer collaborative art, visioning, writing, editing, curating, teaching, mentoring, administrating, researching and more. I feel fortunate to be a carrier of the many gifts received from a dynamic network of ABER scholars (e.g. Conrad & Sinner, 2015; Kind, 2004; Lasczik Cutcher & Irwin, 2018; Norris, 2010; Snowber, 2016 and Walsh, 2018). These gifts, some of which I explore below, often arrived unexpectedly, mysteriously, while serving to sustain and nourish me. Through the generosity of gifts given to me on my journey with ABER, the gifts are carried and move forward through me; touching into the past, present and the future.

I pause and find a new stone to sew onto another page in the *Carriance* book. My mind wanders through a myriad of thoughts and memories as my fingers glide over the different stones feeling for the 'right' one. Settling on a sand-coloured circular

[9] A series initiated at AERA with then fellow ABER SIG committee members and former UBC classmates, Daniel Barney and Nadine Kalin.

[10] Genevieve Vaughan uses the word motherers to recognize that mothering can be carried out by all and not only women.

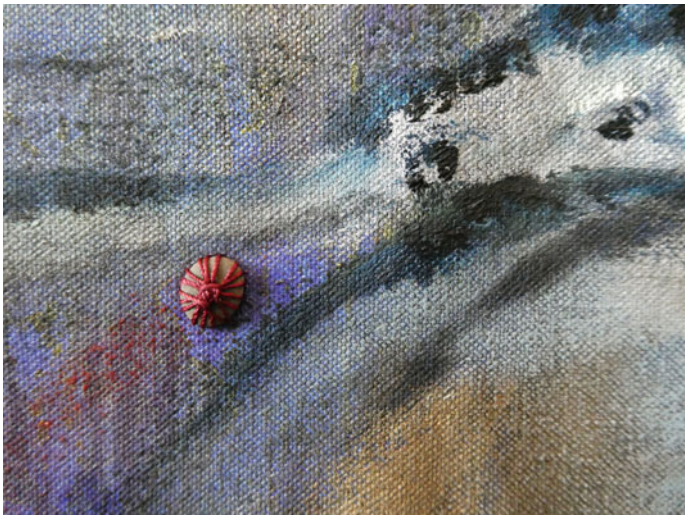

Fig. 5 Detail of *Carriance* book in process. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

stone, I scan further through my 20 years with ABER scholarship. I aim a deep red coloured silk thread through the eye of a needle, tie a knot at its end and make the decision of where to place this small stone on the large page laying open on my lap. This stone carries many memories, only some of which will be mine (Fig. 5). I intuit that I will eventually stitch a tiny stone into each of the 24 pages in the book—reminding me of my small presence in the larger picture of Life as I co-become with it. Each page carries memories embedded in it—when a page is opened, memories are turned over and in turn are carried by the page. Living in the interconnected cycle of carriance.

Carried Away from the University

The gifts of the present come into my thoughts. How did I manage to arrive at the place I am right now, with the ability to live and practice as an independent artist-scholar in Canada, in my city of choice? In 2017, after nine years of teaching, researching and administrating at SIU I was gifted with a small pension; something I had no expectation of when I began my career as an artist. This pension, secured for me by faculty union member predecessors and sustained by students who have attended the university, allowed me to step out of the neoliberal institution and the austerity suffering and conservative controlled State of Illinois. The year I left was one of mass exodus of over 70,000 people from Illinois. I was also admittedly fleeing the USA in the first year of the Trump administration, choosing to forge an independent artist-scholar path in Canada, rather than follow the promotional process to full professorship in the USA. Politically radicalized as a recent dual citizen of the USA and Canada, I left with survivor guilt. Guilt that I had Canada to return to, where I did not have to spend my entire pension on private healthcare insurance. Guilt that I was

Fig. 6 Barbara's Farewell at Mandala Gardens, Marion, Illinois. Digital photograph by Gregory Wendt, 2017. © Barbara Bickel

leaving behind beleaguered colleagues, an Art Education program, and a Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) program under threat of being eliminated.[11]

My colleagues compassionately waved me onward to the Canadian border. For this I am grateful. A colleague, Diana Tigerlily hosted a farewell where we ritually performed in a stone labyrinth with students, colleagues and friends at her home on seven acres of land named Mandala Gardens.[12] We processed through the labyrinth holding high the *WGSS Dream Scroll,* a cloth book added to during my four years as WGSS director (Fig. 6). A scroll filled with student and faculty dreams for women and all those of diverse identities. The *Dream Scroll* remains with the WGSS program and will eventually be housed as an archival cloth book at the university library (Bickel & Sims, 2015). I realize, as I write this chapter, that cloth books carry the threads of my creative research—from the academy into the community. Each of these matrixial-infused cloth books continue to be stitched into and are ever transforming. They have been and are an essential part of my publications as an ABER scholar.

Carrying Stitches Through to Studio M*

Retiring early from my institutional career my desire to create socially-engaged art and write, while connecting with diverse people, ideas, visions and dreams, carried onward. Knowing my ABER scholarship needed a home-base in Canada, I co-founded *Studio M*: A Collaborative Research Creation Lab Intersecting the*

[11] I am grateful both programs have remained in place, smaller but still present.

[12] See http://www.mandalagardens.org/.

Fig. 7 Dream Scroll hung from second floor. *Stepping Out* Art Exhibition, McHugh House Gallery, Calgary Alberta, 2018. © Barbara Bickel

Arts, Culture and Healing with my life-partner, R. Michael Fisher. Studio M* found its first home in a community heritage house renovated with bedrooms turned into studios and the main floor serving as a common space for performing, exhibiting and teaching. I hung the *Gestare Dream Scroll*[13] in the two-story stairwell (Fig. 7). Resting in the center of a temporary labyrinth on the entrance foyer floor, it became a welcoming gesture from Studio M* to the community.

Studio M* has and is a cradle for collaborative creative research, writing and teaching in my post-institutional life. It operates within a matrixial-based gift economy and is a place for learning to live, work, create and support a gifting paradigm. We describe the purpose on our website[14]:

> …Studio M* recognizes the arts and culture as essential healing terrains for the restoration of sanity and nurturing the soul in the 21st century. Studio M* is a gathering place for artists, writers, thinkers, learners, healers and makers to explore ideas and creative impulses that

[13] To learn more about the *Dream Scroll* and *Nap-Ins* created with the Gestare Art Collective see http://www.gestareartcollective.com/nap-ins.php. The Gestare Art Collective (2009–2021) is a collective of women artists. "The source of [their] artistic collaborations comes from [a] shared engagement with the Divine Feminine and the Earth, gestated in the labyrinthine container of wombspace" (n.d., d.p). Recently they ritually transitioned from being an artist collective with set membership to artists individually supporting the Gestare Art Movement. To see more of their archived artworkings go to http://www.gestareartcollective.com/about.php.

[14] See https://studiom.space/.

> don't often get supported because they are not commercial enough, not comfortable enough, and are downright radical.
>
> Studio M* is a creative artworking always in progress. We invite thinkers, writers, artists, healers, teachers, explorers and makers to join in co-creating a conscious awareness of the precarity of our lives and world. Clearly crises of all kinds are going to be the backdrop of everything we do. However, with wide-awakeness and co-creativity we hold the potential to transform the backdrops and re-contextualize new pathways to a better world. (excerpt Studio M* website, 2021, n.p.)

The call for healing in our lives emerged quickly upon our return to Canada. I began to attend to accumulated symptoms from a chronically stressed nervous system and a high level of heavy metal toxicity in my body. In early fall of 2017, my partner was diagnosed with arteriosclerosis. Our first winter was spent living a quiet contemplative and art-focused life while attending to our health. During that very cold winter Michael completed a book (Fisher, 2018), while I spent time resting at home and in the studio working on video-inquiry projects begun during my sabbatical. A collaborative art piece with Michael also emerged that winter and became part of an arts and healing journey with the medical system. We documented the medical experience of his pre- and post-surgery through video, photographs, and recorded conversations which resulted in an ABER video essay entitled *Heart of the Mountain: A Nature, arts and trance-based intervention into a medical crisis* (Bickel & Fisher, 2020).

Recovering from the surgery, and moving out of the home we had been gifted to housesit, we moved closer to Studio M*. In 2018, Studio M* hosted visiting artist-researchers, and began to teach hybrid on-line and in-person classes in our home and at the studio. I was teaching what felt important and nourishing; such as a lunar cycle (bi-monthly on the full and dark moon) of MA Pose practices,[15] a practice co-conceived with Nané Jordan, (a Gestare Art Collective member) at our artist residency in Paris during my sabbatical (Jordan & Bickel, 2021). I also co-taught the first *Trance-Based Inquiry* course with Michael. Trance-Based Inquiry has been integral to my ABER scholarship since my MA thesis. Understanding it as an inquiry process, I had taught short workshops on it, but not an extended course. Teaching this course gave me the confidence to write my first book (Bickel, 2020a, 2020b) which explores my ABER life within the spiritually-centered inquiry practices of art, ritual and trance.[16] Trance-based inquiry is a practice that allows one to explore time freedom within a liminal awake dream space. Engaging both the conscious and non-conscious mind, the right and left side of the brain simultaneously, opens one to inquire through non-drug induced altered states of consciousness. Trance-based inquiry can lead to an embodied union of the pre-rational, rational and arational mind. It invites a deepening and widening of perspectives that includes and extends beyond normal understandings—allowing one to see through the world as we normally know it and re-orient ourselves within the cosmos.

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[15] See http://www.gestareartcollective.com/ma-poses.php.

[16] See the book blog https://art-ritual-trance-inquiry.tumblr.com/.

With both Michael and I focused inward while writing our respective books, to create balance in our lives we opened our home library to the community by hosting bi-weekly drop-in library gatherings. On these nights community members were invited to have tea, explore our library and engage in dialogue. Connecting with community in our home was an essential and grounding commitment for us and a way to keep Studio M* active in the community. Some evenings we invited guest speakers or had informal readings, until our library gatherings were put on hold in early 2020 due to the pandemic restrictions.

Knowing the significance of art as a communal healing practice and with our home closed for library nights, we began to offer on-line drop-in groups of what we call *Spontaneous Creation Making* (SCM) (Bickel & Fisher, 1993; Bickel, 2020a, 2020b, 2023). We have taught SCM as a creative communal practice off and on since 1989. We framed these events as Happenings within a Restorative Lab Project as part of Studio M* to express, co-inquire and learn creatively through the global experience of living with the virus. Teaching on-line in the context of research creation with international participation of retired and active professors, artists, teachers and community members has taken the practice of SCM to a new level. We have since co-written a book entitled *Art-Care Practice for Restoring the Communal: Education, Co-Inquiry and Healing* based on the Lab findings (Bickel & Fisher, 2023).

Stitches Carried Through the Tenure Track

Stitching a stone onto another page with a silk blue thread I am carried back in time to my two-day faculty job interview in 2008 (Fig. 8). During the question period following my artist-research job talk I was asked, "What has happened to art education?" In the conversation that followed the chair of the School of Art and Design (SoAD) compared my research and philosophy with Joseph Beuys and his social sculpture (Biesta, 2017). Presenting the socially-engaged art of my a/r/tographic dissertation with the women spiritual leaders as an integration of art, research and education perplexed many of the faculty. When it was shown to have roots in the contemporary Art World some were able to make the connection. At least enough of them to make the decision to hire me and agree to include a studio as part of my hiring package so I could continue my a/r/tographic research. Studio space for ABER was unheard of for art educators as they are considered teachers rather than artists-researchers in the eyes of most studio faculty. Despite a director who respected me as an artist and art educator and who included studio as well as art education classes in my first-year teaching assignments, it did not take long for me to experience the hierarchy of a traditional SoAD, and by extension the contemporary Art World. Studio faculty at the top, followed by Design, Art History and last, and at the bottom, Art Education. Despite not being respected as an artist by many studio-based faculty, I enjoyed my first year teaching drawing to young artists with an inquiry and relational approach to learning. A telling comment regarding the school context I was teaching in came half-way through the semester from a second-year drawing student saying, "I think I get it. You want us to be creative!".

After my first year of teaching a combination of studio and art education classes, the 2D studio program declined to have me teach in their program again. I was not

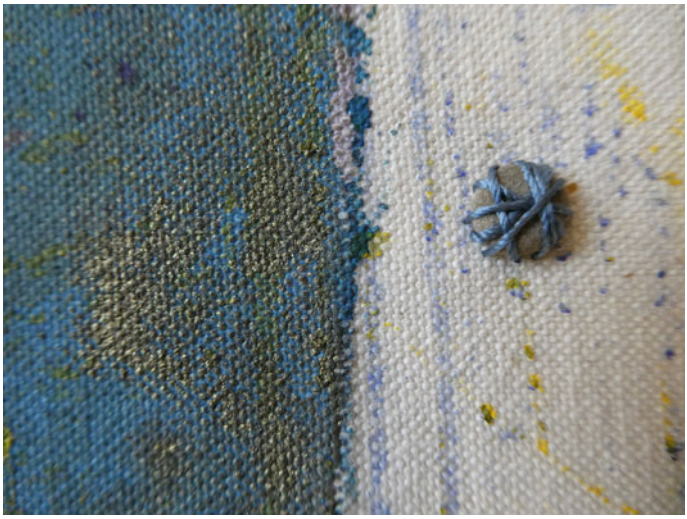

Fig. 8 Detail of *Carriance* book in process. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

Fig. 9 *Metramorphosis* book in progress. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

following their traditional modernist curriculum. The school has had an historically strong craft-based curriculum and reputation, and as I found out later, when trying to created new curriculum in the art education program, studio programs had not altered their curriculum since 1962. To give a bit of historical context futurist R. Buckminster Fuller taught in the same School of Art & Design from 1960–1971 and left frustrated. In Fuller (1971) wrote, "The miracle is that the artists are the human beings whose comprehensivity was not pruned down by the well meaning, but educational customs of society" (p. 43). My frustration with studio faculty not supporting a living curriculum was compounded by the standardization of curriculum, driven

by State requirements in the Teacher Education Program. Both education and studio faculty at my university were at odds with my reconceptualist approach (Pinar et al., 1995/2004) to the education of artist-educators.

I was fortunate to have a supportive and visionary art education colleague (Gradle & Bickel, 2010) who knew the importance of a living curriculum to address the times we were in. We were able to co-create an innovative art education curriculum together and took steps to add a community stream, creating a minor in Community Art Education. In addition to teaching required courses, I was able to develop and teach elective classes in both ABER and socially-engaged art as they did not require a faculty approval vote. These were senior level classes open to graduate students, and consequently I had the privilege of working with across campus undergraduate, MFA and Ph.D. students in interdisciplinary areas such as Performance Studies, Education, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS), and Music. When I became director of the WGSS program I continued to teach these classes, while distinctly fore-fronting the feminist roots of these practices. I count myself very fortunate for the teaching classes I was able to carve out for myself in my years at SIU.

The Carriance of Conferencing

I carried the *Metramorphosis* book (Fig. 9) with me to a number of conference presentations (Bickel, 2019). When it was my time to present, I would unbutton the pages I had pre-pinned a needle and thread into, and handed them to those in attendance. Asking them to stitch into the book and respond to what was already in the page invited connection-making for co-becoming with the stitches of unknown others in the book. With audience members eyes and hands on the book pages, I presented on spiritual feminist and matrixial-infused ABER practices. Conferences sustained me as an ABER scholar. At conferences, I found a supportive network of colleagues that crossed borders, both disciplinary and globally (e.g. AERA, Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE), Curriculum and Pedagogy Conference (C&P), International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI)). Collaborative research, presentations, writing projects and workshops were initiated and fostered at conferences with ABER colleagues. Significantly, my first co-edited book came out of a conference panel I was part of (Walsh et al., 2015). This led to being invited to co-facilitate an Artist Researcher Teacher SIG pre-conference at CSSE in 2017, that then became a co-edited two-part special issue of *Artizein: Arts and Teaching Journal* publication (Bickel & Walsh, 2019; Bickel et al., 2018). I credit receiving tenure a year early to the connections, creative research and publications generated through being gifted by and gifting to the communities of artist-scholars I met at conferences. Significantly, through my service on the ABER SIG executive, I met many international ABER scholars in the field. Their generous tenure review letters not only supported my promotion but also served to educate my SoAD faculty colleagues as to what ABER scholarship was. Travelling to conferences also enabled me to visit museums and galleries I would otherwise never have seen. This afforded me the opportunity to

meet artists indirectly through experiencing their art and sometimes to meet artists who lived in these conference cities (e.g. Mary Beth Edelson, Jana Napoli).[17]

Moving further back in time I recall other significant conferences. In my early professional career in social services, as vice-president of the Art Therapy Association of Alberta, I co-planned my first conference and met my future life-partner. Years later, my dissertation study was carried out with women spiritual leaders on the Women's Spirituality Celebration (WSC) conference planning team. Later I was energized by co-creating conferences for Art Education and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies students, teachers and faculty at my university. During my time on the ABER SIG executive, I co-created pre-conferences at AERA. I am admittedly an artist-scholar who has experienced carriance by conferencing with others, and I recognize that not all people are as fortunate and able to afford conference travel. Yet, I think it is significant to acknowledge the role that conferences can play for ABER scholars. If a scholar is able to find a conference 'home' it can keep their research and research relationships alive and well. I met Sally Gradle, my future colleague at an AERA conference after presenting on one of my comprehensive exams in the Spirituality and Education SIG. Having completed a dissertation (Gradle, 2004) on arts-based spiritual practices of artists herself, she resonated with my ABER research and we easily fell into a nourishing professional relationship long distance. I believe, attending conferences and making valuable connections led to obtaining a tenure-track position in a time when tenure-track positions in art education where scarce. Developing a friendship with Sally helped me make the decision to carry my life to a new country, knowing I had a like-minded colleague awaiting who I cared for and who cared for me.

Despite receiving the gift of a tenure-track position, I was not overjoyed when my career carried me to the USA. I hold great awe for Canadian colleagues who venture out on their own without partners and make the transition successfully. Moving to a new country as a new scholar adds an additional complexity that is important to recognise. In reflection, there were four key elements that allowed me to accept the position and carried me through to my tenure there: (1) the art education program was housed in a School of Art and Design where I was surrounded by art and artists, (2) working with a compatible colleague in the two-person art education program, (3) having a life-partner willing to relocate, despite not securing an academic position himself. His support was essential to the transition and maintenance of my emotional health while in the institution, (4) and lastly, being offered a studio across the street from the university multi-faith center with an outdoor labyrinth. This last element I saw as a sign that I was to make the move. Walking the path of labyrinths carried me during my years as a student at UBC and became the metaphoric and literal map that led me through the writing of my comprehensive exams and dissertation. I trust the wisdom of this timeless cross-cultural art form—often made of stones, and known in ancient Crete as a symbol of the womb of the Divine feminine. Creative research with the labyrinth deepened during my time as a faculty member and continues to thread itself through my life (Bickel & Jordan, 2009).

[17] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Beth_Edelson and http://www.jananapoli.com/.

Cared for and Carried in Collaboration at Artist Residencies

I began this chapter telling the story of collecting stones on the beach while at my first artist residency at Artscape Gibraltar Point[18] (Fig. 10). Between 2007 and 2017 my creative research was carried and deepened by thirteen artist residencies, two of which, I facilitated as artist-teacher for a group of study abroad students from my university. My sabbatical included three artist residencies; one at the Comox Valley Art Gallery[19] and one at the Arts-Based Research Studio[20] at the University of Alberta with my life partner, and another with my friend and colleague Nané Jordan in Paris at the Cité University. Based on that residency, Nané and I co-wrote an article on the gift of creating artist residencies as a practice to sustain artist-researchers-teachers (Jordan & Bickel, 2021). Before retiring I applied for an artist residency at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity.[21] A few months after returning to Canada I was encompassed by pristine mountains, surrounded by artists, and kickstarting the video and trance-based inquiry projects[22] I had not been able to attend to while still a professor.

Over half of my residencies have been collaborative with members of the Gestare Art Collective. The same women artists I had walked labyrinths with at the WSC conference in 2007 while a grad student. The Gestare Art Collective formed in 2009 and became pivotal to sustaining my creative research as an ABER scholar. Our collaborative art-making follows, honours, and is impacted by creating with lunar and solar cycles of the year (whether we are physically together or apart). We have co-presented at conferences, given workshops, and co-written articles and book chapters. Most significantly, we play, struggle and laugh together as we strive to understand the Divine feminine and live in carriance through our collaborative artful inquiry practices.

The Matrixial Divine Feminine in Carriance

Writing within the spiral of time freedom, I stitch a last teaching together from Bracha and Hildegard for this chapter. A found poem combines their words with an intention to carry us toward knowing the Divine feminine, creativity and the cosmos.

> The Cosmos is born
> revealed
> by aesthetical
> ethical
> joining-in-differentiating
> working-through

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[18] See https://artscapegibraltarpoint.ca/.

[19] See https://www.comoxvalleyartgallery.com/.

[20] See https://sites.ualberta.ca/~dhconrad/ResearchProjectsPages/InterdisciplinaryArtsBasedPage.html.

[21] See https://www.banffcentre.ca/.

[22] See an example of the trance-based inquiry art and writing https://galleries.lakeheadu.ca/barbara-bickel.html.

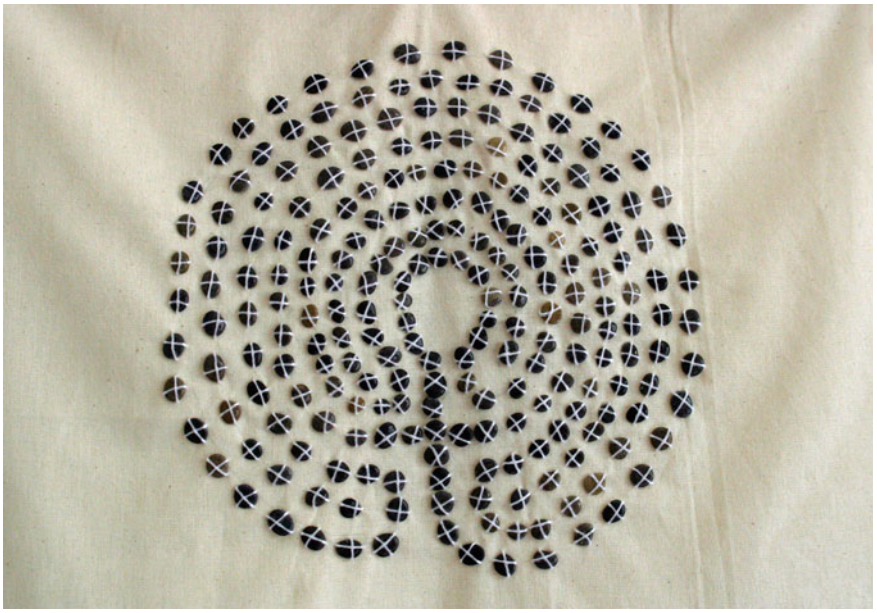

Fig. 10 *Stillpoint* central altar (labyrinth detail)ρ, lake stones, thread on broadcloth. Gibraltar Point Artist Residency, Toronto, ON. Digital photograph, 2007. © Barbara Bickel

spiritual
knowledge of the Other.

The Divine feminine cannot be seen
but is known through
divine creation
artworking
art-works create such
knowledge.

(Poem found in Ettinger, 2005, p. 708 and Hildegard as cited in Fox, 2021, p. 69)

I bring this chapter to rest with the *Carriance* book laying open on my lap (Fig. 11). Although this chapter will end, the cyclical story of my ABER inquiry in carriance within a Matrixial Divine feminine worldview does not end. The book is open and ready for the next stone to be stitched onto a page. I pause and breath in with gratitude my ABER journey; which began prior to my academic career, has been cared for, carried through, around and beyond it.

Having heard my story, I hold that others may find and reflect upon their own stone carried memories. That all may experience compassionate hospitality through carriance and time freedom, while in the midst of an ABER-infused life.

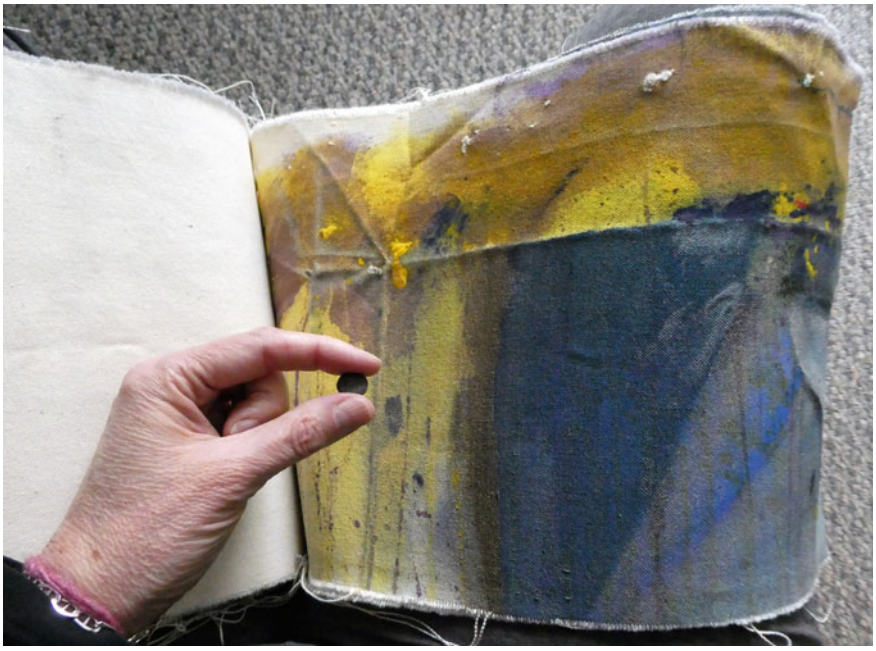

Fig. 11 *Carriance* book with stone awaiting. Digital photograph, 2021. © Barbara Bickel

Dissertation Award Information

Outstanding ABER Dissertation Award Year: 2009

Dissertation Title: *Living the Divine Spiritually and Politically: Art, Ritual and Performative/Pedagogy in Women's Multi-faith Leadership*

Supervisor: Rita L. Irwin

Committee Members: William Pinar, Daniel Vokey

Degree Granting University: The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Canada

Dissertation Link: https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0054657

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Colour and Place, for the Love of the World: Observations Along a Research-Creation Trajectory

Kathleen Vaughan

Abstract Using the linked motifs of colour and place, the author traces her last 15 years of artistic research through theory and practice, a pivotal moment being her completion of the first 'research-creation' doctoral dissertation at York University (Toronto, Canada) which was awarded the ABER SIG Dissertation Award (2008). The chapter tracks the beginnings of the author's methods in the studio-based approaches of her MFA; and describes how during and since her doctoral work, her methods were deepened and enriched by social sciences inflected arts-based educational research and the UK's understandings of practice-based research. The researcher positions her approach as 'research-creation,' the Canadian term for "an approach to research that combines creative and academic research practices, and supports the development of knowledge and innovation through artistic expression, scholarly investigation, and experimentation" (SSHRC, 2021), while she also draws on allied methods of oral history and ethnography. In 2008 taking up her tenure track (tenured 2013) position at Concordia University, and while supervising graduate artist-researchers, the author has continued to develop her transdisciplinary artistic practice addressing place and belonging via textiles, audio, video, installation, photography, and writing, and using the devices of colour to engage, explore and reflect her love of the natural world.

Keywords Research-creation · Place · Colour · Collage · Sustainability · Social justice · Public pedagogies

> Intoxication with color, sometimes subliminal, often fierce, may express itself as a profound attachment to landscape. It has been rightly said: Color is the first principle of Place. (Meloy, 2002, p. 16)

I deliberately start this chapter with an epigram that emphasizes the complex ways that we humans engage with the world, ways that sometimes exceed our capacity to express through language, that provoke altered states of mind (intoxication), that

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draw on love, intuition, and sensation and that reflect the urge to create a sense of belonging. These engines fuel my artistic and research practices, which I'll describe here. This chapter will provide an overview of my activities since the mid-1990s work of my MFA in Studio Arts, the 2006 project of my PhD in education (awarded the ABER SIG dissertation prize in 2008), and my research and graduate supervision activities as of 2008 within a tenure-stream/tenured position in Art Education at Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada. I'll aim to keep my language clear, my tone expository, and my citations precise in order to draw on the power of text to communicate, connect, even teach, and to honour the capacity of stories to generate knowledge. The images here reflect both the colours of creative works and some aspect of the place that inspires them, with the captions offering further information.[1] I hope to convey that as essential as the meanings embedded in academicized writing are those that exceed it: those accessible to the artist's intuitive, nondiscursive ways of knowing. This is the knowledge of artistic research that I aim to both problematize and gesture towards through the texts and photographs of this chapter.

So, colour. I do love colour for its individualized perception, for its site- and time-specificity (*this* petal on *this* plant in *this* spot at *this* time of day and month and year in *this* weather as seen by *this* person at *this* moment); for its ability to refer to and yet exceed the external world; and for its multiple and diverse cultural referents and histories: that is, for its "discursive qualification and affective intensity" (Davis & Lyall, 2015, p. 81). I also love colour's capacity to woo our attention. Recently, to my surprise, I have begun to be seduced by yellow. By its brightness; by its complex, be-deviled human histories; by the benign-to-toxic challenge of the yellow pigment, natural and manufactured (Fig. 1). By the conundrum of its perception: with no yellow receptors in the human eye, we combine red and green receptors to 'see' it, while insects fall over themselves and hallucinate, so strongly does ultraviolet reflect yellow to them (Jarman, 1995). By the fabulously irrepressible exultation of the dandelion (Fig. 2).

And place. There are places on our beautiful planet that I love, and for love of which I take up the artistic research I do. As Scottish naturalist Nan Shepherd reminds us, writing of the Cairngorm Mountains and their impact on her, "love pursued with fervour is one of the roads to knowledge" (2019, p. xliii). My understanding of the multidimensional concept of 'place' is informed by the work of the feminist geographer, Doreen Massey, who considered place and space to be one and the same: the production of interrelations, always under construction, in a simultaneity of intersecting stories-so-far (2005). Many of the stories in my work relate to social and environmental justice. Increasingly, I emphasize questions of sustainability and the rights of nature, as well as equity, inclusion, and decolonization. Some work also reflexively investigates multiple knowledge practices, including those of the arts. The places I reference include my home towns of Montreal, where I was born, did early graduate work, and now, again, reside, and Toronto, where I lived, studied, taught, and

[1] My work is extensively documented and described on my two websites, http://www.akaredhanded.com and http://www.re-imagine.ca, the latter specifically for projects developed through my two Concordia University research chairs.

Fig. 1 *Søndre Green, May 2019* (detail), one of 28 small weavings (each about 6″ by 6″) created using Norwegian yarn and representing the changing spring colours of rural southcentral Norway in calendar form. Created as part of an artist's residency at AiRGreen, Noresund, Norway, and referencing the dandelions in local fields. Photo: RichardMax Tremblay. Copyright Kathleen Vaughan

Fig. 2 Dandelion abundance in the fields of Noresund, Norway, May 2019. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

made art for more than 20 years of adult life. Growing up in Montreal, I internalized the colour of the city's signature grey stone cladding of buildings downtown, in Old Montreal and Westmount (for more on the role of this grey stone in city-building here, see the Canadian Centre for Architecture, n.d.). Moving to Toronto in my late teens, I was surprised by a different palette: the red brick of the Victorian gothic buildings of and around the University of Toronto. Now, back in Montreal, in the previously working class neighbourhood of Pointe-St-Charles, I am in a world of historic brick row houses and low-rise condo newbuilds, the grey-tinged salmon pink bricks of my own small home an ongoing delight to me even as I have come to see that the materiality of my cities reflects class distinctions, urban histories, and colonization.

I am very mindful that in both Montreal and Toronto, I am a settler on Indigenous land. In Montreal or Tiohtià:ke, I am on unceded Indigenous lands, lands that are historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of those lands and waters, and Tiohtià:ke/Montréal is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. I respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in my ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community (see also Concordia University, Indigenous Directions, n.d.). The area known as Toronto or Tkaronto has been care-taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat and is now home to many First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities, including the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region (see also YorkU, Centre for Indigenous Student Services, n.d.).[2] My ancestors came to Montreal and Toronto from Ireland, Scotland, and England, 100 to 150 years ago, the Irish sides of my family fleeing the devastation of the Potato Famine, the Scottish side the Highland Clearances, and my English grandfather, reportedly, both a failed love affair and his violent father. Like so many who have migrated through the human ages, they were seeking a better life for themselves and the children they hoped to have. As members of the agricultural or working poor classes they had little way to better their own lives in the locations they left. I know too few of their stories, and wonder if their having come from relatively northern places is at play in my own draw to the Nordic regions.

Since a 2016 residency, I have grown to love and also develop work related to Iceland, particularly to the small rural northwest community of Blönduós, where numbers of sheep and horses outweigh those of humans (population: 900) (Fig. 3).

[2] In including slightly tweaked versions of the land acknowledgements developed by Concordia and York Universities, I signal that it is through my affiliation with each institution that I have come to understand the importance of including land acknowledgements *in an individualized form that goes beyond rote recitation.* I also understand the problematics of the recitations, which can become formulaic rather than identifying the speaker's responsibility to the peoples and lands acknowledged. For more on the latter see York University's 2019 YFile article about the university's territorial acknowledgement, Chelsea Vowel's (2016) blog post and Theresa Stewart-Ambo and K. Wayne Yang's 2021 article, all in the reference list. This chapter aims to suggest how I am increasingly orienting my own practices towards de-colonization and other forms of healing.

Fig. 3 *Iceland: Earth and Sky* (2016–18), detail of installation of my textile map of Blönduós/Iceland, including Icelandic wool (lace knitting), Icelandic volcanic rocks, silk thread, and velveteen backing. Photo: Richard-Max Tremblay. Copyright Kathleen Vaughan

In Blönduós, grazing fields gleam yellow-green in the summer's bright sun, which glints blue off the rushing, salmon-rich waters of the Blanda River. Dammed further upstream for a hydro plant that provides electricity to the northwestern third of Iceland, the Blanda reveals the challenges and possibilities of living respectfully alongside nature in a very fragile northern ecosystem. In the frequently stormy skies of this small town on the edge of a bay of the Arctic Ocean, the landscape is also a delight of subtle silvers and greys above the black lava sands. I have written elsewhere (Vaughan, 2017) of the appeal to me of the specific colours of the Icelandic landscape—the vividness of the acid green grasses, mosses, and lichens, so different from the Kentucky bluegrass-rich fields of central Canada; the purple of the invasive Alaskan lupine, brought to counter erosion and now freckling the landscape and crowding out native species; the extraordinary lustre and range of those silvers and greys (Fig. 4). They remain the Icelandic tones that delight me most.

The Icelandic Textile Center has since become a research collaborator and the locus of the recurring Iceland Field School (Vaughan, 2019) that I have developed for Concordia University students. Unlike my Canadian homeplaces, Iceland does not have an archeological record, oral history, or literary knowledge of Indigenous peoples subsequently colonized, although its Viking/Celtic settlers and descendants were colonized by both Norway and Denmark. This may be why being there feels to

Fig. 4 The Húnafloí or Húna Bay of the Arctic Sea at Blönduós, June 2018. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

me indescribably 'different' than being here: the historical weight of suffering feels less, as does my complicity. However, in all these locations, the natural world and Other-than-human creatures have all suffered from extractivism and toxic capitalism, which sees the world as an economic resource to be mined rather than a sacred trust to be stewarded and preserved for the future. I look forward to the day when our land acknowledgements also honour the natural world, and our laws and cultural practices show its systems and creatures greater respect. I draw strength from these complex places I love, do my best to learn with and about them, and centre multiple projects of artistic and community-based research in and around them (Fig. 3). Especially given my appointment as Concordia University Research Chair in Socially Engaged Art and Public Pedagogies (2016–2021), I both make work and consider its public pedagogies, agreeing with education theorist Gert Biesta that "public pedagogy [is] the enactment of concern for the public quality of human togetherness" (2012, p. 683). In my work, then, I aim to explore the ways that art can embody a concern for participation in the public sphere, for viewers' engagement in the kind of freedoms and sense of democratic entitlement that can lead to our co-creating more just worlds for more of us.

With this pedagogical inclination, my work can be described as arts-based educational research (ABER), that is—in the words of scholars and theorists Melissa Cahnmann-Taylor and Richard Siegesmund—"critical arts-based scholarship and

research … demonstrating deep knowledge and skill within an art form for the purpose of illuminating educational issues" (2018, p. 4). But as their "Introduction" to the second edition of their essay collection also notes, artists/researchers now navigate a varied terrain that conjoins social sciences and the arts, with some methodological casting emphasizing the artistic stance, others, that of the social sciences (p. 2 ff.). I emphasize the artistic, and see the artwork itself as generating knowledge rather than as an embodiment of data sourced via other means (as per, for instance, arts-informed inquiry (Knowles & Cole, 2008) and some other modalities of arts-based research (Leavy, 2020)). I categorize and describe my work as 'research-creation', using the Canadian term for artistic research. Our major national academic funder, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), offers the following as partial definition of research-creation:

> An approach to research that combines creative and academic research practices, and supports the development of knowledge and innovation through artistic expression, scholarly investigation, and experimentation. The creation process is situated within the research activity and produces critically informed work in a variety of media (art forms) SSHRC, (2021).

Further, research-creation is distinctive in that it draws on the researcher's professional caliber of engagement with art practice and aims to generate knowledge through art-making. Indeed, a history of "sustained artistic or creative practice" is the prerequisite for research-creation identified by our provincial academic funder, the FRQSC, Fonds de recherche du Québec en société et culture (2021). I occupy this double niche, of a professional academic, and of a professional artist whose status as such is recognized by my peers.

Using textiles, drawing, photography, oral histories in audio and video form, on-site natural installations, and text, and in interdisciplinary studio- and community-based projects, I work as an exhibiting artist to create research through art—art as research—and have done so since I completed my MFA in studio arts in the mid-1990s. Before describing that early work as well as the project of my dissertation, I'll highlight two current, long-term projects, so that past work can be seen through the lens of where it led in my on-going research-creation.

First up is *Learning from the St. Lawrence (LWtSL)*, a multi-year arts-science collaboration and outreach project centred in Montreal and the St. Lawrence River Valley, exploring this major 1200-km-long river as imaginary and ecosystem, ultimately celebrating citizen engagement and advocating for the River's rights. Two environmental scientists, a participatory documentary filmmaker, sculptor/researcher in plastic pollution, and curator are my five collaborators in this project—funded both by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and by Concordia University, through two successive Concordia University Research Chairs, in Socially Engaged Art and Public Pedagogies (2016–21) and Art + Education for Sustainable and Just Futures (2021–26). *LWtSL* is an umbrella for multiple research-creation and community-facing projects, now regaining momentum after the COVID-19 pandemic's slowdowns. This project is profoundly energized by my experience of the 'colours of water' in the St. Lawrence River Valley between Montreal and Trois-Rivières, where distinct streams can be distinguished by their

Fig. 5 View from the deck of the Lampsilis into the waters of Lac St. Pierre, the white foam line in the water indicating the meeting spot of two strands of water of different temperatures, moving alongside each other at different speeds. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

colour as they flow to the Atlantic. Along the eastern shoreline, the dredged channel of the St. Lawrence River seaway moves deep and fast, a distinctive chrome green with waters originating in the Great Lakes; in the middle, a shallower and more turbid flow reflects blue skies but tinges to tan with the outflow of Montreal wastewaters—treated but still containing high concentrations of E-coli and other contaminants—particularly visible in aerial shots in the central channel; and along the western edge, the brown waters that come in undammed from the Ottawa River and its northern tributaries, filled with leaf matter and other earthy constituents of a boreal tea. With different components, temperatures, and rates of flow, these streams within the St. Lawrence move alongside each other for many kilometres before starting to mix, an extraordinary reality I was able to see for myself when aboard the Lampsilis in July 2018, as my science collaborators tested water quality and fish—and inspired me with their knowledge of place. Clearly visible in person with the discerning capacities of the human eye, the subtle distinctions are hard to capture with the less subtle device of a camera. However, what can be recorded and is seen in the image above is the line of foam between the streams of water, a by-product of the friction they create as they rub alongside each other (Fig. 5). The long horizontals of such views compel me and will be a feature of new artwork.

In addition to my own planned digital- and hand-embroidery series of textile works about endangered river species, *Learning With the St. Lawrence* includes commissioned 'field notes'—digital or digitally-documented works from artists responding to specific, geo-located sites along the River's flow—and outreach via community arts activities to citizens and other stakeholders, implicated in the River's well-being. With permission, I will integrate their words and images into a collaborative textile map of the River, mapping being a favourite visual device of mine since it is at once easily accessible to almost all and—sociologically and environmentally—always imbued with questions of engagement, power, and colonialism.

Indeed, LWtSL is also the locus of *Walk in the Water | Marcher sur les eaux* (Vaughan, 2018), a two-pronged research-creation project that includes a wall-sized, touch-sensitive 'talking textile' map of six moments of human intervention into the shoreline of Montreal's industrial/post-industrial Pointe-St-Charles neighbourhood: specifically, shoreline infilling with contaminated soil from multiple urban development projects, with changes visible on six maps from 1801 through 1963, and the neighbourhood's permanent loss of access to the shoreline that once defined it (Fig. 7). Created with the beiges of natural linens as well as layers of organzas in shoreline/river tones of green, teal, tan, and various blues, *Walk in the Water* includes labeling and captioning created via digital embroidery, using the 700-stitch per minute Tajima Machine of the Textiles and Materiality research cluster of Concordia's Milieux Institute in Arts, Culture and Technology. Integrated into the large (9 feet high by 12 feet wide by 5 feet deep) textile map of the neighbourhood are five triggers which via embroidered conductive thread activate electronic features: small amplifiers and speakers hidden behind the top layer of cloth (Fig. 6). When touched by a visitor, these trigger points play back 1–2 minutes of audio excerpted from interviews with River stakeholders, as well as an underwater/hydrophonic recording of the St. Lawrence itself.[3]

These and other interviews are integrated into *Walk in the Water*'s second component (Vaughan, 2020), an hourlong 'displaced' audiowalk that traces the route of the vanished, overbuilt 1801 shoreline. Designed to be listened to on site or elsewhere, the audio work outlines the natural and human histories of the area, and considers Montrealers' relationships with water ecosystems through time, from the perspectives of drinking, swimming, and fishing. This project is oriented to embodied knowledge and with respect to participants, takes on the oral history stance of "shared authority" (the term popularized by Michael Frisch and used to title his book of oral history case studies, 1990), in which knowledge is explicitly co-created with interviewees. While the project has a definite post-humanist, environmental orientation, I aim to be inclusive, urging those who experience these works to their own 'deep noticing' of the natural world of the urban sites and urban rivers around them, wherever they may be.

The second project I have currently underway is *The Future is Wool*, an international collaboration that connects artists, sustainable sheep farmers, agricultural

[3] The workings of and background to *Walk in the Water* is portrayed in a short film, see Vaughan and Flores Torre (2020).

Fig. 6 *Walk in the Water* (2018), detail of touch sensitive trigger for audio segments of interviews, with digital embroidery and textile piecing on linen, with silk and polyester organzas and thread. Photo: RichardMax Tremblay. Copyright Kathleen Vaughan

researchers, soil scientists, and members of the textile and design industries, with crafters and other yarn-loving members of the general public. The work of this project spans the various realms of globalized knowledge proposed by craft theorist Namita Gupta Wiggers (in an interview published online, Razdan & Lamber, 2021), building on those of cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (2013): the craftscape, ethnoscape, technoscape, ideoscape, financescape, mediascape—and, I would further add—the enviroscape. Connecting folk in the wool-oriented countries of Iceland and New Zealand with others here in central Canada, *The Future is Wool* aims to support our respective regional wool development and use, and promote shifts in textile use away from synthetics and their micro-plastic contamination. My collaborators and I are developing multiple undertakings. Some will use research-creation to explore the potential of wool as a beautiful and sustainable material for art and design. Others will emerge from crafting circles as sites of community/research/making: exploring community-based handwork projects (knitting with wool) as a means of promoting personal/communal well-being; welcoming diverse cultural knowledges and practices; and mitigating ecological grief (Cunsolo & Ellis, 2018).

Fig. 7 The inaccessible St. Lawrence River shoreline of Montreal's Pointe-St-Charles neighbourhood. This photo was taken from the shoulder of a fast-moving autoroute to/from the city centre, not conducive to walking at the best of times. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

One of my personal research-creation projects under this umbrella is *The Book of Wool* (begun in 2019), a double-spined cloth book whose interleafed pages are designed to be touched, turned, read, absorbed by viewers/readers. Drawing on my own and internet-sourced photographs, text about sustainable farming, and wool research, the pages of *The Book of Wool* integrate digital and hand embroidery, knitting, and other handwork techniques (Fig. 8). This project aims to celebrate and share local/regional knowledge of sheep and wool, while proposing a broad definition of what counts for knowledge—not just the written word in books (even cloth ones!), but also visual acumen and embodied and experiential understanding from handmaking, whether this knowledge is shared through digital means or direct exchange. I am creating new pages for the *Book of Wool* as I deepen my engagement with local, regional, and international partners and crafters (Fig. 9). My pages and embroidery threads take the natural colours of sheep, from ivory white through taupes, browns, greys and black, with a few exceptions. For instance, one page includes a stitched version a pile of hay in a spectrum of gold-greens, others the royal blue of hot links in digital texts, ironically versioned in embroidery thread in this book. *The Book of Wool* references various places in Canada, Vermont, Iceland, and the UK, reflecting the ubiquity of sheep in human culture and history as well as the potential of wool as a miracle fibre that insulates when wet, and is antibacterial,

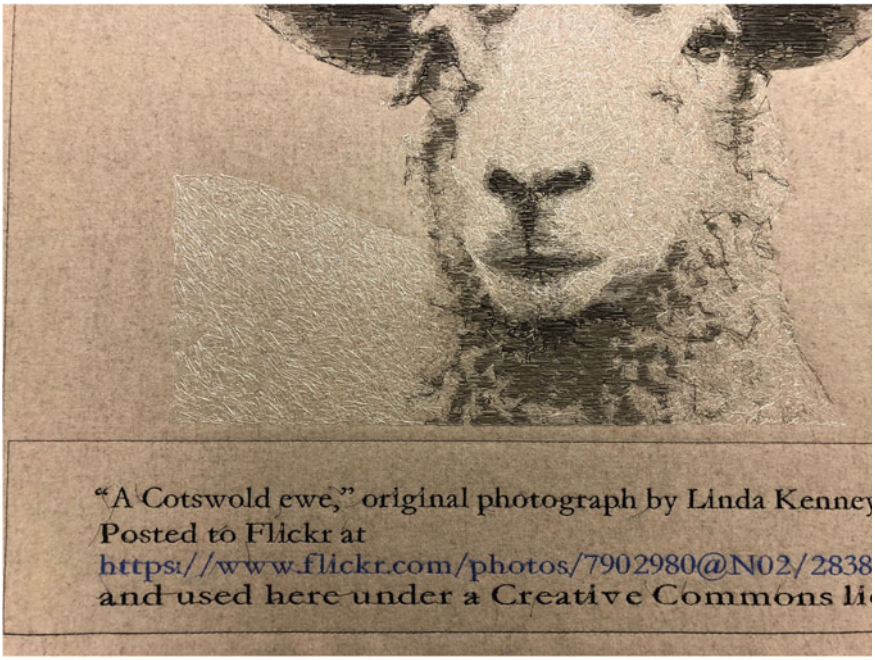

Fig. 8 *The Book of Wool* (work in progress), detail of digital embroidery of image/text on wool cloth. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

anti-inflammatory, biodegradable and sustainable, versatile and incredibly beautiful, whether dyed or in a natural wool tone.

I frame both *Learning With the St. Lawrence* and *The Future is Wool* as research-creation initiatives. From my perspective this means that they address particular research questions from identified theoretical standpoints—posthumanist and feminist in ways similar to those of biologist/cultural theorist Donna Haraway (2016); critically new materialist (Barad, 2007; Bennett, 2010; Braidotti, 2016) but with respectful attention to Indigenous epistemologies (Robinson, 2020; Wall Kimmerer, 2013) and mindful of the connections between these realms of ideas (Clary-Lemon, 2019); and feminist in ways that draw on lived experience (Grosz, 2017; Lacy, 1995) and centre equitable and just futures. In these initiatives, I also draw on contemporary art theory, reflecting two leading trends in contemporary creative production described by theorist Grant Kestor (2013): a move towards participation by the general public in a way that "start[s] to break down the artist's custodial relationship to the viewer" (p. 123); and an orientation to interdisciplinary engagements with socially relevant fields, that is, the "attempt by artists to build conciliatory relationships with parallel systems of knowledge or expertise: planning, activism, ethnography, geography, and so on" that draw on "cognition, empathy and bodily intelligence" (p. 124, p. 125). My own work actively engages urban and cultural geographies, natural histories, and environmental science.

Fig. 9 Icelandic ewe with two lambs at the farm of Jóhanna Érla Pálmadóttir, Akri, Iceland, June 2018. Jóhanna runs the sheep farm with her family, is an expert knitter, spinner and knitting teacher, and has managed the residency activities of the Icelandic Textile Center. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

This interdisciplinary framing is a deepened and updated version of what I brought to my PhD dissertation in 2006. Similarly, I have maintained and added to my doctoral methodology: research-creation integrating auto-ethnography, to which I've more recently added oral history and participatory methods. During and since my doctoral studies (see, for instance, Vaughan, 2005, 2009, 2015), I have framed my interdisciplinary, intermodal approach to research-creation as a version of expanded collage, specifically, "a juxtaposition of multiple forms, that is, an original composition in any media that brings together previously independent components, whether found or fashioned" (Vaughan, 2009, p. 10). This orientation to juxtaposition accounts for my multi-modal making and for my interdisciplinary preferences.

I think I have always worked in this way, from the time I complemented my BA in English and Art History from the University of Toronto with an undergraduate diploma in fine arts, specifically drawing, painting, and photography from what was then the Ontario College of Art (and is now the degree-granting Ontario College of Art and Design University), through my MFA in Studio Arts at Concordia University, where my *Bog People* series combined photography, drawing, painting, and textiles in an exploration of orality, literacy, and embodied forms of knowledge, with a body of visual work accompanied by a text that explored then-current neuroscientific

Fig. 10 *Bog Series: Redhanded/The Touch of You* (1995), a folding, multi-paneled table screen that includes a sculptural casting of my own left hand as well as a version of a photographic image of the hand of the Iron Age person found within a bog (12 3/8 × 37 ¼ × 2 1/8 inches). Photo: Paul Buer. Copyright Kathleen Vaughan

theories about the impact of art on the brain/mind/being and philosophical theories about intuitive knowing. *The Bog Series* brought together scientific, archaeological, and artistic modes of knowing; and investigated the possibilities of photography as public pedagogy and prosthetic memory, integrating the remarkable documentary photographs of Harald Andersen (featured in Glob, 1988). It was my chance encounter with Andersen's photos of the Iron Age bodies—uncovered, centuries later and remarkably preserved, from peat bogs as the turf was cut for fuel—that sparked this series. In terms of colour and place, my mixed-media works integrated black and white photos, but overall took on tones of red and earth, body and bog, and included the scarlet table screen work that has since become a kind of personal signature, *Redhanded* (Fig. 10). The places referenced in the photos were the anaerobic peat bogs of Northern Europe, watery, liminal places that I've not yet visited. While not all peat-y, wetlands here in Canada serve a similarly important environmental purpose as vital habitat and also threshold and sponge for the surging waters of extreme weather events. I have since come to recognize the marshy terrain around the Berthier Islands at one end of Lac St-Pierre as a site as rich and precarious as a northern European bog, both environmentally and metaphorically (Fig. 11). A fluvial lake within the St. Lawrence River, Lac St-Pierre is a UNESCO Natural Heritage Site prized for its biodiversity and challenged by the pressures of human habitation and agricultural run-off (UNESCO, 2021).

Fig. 11 The marshy waters of Lac St. Pierre/the St. Lawrence looking from one island of the archipelago across to another, September 30, 2020. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

My doctoral dissertation, *Finding Home: Knowledge, Collage and the Local Environments* (Vaughan, 2007), addressed questions of belonging and the role that local engagement and art-making could play in finding a feeling of being 'at home' in place, and worked across disciplines of urban, natural and art histories, art theory, animal theory, walking theories and methods, autoethnography, and research-creation. Sited in my then-home city of Toronto, my dissertation existed in two parts. The first was a visual exhibition that brought together large scale, naturalistic landscape drawings; contemporary and archival photographs that showcased changes in a site over time; made-to-scale walking textile maps; and textile sculptures referencing both post-disaster, place-based offerings and dog toys. The second, its companion, was a 300-page scholarly text that explored conceptual and methodological issues and was written as a walk through my neighbourhood with my standard poodle, Auggie (1998–2009) (Fig. 13). In terms of colour, *Finding Home* integrated black-and-white historical/archival photos; sequenced stop-motion colour photographs of Auggie and me walking together; the grey spectrum of charcoal on white paper; and squares of cloth in sap green, silver grey and red brightening textile maps of the stitched routes of walks with Auggie, our favourite path needled in in scarlet (Fig. 12). The place was my then-home neighbourhood around Bathurst and St. Clair, in Toronto's midtown. Since I was working prior to University-wide policies for doctoral research-creation dissertations, the Faculty of Education and I agreed on a dual (exhibition/scholarly

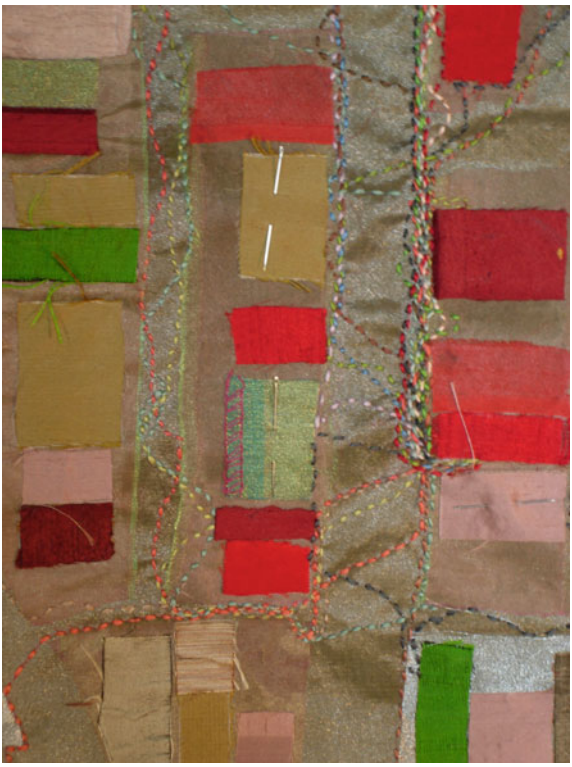

Fig. 12 *Finding Home: Map: Raglan* (2006, detail), one of four textile maps representing the routes of my dog walks with Auggie in our Toronto neighbourhood around Bathurst and St. Clair streets. Textile piecing with silk charmeuse and organza, cotton embroidery floss. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

text) submission as a partial fulfillment for my PhD via research-creation. I would thus meet the university's familiar text-based stipulations as well as incorporate my own art/exhibition innovations: as far as I have been able to determine, *Finding Home* was the first research-creation PhD dissertation at York University and received early research-creation funding support from doctoral fellowships from both the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Commission and the Ontario Graduate Scholarships scheme.

I chose to take up doctoral studies (2001–2006) through York's Faculty of Education in part because at that time there were no Fine Arts-based doctoral programs in Toronto, but largely because my overarching conceptual objective was to explore art as a mode of knowing through art-making itself. I am very grateful to have done so: the steep learning curve from my MFA took me into the social sciences of education, to realms of qualitative research theories and methods, to best practices of innovative pedagogies of arts education such as those of Reggio Emilia, and introduced me to arts-based educational research (ABER)—all from the University's/Faculty's explicitly social justice orientation. I learned so much, and deeply appreciated 'thinking with' the work of disciplinary innovators such as Elliot Eisner and Tom Barone, philosophers such as John Dewey, Suzanne Langer, and Maxine Green, and my own supervisor and advisory team, Rishma Dunlop, Warren Crichlow, and Carol Anne

Fig. 13 The Cedarvale Ravine that features in *Finding Home*, with (in foreground) the commemorative red oak tree planted to honour my standard poodle, Auggie (1998–2009), who was the muse and companion of my doctoral research, October 2018. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

Wien—all of whom agreed that art is a mode of knowing and that artistic practice can be a form of research. It was only a few years prior that Barone and Eisner (1997) had introduced the term 'arts-based educational research,' together exploring the contributions that aesthetic, particularly literary forms, could offer to the generation and communication of new knowledge in the social sciences, and bringing much excitement about the potential of the arts to educational research. Their early orientation was not to art forms as modes of inquiry in themselves; the potential of artistic inquiry motivated work by other education scholars, notably at the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto, whose innovations in turn influenced Barone and Eisner. As I worked during my doctoral studies to deepen my understanding of their and others' writings and ideas, I confirmed that for me the art practice was primary: I was more oriented to artistic research or research-creation than to educational research that—in the phrase coined by cultural critic Clifford Geertz (1980) to describe academics' increasingly transdisciplinary approaches—'blurred genres' with the arts. I was grateful to encounter the work of education researcher Thomas G. Fox, who, writing with Judith Gleichman proposed that "contemporary art can suggest a greater openness to what we consider education, as well as more shock, deeper conflict, and a greater variety to the questions being asked in our educational research" (2001, p. 33).

My thinking was also profoundly assisted by the theories of 'practice-based research,' emerging out of the United Kingdom and Australia/New Zealand, the innovations of Carole Gray and Julian Malins (2004) in particular. But ultimately my work was always best described in our country's home idiom, research-creation.

I do believe that my orientation to and developing understanding of research-creation—my doctoral dissertation and its various prizes, including the ABER SIG award—were factors in my being hired into a tenure-stream position in the Department of Art Education at Concordia University in 2008. My research orientation complemented other faculty members' expertise in art teacher education, child art, museum education and public art, and service learning in community settings (and that of later hires in digital art in education, international art education, inclusive art education and Black studies in art history and art education). As well, my research-creation methodology was familiar in this province: artist-researchers had worked this way since the 1980s at the French-language Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)—which claims to have originated the concept at that time (Paquin & Noury, 2020). At Concordia, doctoral students in the interdisciplinary Humanities program (launched in 1973) have included an artistic research aspect of their PhDs at least as far back as the mid-1990s, when during my own MFA studies, I learned of Elise Bernatchez's PhD dissertation, *Art and object-X: Things I found while digging a pond* (1995), which combined sculpture installation and discourse analysis using art theory and practice.[4]

By the turn of the millennium, Quebec was increasing oriented to innovative research methods and research-creation in particular. In 2001, the Hexagram Institute received special funding for infrastructure and networking to support research-creation through digital technologies, by faculty members and graduate researchers at Concordia University, the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and the Université de Montréal (Hexagram, n.d.). Graduate student interest surged. More potential doctoral students, more professional artists, sought to deepen their understandings of their own practice and, at times, to gain a credential that would strengthen their employment possibilities in a tightening academic job market. My familiarity with research-creation could help my home Department of Art Education, which was still finding its way to this methodology.

By January of my first year at Concordia, I was teaching about research-creation methods and supervising first Master's and then doctoral students in research-creation thesis projects.[5] One of my doctoral supervisees, Maria Ezcurra Lucotti, created our Department's first research-creation doctoral dissertation, *The Threads, Trends and Threats of the Wedding Dress: A Collaborative, Studio-based Dissertation* (2016).

[4] The then-program director of the Humanities PhD stated that it is impossible to know whether earlier models of such doctoral research-creation exist, due to incomplete archiving (Bina Friewald, personal communications, December 15, 2016).

[5] A full list of the graduated MA and PhD students whom I have supervised, with a link to their theses on SPECTRUM, Concordia's open-access scholarly repository, can be found on my faculty page at https://www.concordia.ca/faculty/kathleen-vaughan.html Those oriented to research-creation are identified as a 'studio-based thesis'—the Art Education category—or 'research-creation thesis'—the Humanities/Individualized Program's preferred term.

Maria worked with 19 participants so that each could design and co-create an 'altered' wedding dress that more accurately reflected her experience of intimate partnership than did/does the stereotypical white wedding dress of Euro-North American culture. The participants modeled and were professionally photographed in their revisioned dresses, with digital enlargements of these images on linen comprising the dissertation exhibition. Looking to ethnography to deepen her inquiry, Maria's dissertation showed innovation in method as she conducted fieldwork with her participants, took note of their engagement with her research questions, and promoted collective conversation and individual feedback along systematically drawn, as well as organically emergent lines. By linking questions of knowledge produced through creative practice to the considerations of visual literacy of gender roles and the social consumption of wedding dresses, Maria's dissertation became a model for a possible approach to research-creation practices within Art Education, where our disciplinary interests lie not only in the creative production, but also in the educative angle: the creative work's embedded epistemologies, public or other pedagogies, or related curricula, deriving, for instance, from popular or high art cultures.

While Maria's 2016 dissertation represented the first true research-creation PhD in Concordia University's Department of Art Education, it occurred within an institutional context that encourages such an approach and provides guidelines to help students and supervisors succeed together. These note that the research-creation dissertation is comprised two 'synthesized' components:

> a creative production component, which may be presented in a variety of media, communicative, or performative platforms; and a written component. The written component's length is dictated by the project and varies according to the discipline. The creative production component will usually constitute an integral part of the research-creation itself, while the written component contextualizes and expands on its significance in the discipline. The written component, like the conventional research thesis, should demonstrate substantial knowledge of the relevant scholarly literature, consider methodological issues, and present a contribution to knowledge. In addition, it must demonstrate knowledge of prevailing practices and precedents in the practical field of activity in which the creative production component situates itself, and may reflect on the production process. (Concordia University, School of Graduate Studies, 2013/2021, pp. 8–9)

The two components stipulated by Concordia University in fact align with my own beliefs about and personal history of what a research-creation PhD should comprise, and with how I can support graduate students to develop these. Of course, the 'creative production component' is core. My professional experience and my MFA—still considered a terminal degree by the influential American-based College Art Association (2015) and thus reflective of the "highest level of professional competence" (College Art Association, 2016)—enable me to support students as required via fine arts' signature pedagogies (Shulman, 2005). These include critique, sketchbook review, or discussion of conceptual, aesthetic, or formal research processes (Klebesadel & Kornetsky, 2009; Sims & Shreeve, 2012). Building on these, my involvement with the artistic component of the student's research varies by student, depending on their level and need.

As they prepare their creative work and anticipate their accompanying texts, graduate students seem to easily understand the idea of a literature/resource review of

other artists' works: naming prevailing practices and precedents, as Concordia calls them, or providing an 'artistic audit,' research theorist Brad Haseman's term for "a more layered and rich analysis of the contexts of practice" (2006, p. 8). For doctoral students, these build on the requirements of the MA/MFA thesis, at least as it is frequently constituted, and often resemble the kinds of research that many context-minded contemporary artists do as they develop projects.

My own continuing work to understand and articulate the research-creation aspects of my practice helps me to support my students in finding ways to discuss their own methods and procedures. I have often heard doctoral artist-researchers voice a version of the self-description noted by methodological researcher Katy Macleod a little over two decades ago, when a PhD artist-student referred to her practice as "robust" and her writing as "fragile" (1998, p. 33). Indeed, I consider the writing work of a research-creation PhD dissertation (and to an appropriately lesser extent, Master's thesis) to be complex and intellectually/emotionally challenging. A doctoral artist-researcher must address fundamental questions: What does it mean to be doing research-creation? What are the procedures that facilitate the taking up of the research question(s) or adding direction and articulation to the "enthusiasm of practice" (Haseman, 2006, p. 3) that propels us forward? The text can become as much a personalized, reflexive consideration of research-creation methodologies as it is an engagement with the conceptual content of a doctoral project.

At Concordia, we have no single 'house' approach to research-creation. My colleagues and I offer a range of methods and procedures, and various statements of theories and benefits of research creation (see, for instance, the influential articles by Chapman and Sawchuk (2012, 2015), which use 'research-creation' as the overarching term within which they include methods akin to arts-informed inquiry or arts-based research; Manning (2016), which draws on contemporary philosophical frameworks and prioritizes performative practices; and Salter (2015), which is strongly oriented to work and innovations created through/with digital technologies. Relatedly, scholars such as Sinner (2021) work with and teach about arts-based methods such as a/r/tography). Most of us agree that research-creation can be a "methodological and epistemological challenge to the argumentative form(s) that have typified much of academic scholarship" (Chapman & Sawchuk, 2012, p. 6). Because of this, some of us see felicitous kinships between research-creation and Indigenous methodologies, and aim to develop and use research/methods from "which knowledge will hopefully emerge from a truly horizontal, intercultural dialogue and not through top-to-bottom neo-colonial systems of validation" (Araújo, 2008, p. 14).

Such is how I hope to continue my research-creation, as my current projects unfurl and new ones emerge, ever more deeply oriented to place—that is, to the complex human/Other-than-human ecosystems of Montreal, Toronto, Northwest Iceland and perhaps elsewhere, too. For instance, from a position of respectful admiration, I increasingly 'think with' approaches to Indigenous land-based pedagogies (Wildcat et al., 2014), which consider ways that our relationships with land inform our relationships with each other and with Other-than-humans, and how the land might be "a system of social relations and ethical practices – … a framework for decolonial critique" (p. ii). I appreciate that such a stance aligns with the kind of natural history

education/knowledge that I value and strive to backfill in my own life, and that is part of my ongoing research/pedagogical work under the broad socio-environmental themes of the Right to the City (Harvey, 2011; Vaughan et al., 2014); the right to urban nature (Langhorst, 2014), and the rights of nature (Boyd, 2017; Kaufman & Martin, 2021).

Like many of us—and like Concordia University, which institutionally has affirmed its/our support for the United Nations' Sustainability Goals, through research, teaching and direct action (Bokser, 2020)—I am deeply concerned about the future of our planet in the face of climate catastrophe, radical extinctions, and heartbreaking social inequities and the need for profound change. An international survey on post-pandemic futures found that here in Canada, 83% of us want the world to change significantly and become more sustainable and equitable (Ipsos, 2020a). And worldwide two-thirds of people under the age of 24—that is, the age range of most of university undergraduates—assert that in recovery, the emphasis should be on social progress rather than economic growth (Ipsos, 2020b). Sharing these values, I intend to use my research-creation and public outreach work in a public-facing way to raise awareness and to advocate for political and structural change; and in an institutional way to help mentor the next generation of artistic researchers in ethical and meaningful practices for our [post]-pandemic times. In support of my plans, Concordia University has recently awarded me the Concordia University Research Chair in Art + Education for Sustainable and Just Futures (2021–2026), which means five years of seed funding and some teaching release. I am so grateful. I look forward to working with students, colleagues, and other collaborators to develop research and creation whose underlying concerns represent "questions *worth having answers to*" [emphasis in original] (Scott, 1999, p. 7), especially now, when our beautiful planet is burning.

As I consider the potential and obligations of research-creation (arts-based educational research), I recall the words of choreographer and artistic research theorist Liz Lerman, who wrote:

> In the end I have come to see research as an act of conversation. It is a companion. It is a refuge. It is a source of inspiration of all kinds. I do sometimes end up in an eddy, off to the side of the important stream I thought I was on. But that is where an artist is lucky. Because I can move the whole stream over to the little tributary if I think it worthy, and if I have enough will, I can bring my collaborators and audiences with me. (2011, p. 214)

In fact, I believe that such accompaniment along the research journey happens not so much because of the researcher's will—although that surely helps—as it does as a consequence of art's magic, it's capacity to engage, inspire, provoke, even seduce, when the questions worth having answers to are invoked, and when we share authority with our human and Other-than-human collaborators. The tools that I favour are colour and place, for the love of the world (Fig. 14).

Fig. 14 A calendar-style display of 27 of the small weavings of *Søndre Green, May 2019*, against the spring landscape whose colours inspired the work, one weaving for each day in residence at AiR Green, Noresund, Norway. Not yet created was the brilliant yellow square that would complete the series. For that I wanted Norwegian yarn both dense and fuzzy—dandelion-esque—to mix with the finer yellow wool contributed by Kristen Lundberg, textile artist and owner of the farm on which the residency is sited, and had to wait for my return to Oslo to access the materials for that one punctuation point. That final yellow square is the first image in this chapter. Photo and copyright: Kathleen Vaughan

This chapter is dedicated to the memory of Martin Peach (1956–2021), the artist and electronics wizard who was invaluable to so many artist-researchers at Concordia and without whom I could not have created *Walk in the Water.* His ingenuity and problem-solving capacities made our imaginings possible; his gentle, quirky self was much beloved.

Dissertation Award Information

Outstanding ABER Dissertation Award Year: 2008

Dissertation Title: Finding home: Knowledge, collage and the local environments (not available online)

Supervisor: Dr. Rishma Dunlop

Committee Members: Dr. Warren Crichlow, Faculty of Education (Advisory member); Dr. Carol Ann Wien, Faculty of Education (Advisory member); Dr. Belarie Zatzman, Faculty of Fine Arts

(External to the program); Dr. Lorrie Nielsen Gould (External to the university).Degree Granting University: York University, Toronto, Canada

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Kathleen Vaughan (MFA, PhD) is an artist-researcher who integrates visual art and storytelling in studio- and community-based projects on social and environmental themes related to the dynamic ecosystems of rivers, forests and skies. An artist in textiles and lifelong knitter, she is also exploring wool as a sustainable, beautiful material that can improve our lives and our world. She holds the Concordia University Research Chair in Art + Education for Sustainable and Just Futures, is Professor of Art Education and feels happiest with her hands in materials and when walking wildish pathways with her standard poodle. https://www.akaredhanded.com/ and http://re-imagine.ca/.

An ABER Interview: A Pedagogy of Parallax to Parallaxic Praxis

Pauline Sameshima

Abstract *Seeing Red: A Pedagogy of Parallax* won the ABER Award in 2007 and was published in the same year by Cambria Press. Norman Denzin described the work as "… bold, innovative, a wild, transformative text … almost unruly, a new vision for critical, reflexive inquiry." The dissertation took the form of an epistolary novel made up of love letters written to a supervisor. Post-dissertation, the concept of parallax in pedagogy was extended into parallax in research and thus the interdisciplinary, multi-modal, post-qualitative research methodology of Parallaxic Praxis evolved. In the foreword of *Seeing Red*, Carl Leggo described the work as a love story. 13 years later, in the foreword of *Parallaxic Praxis*, Leggo described the methodology as a love song. The processes of Parallaxic Praxis involve meaning-making that are relationally co-constructed in love. Leggo described love using Paul Nonnekes' description as a movement forward, as a desire, as an agent for change, recognizing freedom, difference, and diversity (In *Three Moments of Love in Leonard Cohen and Bruce Cockburn*, Black Rose Books, 2001). In a fictive radio show interview format, this chapter shares highlights and learnings of an ABER journey from Assistant to Full Professorship and an appointment as Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Studies.

Keywords Parallaxic praxis · Arts integrated research · Arts based educational research · Interdisciplinary research · Post-qualitative research · Imagination · Creativity · Pedagogy of parallax

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1 An ABER Interview: A Pedagogy of Parallax to Parallaxic Praxis

Mei: Thank you for joining us for our Arts Based Educational Research Series this morning, listeners. Today, Pauline Sameshima joins us in the studio. Pauline was the Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Studies from 2012–2022. Good morning, Pauline!

Pauline: Good morning, Mei! Thank you for having me.

Mei: To start off, can you tell us what year you won the award and your experience of that event?

Pauline: It was 2007 in Chicago! I'm surprised how clear the memory is! I remember Carl Leggo at the front of the room with me. I was presenting my research in a large, carpeted ballroom. There was an aisle down the middle of rows and rows of chrome chairs with blue upholstery. Tom Barone sat in the front row on the right side. Later he would stand and address the room, congratulating the community on the inspiring growth of ABER. I also remember speaking with Richard Siegesmund before the session, standing in that middle aisle. I was wearing a brown tulle dress with corset boning, which was surprisingly comfortable! I had the pleasure of rooming with the amazing Rita Irwin during that conference. It was a joyous time within the enthusiastic ABER community. Cambria Press had shipped copies of *Seeing Red* to the hotel and I could hardly believe that all the books were sold that day.

Mei: Where did your research trajectory lead you?

Pauline: I was fortunate to have been given a tenure-track position at Washington State University (WSU) that started immediately after I defended my dissertation in September 2006. I met the Education Dean, the late Judy Nichols Mitchell, for an interview in San Francisco at AERA in 2006. For new scholars, I highly recommend the graduate job fair at AERA if you are looking for a position in the United States. At that time, before the AERA conference, graduates could fill out their bios and vitaes online and universities held mass interviews in curtained-off spaces at the conference.

My PhD was in curriculum studies, and I was originally hired at WSU in a mathematics tenure-track position. I taught pre-service mathematics courses initially and took responsibility as lead for the Arts Integration K-8 pre-service courses. Later, I also took on the role of Curator of Online Education of the Washington State University Museum of Art. Shortly after I arrived in Pullman, WA, I was contacted by Roxanne Vandermause from the Nursing Department. Roxanne had gathered an interdisciplinary research team to render the stories of three methamphetamine addicts in recovery. That is where the Parallaxic Praxis model was born. Roxanne and I first published on the model in 2008 and then in book form in 2009. The model continues to be refined and tailored to suit different projects (Cameron et al., 2021; Ingalls Vanada, 2017; Maarhuis, 2016; Saunders, 2015). In 2019, a book dedicated

to the methodology was published, winning a Society of Professors of Education 2020 Outstanding Book Award.

Mei: What ABER projects were you involved in and what are you currently working on?

Pauline: At WSU, I worked on two projects: The Women and Meth project[1] and a project on teacher identity that later included Boyd White and Anita Sinner.[2] In both projects, I created artworks as responses to the data sets, used the artworks to generate further discussion with the research team and participants, and shared those artworks with the broader public as a means to evoke expanded understandings of our research learnings. These are the goals of the Parallaxic Praxis model. I can share a link with the listeners to the Women and Meth culminating exhibit.[3]

In 2007, I was invited to a National Science Foundation dinner event in Washington, DC by Oon Seng Tan of the Singapore National Institute of Education. There I met the magnanimous Eric Hamilton of Pepperdine University and was humbled to be welcomed into his international creativity and distributed learning think tank network. These early and varied interdisciplinary collaborations were foundational in setting the stage for how I see the arts as a medium of translation between communities of researchers and broader publics.

Serendipitously, in 2011, I was invited to apply to Lakehead University for a Canada Research Chair (CRC)[4] position. I took up that post in November 2012 and named my area of focus Arts Integrated Studies. I am truly grateful to Lakehead University for the support given to arts integration. For example, in 2015, they featured arts integrated research in a full-page advertisement in Issue 41 of the Porter Airlines flight journal (see Fig. 1)! I was delighted to receive notes from friends who saw the journals in their airplane seat pockets! This was unprecedented support for arts research at a time when the arts and arts sectors were consistently precariously positioned in response to government cutbacks in North America.

After my move to Lakehead University, I continued my work on the methamphetamine addiction project and teacher identity/creativity through my CRC. Among other curriculum projects, I have also had the wonderful pleasure of working with

[1] Women and Methamphetamine: Portraits of Addiction and Recovery. Primary Investigator: R. Vandermause. Supported in part by the American Nurses Foundation. https://www.womenandmeth.com/.

[2] Material Culture and Teacher Identity Development. Primary Investigator: B. White. Supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. https://www.solspire.com/material-culture--identity-development-research.html.

[3] Women and Meth Project Culminating Exhibition. Curator: P. Sameshima. https://www.womenandmeth.com/culminating-exhibit1.html.

[4] Canada Research Chair designations are competitive positions. Principal Investigator: P. Sameshima. Supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

Fig. 1 *The Journal of Porter Airlines, Issue 41*, p. 44
Description of Fig. 1: Woman wearing a dress made of chicken wire and ribbons. A Lakehead University advertisement featuring arts integrated research.

colleagues involved in a dementia study,[5] a sexual violence on campus study,[6] a prenatal education study,[7] an Anishinabek cervical cancer screening study[8] and a university/community engagement project.[9]

Now, I am working on an international project on the concept of social accountability that spans five international medical school sites.[10] Despite being listed as an accreditation expectation in medical schools worldwide, understandings and expectations of social accountability vary greatly. As an example of the research I do, I can share a link to a video response to one site's data, where participants were asked what social responsibility means to them during a pandemic. Drawing inspiration, text, and ideas from the participants' art creations and discussions with the site team, I created a video response called Ann-Other Dream.[11] I'm happy to send along the link.

The video and a poem were used to further generate conversation and provide an entry point into a broader discussion of what social accountability means to this participant group and the research team. I will read the first two stanzas of the poem and share a still shot from the video (see Fig. 2).

Ann-Other Dream

I can't close my eyes
my plastic skin
does not feel the tears uncried
sloshing in my hollow head
severed at the neck
from a body I do not know
inconsequential online
knotted, gnarled
withering above
ahead, the shadows

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[5] The Dementia Experience: People and Pathways. Principal Investigator: E. Wiersma. Supported in part by Eli Lilly Canada. http://www.rethinkingdementia.ca/arts-and-dementia.html.

[6] iMPACTS: Collaborations to Address Sexual Violence on Campus. Principal Investigator: S. Shariff. Supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. https://www.mcgill.ca/definetheline/impacts.

[7] Prenatal Knowledge Exchange for Equity in Birthing Experiences and Outcomes. Principal Investigator: H. Møller**.** Supported in part by the Women's Xchange. https://www.solspire.com/access-in-equity-in-maternal-health.html.

[8] Community-Created Cervical Cancer Education and Screening Strategies for First Nations Women in Northwest Ontario. Principal Investigator: I. Zehbe. Supported in part by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. http://www.accssfn.com/.

[9] Lakehead University Community Connections Showcase. Project Director: P. Sameshima. Supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/departments/education/news/node/46396.

[10] Social accountability and local transformation in health research. Principal Investigator: E. Cameron. Supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. https://www.salt-he.com/.

[11] Ann-other Dream (P. Sameshima, 2021). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMkbG9_IHgU.

of my filtered self
eclipse my views
I no longer know
what flower coloured
glasses I wear
this shield, this mask
is my every day

The other project I am working on is a beautiful culmination of my interests in arts integration, community engagement and curriculum theory coming together to mediate systemic divides and inequities across multiple dichotomies. This 5-year project has been funded by the National Institutes of Health for 26.5 million USD

Fig. 2 Still shot from Ann-Other Dream by Pauline Sameshima (2021)
Figure 2 description. Photo of a plastic mannequin head in front of a blue sky background. The mannequin is wearing a black wig with red highlights, a blue covid mask with cursive writing on the folds, a face shield embellished with white polymer clay flowers, and a nest of twigs atop her head. Copyright of the artist

and is by far the largest project I have been involved in. The HOPE Project[12] (HIV Obstruction by Programmed Epigenetics) focuses on three avenues of HIV cure research. The project is led by Melanie Ott of Gladstone Institutes and involves multiple international sites. Using cutting-edge epigenetic advances, our team motto of "Block, Lock, Excise" are the three foci for silencing and eradicating the virus. I oversee the Community Arts Integrated Research (CAIR) activities in the development of HIV cure literacy curricula with Patricia Defechereux, the Community Engagement Lead. The world has learned from the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out just how critical the need is for community engagement, involvement, and trust in mobilizing health literacy. I believe all research projects, in all disciplines, need an educator to effectively mobilize project findings pedagogically. I am extremely excited that Parallaxic Praxis, with its inclusive and relational basis, is at the heart of the community engagement plan for the HOPE Project.

Mei: How do you frame success in the context of ABER?

Pauline: Certainly, moving from assistant professor to full professor in a tenure track position, holding a Canada Research Chair, and being inducted to the College of the Royal Society of Canada on the basis of arts integrated research can be considered wonderful successes, but as I reflect upon my career, the highlights have not been the roles and ranks, but the relationships and the exceptional privilege of a career in art-making. Then, to consider that the art-making is a pedagogical tool, that the purpose of the art-making is to better understand the human condition, and that the art-making is made as a gift—these qualities combine in a context of co-constructed meaning-making with a team in joyful wonder and revelation. It is my belief that when I make, I am constructing love—I am materializing something that can be gifted, something that might stir a thought, something that might resonate with someone who might feel unseen, something that can affect another. This resonation is a reparation, a communing, an acknowledgment of identities and experiences. I would call these moments successes.

I believe the success of the Parallaxic Praxis model is in its capacity to create a conceptual and procedural framework for interdisciplinary teams and to welcome the possibility of difference, diversity and love in research. It is a model that considers how communication across communities can be achieved and the crux of the model is inclusion, accessibility, and strong relationships even while intentionally advocating for divergence.

Mei: How does ABER work within and outside of academia?

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[12] HIV Obstruction by Programmed Epigenetics. Program. Director & Principal Investigator: M. Ott. This research is supported by the NIAID, NHLBI, NIDA, NINDS, NIMH, and NIDDK of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number UM1AI164559. The content is solely the responsibility of the author and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health. https://hopeforhivcure.org/about/hope-collaboratory/.

Fig. 3 The SPACE Gallery. Artwork by Pauline Sameshima & Patricia Morchel, 2019. Photo by Pauline Sameshima
Figure 3 description. Six square acrylic painted canvases in a row on a white wall. Gallery sign of THE SPACE: Science, people, art, creativity & engineering.

Pauline: When the arts are used in research, the art can sit between communities, bridging literacies, cultures, disciplines or other divides. ABER enables interdisciplinary teams to work together. The arts can move research out to broader communities or bring the community into the academic space. For example, the gallery spaces I curate[13] are excellent venues for showcasing research within the university as well as inviting others into academia (See Fig. 3).

Mei: What can ABER do?

Pauline: The essential aspect of ABER is that it is pedagogical. Methodologies are used by researchers to process and analyze data at the researcher level. When using the arts, the artist-researchers teach themselves and their collaborators about the data. The art can also be used to teach those understandings to the broader public.

Mei: How does ABER help authors to reach new insights in their research?

Pauline: When a researcher invests the self in a data set or a particular issue, they are involved in a heuristic acculturating journey of the self (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2010). "Identifying with the focus of inquiry, self-dialogue, tacit knowing, intuition, indwelling, focusing, and [creating] the internal frame of reference" (2010, p. 1573) are the heuristic processes an artist-researcher accesses while making and thinking about the phenomenon.

Mei: What struggles do ABER Scholars face in academia?

Pauline: One of the struggles ABER scholars face in academia is not recognizing how the aims of artful research are different from scientific research. Elliot Eisner (1981) explains that scientific research has an ultimate goal of discovering "the laws of nature about which true statements or explanations can be given" (p. 9) whereas artful

[13] The LAIR Galleries. Curator: P. Sameshima. https://galleries.lakeheadu.ca/.

research is concerned with the "creation of meaning" (p. 9). Know what the goals of your research project are and choose the methodologies that enable your goals. The Parallaxic Praxis model encourages multi-perspectives and actively accommodates multi-methodological research. By this, I mean that an interdisciplinary research project can have data analyses from teams using SPSS (statistical analysis software), Atlas-ti (qualitative data software), and arts integrating methodologies with each analysis serving a distinct function.

You may want to know how everyone gets along. It's not always rosy. Another aspect of the Parallaxic Praxis model is non-assimilation. Difference is encouraged and the teams who have worked well together demonstrate respect and trust in the expertise of the other. These scholars recognize the functional capacities of individual work and view diverse interpretations as necessary, complementary layerings. For example, in the HIV project I am a part of, we need both scientific research and cure literacy development (through the arts) to ensure that the invented cure will be taken up by the community for which it is intended.

Have I had any relational team challenges? Yes, of course! Negotiating team relationships are always integral parts of any project, especially when the relationships between signs and signifiers differ across disciplines. Crucial attitudes to encourage on teams are letting go of ownership, power-over another and the privileging of methodologies. In thinking about the social accountability project I am part of, we consistently have invigorating, generative team meetings because we converse with the language of "maybe" and "if"—using brainstorming frames of talking. We really are using imagination as method (Hayes et al., 2015; Sameshima et al., 2019b) with an intent to "produce different knowledge and produce knowledge differently" (St. Pierre, 1997, p. 175). I also see team members as generous, receptive, and open to one another. So, to return to what I said earlier, it's important that scholars understand that artworks are for meaning-making and that they do not provide statements of truth or laws of nature.

In reflection, I'd have to say that a pointed instigator of relational upsets on teams can also be attributed to the stressors created by career advancement, and the intense pressure on scholars to grow their curriculum vitaes. Some of the discussions have included: How is research artwork listed? Can an artwork be exhibited by the artist without the team? Or, who does the artwork belong to? These are questions that different teams deal with in different ways. The important point is to have these discussions.

Mei: As a tenured faculty using ABER scholarship, what lessons did you learn that might be helpful to junior scholars?

Pauline: Now, having been an evaluator of numerous files for tenure and promotion from different disciplinary departments, it is essential for evaluation teams to have broad disciplinary representation, time for conversations about what research means, discussions on the accepted practises in different fields of study, training on how diverse forms of scholarship are valued (i.e., ABER, community-engaged research, teaching streams, and more), and articulations of what specific collective

agreements are demarking. I encourage ABER scholars to contribute to these conversations in their departments, at the university level and in their faculty associations. ABER practices have long valued equity, diversity and inclusionary tenets and ABER scholars can draw on these precepts to help colleagues and their fields enlarge their conceptions of research practice.

Research assessment across fields and modalities do not differ as greatly as junior ABER scholars might imagine. Good research is clear and convincing. If the researcher is possibly using a different literacy than the accessor, it is the researcher's responsibility to scaffold or provide the information in a literacy the accessor can understand. A good stance is to position the self as a teacher and to help reviewers understand how to make judgements of ABER work. For example, in my curriculum vitae, I have the following:

> As an Arts Integrated Studies scholar, my recognized outputs include artmaking, curation, art exhibition, and invitations to share research, as comparable and equivalent to traditional text-based publications.

I also explain that a juried exhibition is comparable to a refereed publication while a non-juried exhibition can be compared to an invited publication. Separating entries into local, national and international exhibitions, and providing rates of acceptance or the size or stature of an exhibition also help reviewers understand how a scholar's work is positioned relationally. Scholars need to be able to clearly articulate their research in the form that is dominant in their faculty and field. So, while ABER scholars work with arts modalities, they must still be able to explicate their research in scholarly written texts. This is to enable an extension of the current canon. My last point, in preparation of documents that will be evaluated, consider how the reviewer might be lovingly supported. Consider your document a gift. Be intentional, aesthetic, and tidy.

Mei: How have you evolved as a scholar?

Pauline: Hmmm, that is a good question. I'll need to reflect a bit more, but I noted a change when I was promoted to Full Professor in 2017. It wasn't that I suddenly felt I had freedom as others might anticipate. I don't remember celebrating the promotion or where I put the letter, but I do remember that shortly after, I did a local community presentation at Mary Black Library in Thunder Bay and as I prepared the presentation, I felt as if I was just going to talk about something I did all the time. The title was "Making Love: Changing the World". I was talking about the power of making and as I've said before, how making materializes the self and creates relation with another.

I read a haiku at the presentation:
cherry blossoms
burst from your mouth
I cross the threshold

This haiku, a making, is a form of engagement. Ardra Cole (2015) explains that arts-informed research

> is part of a broader commitment to shift the dominant paradigmatic view that keeps the academy and community separated; to acknowledge the multiple dimensions that constitute and form the human condition—physical, emotional, spiritual, social, cultural—and the myriad ways of engaging in the world – oral, literal, visual, embodied. (p. 22)

I believe that when we imagine, make, and gift, we construct a future and a past of love. It was around that time that I felt as if I knew something, not knowledge in a brain compartment of smart learnings; rather, I recognized that I knew things from personal experience. That sense of security in recognizing the validity of my own experiences is a change I grew into.

Another evolution I think, is how much I enjoy being a curator and journal editor. I appreciate that I am in a place where I am able to do these things because others before me have mentored and supported me. The genealogy of our scholarship is always evident—a quiet quality that exhales through our work whether we want to recognize it or not and I'm reminded how important rich and beautiful relationships have been to my scholarship. I am not only referring to mentors and scholars imprinted during graduate school, but also those through the years who have shaped and influenced my scholarship in ongoing ways.

Mei: Last question, what foundational aspects of your ABER scholarship would you like to share?

Pauline: I'm thinking about critical readings or learnings that set one on a path and maybe in the moment, one can't yet see how those events change the future. Two performative inquiry courses—one in 1990 when I was doing an education diploma and another in 2003 (taught by Lynn Fels) opened my eyes to the significance of embodied reflexive inquiries. The other two cornerstones were a course on ecological identity and Carl Leggo's narrative inquiry course. My doctoral journey was dramatically marked by Ardra Cole's profound writings. I also had the singular opportunity to work as Rita Irwin's graduate assistant and to serve as an associate editor with Liora Bresler, the co-founding editor, at the *International Journal of Education & the Arts*. These brilliant role models created indelible examples of what caring mentorship and passionate scholarship could look like.

There is, as well, a bittersweetness in reflecting on my academic journey. Perhaps as an artist, the personal and the public are always tangled. The yin and yang invariably reside together and while not specific to ABER scholarship, my academic path has also included forced awakenings at the hands of scholars shortcutting. Foundational to living in parallax—not in paralysis—is the faith that over time, we are able to make new meanings and open new doors. I am now able to see doors to paths that allow me to turn away from the road I am uncomfortable being on. They are doors that were not there until I made them. I can actively seek to change my environment to protect myself and others. I have been lifted in a Promethean journey richly blessed by recognizing beauty all around me and the love I have experienced for and from

generous, amazing mentors, colleagues, friends, students, and community members I have had the privilege of working with.

Mei: Wow! There's certainly more to talk about but I see we are close to the top of the hour. Thank you, Pauline, for taking the time to join me and our listeners here today. Wishing you all the best.

Pauline: You're very welcome. Thank you again, for the invitation, Mei.

Dissertation Award Information

Outstanding ABER Dissertation Award year: 2007

Dissertation Title: *Seeing Red: A Pedagogy of Parallax*

Supervisor: Anthony Clarke & Carl Leggo

Committee Members: Rita L. Irwin & J. Gary Knowles

Degree Granting University: The University of British Columbia

Published by Cambria Press in 2007: https://www.cambriapress.com/pub.cfm?bid=102

Library hyperlink: https://open.library.ubc.ca/soa/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0055202

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Mentoring a New Generation of Arts-Based Researchers

Douglas Gosse, Jeffrey Thornborrow, and Kari Janz

Abstract Two doctoral candidates who participated in an online course Doug Gosse taught in Spring–Summer 2019 at Nipissing University—EDUC 6116: Critical Conversation in Educational Research, have moved from quantitative research to adopting Arts-Based Research (ABR) methods and methodology for their own dissertations—Jeffery Thornborrow, a Registered Social Worker (RSW) and Nipissing University Faculty member with his research, *Exploring Attachment Bonds Between Kindergarten Students and Educators: A Creative Appreciative Inquiry,* where he will create a comic book as methodology to investigate attachment formations of school-aged children and Kari Janz, a mental health therapist and coach with her inquiry, *Blondie: A Narrative Existential Inquiry*, where she wrote a Bildungsroman that functions as both research methodology and mental health treatment. Both researchers intend to extend their research beyond the academy and to reach new audiences. This essay will delve into their transition to becoming arts-based researchers. These insights, exchanged using dialogue, will highlight the transformative qualities of the arts for new and current scholars, contributing to current research in four stages: Stage 1: Inception; Stage 2: Revelation of ABR; Stage 3: Finding a Supervisor; and Stage 4: The Ongoing Doctoral Journey.

Keywords Arts-based research (ABR) · Bildungsroman · Fiction as research · Comics as research · Doctoral mentorship · Doctoral journey

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1 Introduction

Doug: In 2005, I successfully defended my doctoral thesis at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE-UT), *Breaking Silences, an Inquiry into Identity and the Creative Research Process* (Gosse, 2005a). It was an unexpected honour to receive the inaugural Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) Special Interest Group's Outstanding Thesis/Dissertation Award of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in 2005, for the best Doctoral Dissertation that explores, is an exemplar of, and pushes the boundaries of arts-based educational research. The novel portion of my dissertation, *Jackytar* (Gosse, 2005b), was then published in 2005, garnering book reviews and sales across Canada, and has been referenced in several international theses and arts-based academic publications. Three years later, I edited an accompanying booklet, *Breaking Silences and Exploring Masculinities: A Critical Supplement to the Novel Jackytar* (Gosse, 2008), an anthology of essays from international academics, analyzing the portrayals of masculinities in *Jackytar*.

To this day, my overarching impetus in using arts-based research (ABR) is to forge bridges between the academic and broader public—fictionalized research may be published and shared amongst academics and laypersons alike. Two doctoral candidates who participated in an online course I taught in Spring–Summer 2019 at Nipissing University—EDUC 6116: *Critical Conversation in Educational Research*, Jeffery Thornborrow and Kari Janz, have moved from quantitative research to adopting ABR methods and methodology for their own dissertations. This essay will delve into their transition to becoming ABR scholars. These insights, exchanged using dialogue, will highlight the transformative qualities of the arts for new and current scholars, contributing to current research (e.g., Purton, 2013; Sinner et al., 2006) in four stages:

- Stage 1: Inception;
- Stage 2: Revelation of ABR;
- Stage 3: Finding a Supervisor;
- Stage 4: The Ongoing Doctoral Journey.

Stage 1: Inception

Doug: Jeff and Kari, you've both successfully completed your comps in our PhD (Educational Sustainability) program at Nipissing University and are in your third year. Congratulations! You're both currently working on your thesis proposal. Please tell us a bit more about yourselves and your previous methodological lens?

Jeff: I'm a Registered Social Worker (RSW) with 18 years of experience working with children and their families in community-based settings and a Nipissing University's School of Social Work faculty member. I live in Sundridge, Ontario with

my partner, three children, and our dog, Meika. My research, *Exploring Attachment Bonds Between Kindergarten Students and Educators: A Creative Appreciative Inquiry*, investigates attachment formations created as students enter the formal school system.

I believed (and still do believe) that pursuing my doctorate, and engaging in new and innovative research, has the potential of furthering not only my understanding of the social work field, but can also offer other social work practitioners new perspectives to consider when engaging in their own practice. My path towards completing my PhD was clear: a large-scale research exposé that uncovers *the truth* pertaining to my topic of interest. I envisioned hundreds, perhaps thousands, of participants; graphs, tables, and figures that offered the most sophisticated capturing of the piles of statistics and data captured through the grueling research process; a presentation that would be Greek to almost all but the most cunning of minds and which in turn would unequivocally state that *this* was the research that changed the field of social work. However, before long in my doctoral journey, I recognized the contradiction between presenting research that few could understand and my goal of bringing sweeping change to the field.

To impact more people, I must reach more people!

Kari: I'm a mental health therapist living and working in Toronto, Ontario. My research, *Creation and Destruction (Mental Health in Crisis: A Narrative Existential Inquiry)*, attempts to follow in the footsteps of Doug, taking the form of a literary bildungsroman. This forward-thinking arts-based inquiry aims to show how story can act as a widely accessible resource for mental health treatment. I must admit, for most of my university career I saw qualitative and arts-based research as little more than pseudoscience. Perhaps this was the result of an education system that had molded me; where the power of science and its paradigm-shaking discoveries are presented as conclusive and all-encompassing. Mesmerized by beautiful formulae and replicable results in psychology, I found order and comfort in an uncertain world. Yet as I would find out, data and numbers fall short of a complete picture, and in the absence of texture, the colour of story can be lost between the cracks.

Stage 2: Revelation of ABR

Doug: When I applied to OISE-UT, I thought it was a given that I'd be able to write a novel as a significant portion of my dissertation. I recall when I met with a potential committee member who had supposedly read my thesis proposal. She said, "What will you do with the bits that end up on the cutting room floor?".

Wasn't this the case in all qualitative research?

I had thought that my carefully constructed postmodern approach and methodological explanation would be fine. My 100-page proposal was thorough. I came to realize that my potential supervisor and committee members were grappling with ABR, and that I was fighting a losing battle in trying to get them to understand. There were several months of tension before I found a supportive supervisor well-versed in ABR, and a supportive committee to take me on. The ABR field was still newish. I recall my committee telling me something of this nature, "Doug, you don't

have to convince the whole academy of the validity of arts-based or arts-informed research. Your supervisor, committee members, and external examiner will evaluate your dissertation."

That made sense.

Once my committee approved my proposal, I was finally able to focus on what I loved—the fiction writing brunt of my thesis, an educational novel or Bindungsroman, which explores masculinities and shifting intersectional identities via queer theory. Having already published two novels in the mid-1990s when I was an English and French teacher in St. John's, NL, I immersed myself in the creative writing process, and had a solid draft in a matter of months.

I quickly obtained a tenure-track curriculum position at Nipissing University and vowed that I would keep an open mind regarding students who approached me to supervise. However, I do have a few rules:

1. They must publish at least one paper per year;
2. They must present at least one conference paper per year;
3. They must use RefWorks or Endnote (I cannot see how people cope without), and;
4. Ideally, they should take one of my methodology courses that address arts-based methodologies.

Other than that, I need to feel their empathy and passion to explore their artistic side. Kari and Jeff, you certainly meet and exceed my modest criteria. Would you each share the genesis of your shift from quantitative research to qualitative and indeed, ABR?

Jeff: I thoroughly enjoyed my experience in completing my master's degree and, although the degree allowed me to build and grow my capacity for social work practice, it also fueled a fire in me to contribute to the broader social work field. The decision to complete a PhD was not one I laboured on for very long. Social work has a strong history of listening to people's stories but is moving towards the quantification of social work practice and *proving* outcomes (Malenfant et al., 2019). Therefore, when I met you upon entering my doctoral program at Nipissing University, the use of art as a method of research was almost inconceivable to me.

Looking back at this early stage of my PhD, I could not see the incongruence in my vision for my research: to offer my research to the broad social work field but in a way that only a select few could interpret. As course work progressed, my PhD peers and I were introduced to a variety of research methodologies, exciting even daring methodologies that built such beautiful stories! Whether it be fiction writing in research [such as Leavy (2018) discusses], music being used to enhance research (see Bolden, 2017), or defending a dissertation entirely in comics form [Sousanis' (2015) *Unflattening* is awe inspiring], I began to truly appreciate the variety in paradigmatic perspectives. However, as I was still wrestling with my own identity as a researcher, I struggled seeing myself utilizing such creative methods in my PhD research. That is, until a particular moment in my doctoral journey. I remember it very well.

One day, early on in my PhD journey, Doug and I were discussing methods of data collection and, seemingly out of nowhere, he asked me if I ever engaged in anything artistic. A little guarded in my response, I noted that my children and I often draw and colour together and that I used to be "a comic-book geek" as a teenager. Doug's eyes widened slightly as he followed up.

"Have you considered using comics in your dissertation?"

I was baffled. After all, dissertations are meant to be the pinnacle of higher thinking. Comics are just... comics!

"No," I said.

"No?" Doug replied. "Art can be a powerful way to move beyond the academy and disseminate your research to a wider audience. As part of my dissertation, I wrote a Bildungsroman, an educational novel".

The thought of utilizing something I truly enjoy, perhaps not comics (at least... not yet) but visual art, within my PhD work was something I had never considered while envisioning the *grueling research process*. I was gobsmacked.

"You can do that?"

Doug offered a large warm smile as he stated, in his typical jovial and East Coast accent, "Yes!"

This was a revelation, one that would propel me to include art in my research.

Doug: Thank you, Jeff. Every time we discuss the comics in your dissertation, your eyes light up. Now Kari, tell us about the genesis of your shift from qualitative research to qualitative, and indeed, ABR?

Kari: I can remember the precise moment my black and white world began to stir with colour. I'd entered my PhD program with certainty and focus—honing solely and stubbornly on a quantitatively structured study and armed with an air of confidence! I had a collection of scholarships and awards under my belt, and I felt no need for change. It took just one course from Doug before this perspective began to shift: *Research Methodologies.* This is where I was first introduced to arts-based inquiry and Doug's own literary Bildungsroman as research. Inspired, I leapt at the opportunity to take his arts-based research course and entered a new world of discovery, captivated by the writings of scholars found in the *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. And, with some gentle encouragement by my soon-to-be mentor, I now imagined how the blending of arts and science could create a beautifully rich, textured, and robust study.

As I opened to new, or rather, foundational ways of knowing, I could see how my research interests were already rooted in the arts. All science is born of philosophy and many great minds adopted a narrative approach to disseminating their powerful ideas and discoveries through fictional characters and worlds [e.g., see Plato's *Republic* (Reeves, 2004), Kierkegaard's *The Seducer's Diary* (2013), Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (2017), Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (2021), Sartre's *Nausea* (1964), Einstein's poetry (1939), Yalom's *Love's Executioner* (2012)]. Today, I believe that the works of these philosophers and scientists would classify as arts-based inquiry with their use of creative writing in poetry, prose, and the great philosophical novel.

Stage 3: Finding a Supervisor

Jeff: As a new researcher, I felt caught in a quagmire. After my eyes began to open to the possibility of including art within my research, the excitement of engaging in new and innovative research felt somewhat muted as I also grew to understand that *new* and *innovative* are terms seemingly reserved for topics of research and not necessarily methods of engaging in the research itself. Most empirical work continues to be dominated by particular methodologies (and those that are not based in the arts) (Cole & Knowles, 2008). Choosing to deviate from the common methods of research places novice researchers at risk of experiencing negative implications on their careers (Kuttner et al., 2008). Being one of those researchers at the beginning of their careers, I wasn't willing to take the risk; at least, not alone.

As I progressed in my PhD studies, I decided to take a qualitative methodologies course. At this point in my academic career, I had an appreciation for qualitative studies and believed my area of research could benefit from a more detailed storytelling as compared to my initial direction of the big and bold quantitative study. In enrolling in EDUC 5676: *Qualitative Approaches to Educational Research*, the intended output was to improve my skills in data collection methods such as conducting interviews and participant observations. To my surprise, the course offered me another (and I would say much more integral to my research path) learning moment. Doug, the instructor of the course, offered a large arts-based research section. When it came to the final assignment in the course, I decided to *play* with adding an arts component to my proposed research. And, just like that, a light turned on. Once the paper was written, I couldn't envision my research without an arts component and nearly forgot the direction I had originally set out to take. This was it. I wanted to be an arts-based researcher.

Considering specifically my proposed research in exploring educator/student attachment, I began to dream of research that engaged the participants in meaningful and creative ways. Connecting my study to the arts had the potential of offering the participants, especially the children, different ways to have their voices appreciated and heard (Botsoglou et al., 2019). The path to reaching far and wide with my research was also becoming clearer; recognizing that disseminating through the arts can reach a much broader audience then more traditional modes of sharing findings (Ayrton, 2020). However, I was still new to the academic world. I wanted to be an arts-based researcher, but I also wanted to learn how to be so (and, to also minimize the risk of negatively impacting my entering the academic field). What I needed was a supervisor who was experienced in engaging in the arts that would guide me in my learning but also, remembering advice I received from another professor, one that is kind and that will help me navigate an area of research that may not be received positively by all in the academic community. Considering this, I approached Doug to act as my supervisor for the remainder of my doctoral journey. He and I explored my new path for my PhD research and through our conversation, we both became excited at the prospect. It was a natural fit.

Kari: As a psychotherapist, I blended these new insights into my practice, adopting an eclectic, arts-inspired method of treatment as my main approach, an

integration of Narrative, Biblio-, and Self-Authoring therapies, and what I now refer to as Arts-Based Cognitive Therapy (ABCT). We think, dream, communicate, learn, and connect with one-another through story and metaphor. Stories are not mere *representations* of our lives, they *constitute* our lives (Madigan, 2013, p. 455). The use of story in knowledge discovery is often recognized as a new or progressive methodological approach, yet it is in fact the oldest form of human inquiry. We each live inside a story (Jung, 2014), an evolution of cognition that reflects the structure of reality and all its patterned manifestations. It is no wonder then that a great deal of mental health therapy involves 'treating' or 're-writing' one's story, just as learning and understanding comes from 'reading' and connecting to new narratives.

I began to ask myself how I might design my dissertation to honour these revelations while maintaining methodological rigour. What I came to understand is that by adopting a narrative approach to inquiry, psychological discovery could become *more* not *less* scientific in its accuracy and reliability, while representing ways of knowing that closely resemble human life and living. It was when I took another graduate course from Doug—EDUC 5447: *Current Issues in the Teaching & Learning of Boys & Men,* where we studied a number of ABR texts and were challenged to pen our own, that I uncovered my flair for fiction. Now convinced, I took the plunge and embraced narrative/creative writing as the basis for my dissertation's methodology. After some insightful brainstorming with Doug, he agreed to mentor my creation of a Bildungsroman, a novel of self-discovery and perseverance, just as he did for his own dissertation. Doug helped me to map my journey of creativity, to integrate psychological and philosophical theory, and to provide evidence of rigour in such innovative and contemporary methodologies.

Stage 4: The Ongoing Doctoral Journey

Doug: Jeff and Kari, now that I am your supervisor and we've formed a thesis committee for each of you, you're both finalizing your thesis proposal. Tell us what you consider to be core points in looking back, and moving forward, in your ABR doctoral journey?

Jeff: Moving through the PhD process is much like a dream sequence: you begin at a certain point, knowing who and where you are, but then before you know it you are transported to a place you never knew existed and become a person you never thought you could be. I began this journey with a desire to influence my professional field. But, where I saw the only path to my contribution being one of quantitative research that utilized numbers and graphs, I now see another. This vision, one that includes not statistics and tables but instead a combination of words and pictures in the form of comics to offer new and unique ways of knowing (Lawrence et al., 2017; Leavy, 2018), has the possibility of reaching so many more than the Greek tragedy I described earlier. The inclusion of comics in my research offers the ability to extend my research beyond the academy and to reach new audiences (Ayrton, 2020).

The belief in the arts as a methodology, and that it does not merely offer value to my research but is an integral part to sharing participants' stories to their fullest potential, continues to build in me every day I continue to draw closer towards the

apex of the long dissertation climb. The metaphor of a mountain climb is apt. Just as a mountain climber can see more and more of the beautiful landscape as they ascend the escarpment, as I climb towards completing my doctorate, I can see more and more beauty in blending aesthetic elements with my research, from the completion of my course work and comprehensive exams, to data collection and the dissemination of the findings in artistic form.

Entrance into the academy can be daunting... and intimidating. The worry of doing the right thing regarding your research is palpable. What I have found, however, is that *the right thing* becomes easier to define when you align yourself with the right person. In the instance of completing your PhD, that person is the committee supervisor. I am so fortunate to have found a supervisor that was able to reignite a long-forgotten passion in me (all stemming from a seemingly benign remark recalling a teenage interest) and who encouraged me to broaden my definition of what research *is* and *can be*. The pressure to follow a more traditional path of research is felt by most new academics, and the courage to pursue the arts in research must be fostered. Through guidance, direction, mentorship, and at times a lot of patience, the shift from where I was at the beginning of my PhD to where I am now, no longer feels like a dream sequence. It is reality.

Kari: I'd always fancied myself a writer, despite having never published! I was simply too shy to share my creative and personal work with anyone. But with Doug's gentle encouragement and knowledgeable guidance, I set out to write a dissertation that could be used both as methodology and praxis. It has been said that we write our lives as we read (Dunlop, 2002), a synergistic relationship that opens a space for fresh perspectives, allowing readers to rewrite their own personal narratives. I soon came to realize that by combining philosophy, psychological theory, and creative writing, mental health inquiry and treatment could be extended to a broad audience, reaching beyond that of a traditional dissertation or individual psychotherapy.

This design took a considerable amount of time to first conceptualize, and then to crystalize as the most meaningful path forward. I think that an authentic mentoring relationship is key for this process to unfold naturally, with patience and understanding of the student's natural development. Here, the successful mentor does not lead their student down an academic path, they cheer them on from the sidelines! It's incredible how we can begin a journey with such certainty and direction yet wind up far from where we originally intended. But, as I've come to understand, it is the unfolding story and forward progression (albeit never linear) that holds the real value. It has been the space between each small victory, each small data point, that has given colour to my PhD journey as the mentorship story created by Doug and me continues to be written.

Doug: Kari, I know you also envision becoming somewhat of a public intellectual, to not only share your research via more traditional means, such as peer-reviewed journals, but also via publication of your novel. That way, people can buy it at a bookstore or online, and your audience will extend far beyond the academy. I think you also plan on using social media.

Kari: I feel that story, and all art for that matter, has a way of stirring emotion through its immersive qualities, and it is this combination of evocation and knowledge that most effectively resonates with people. I think that by experiencing different worlds through another's eyes, feeling the depth of their pain and height of their triumphs through reading can be powerfully therapeutic as a form of experiential learning. In novel form, this has the capacity to reach exponentially more people than individual therapy could ever accomplish, and it is this belief alone that serves as my raison d'être and motivation to publish *Blondie: A Narrative Existential Inquiry* as a widely accessible novel!

Yes, I also write microblogs and provide therapy and psychoeducation on platforms such as Instagram where young people from across the globe can be reached. I plan to use this online presence to help promote the self-help nature of my upcoming novel.

Doug: Jeff, likewise, you intend to also have a component in your methodologies and methods of having your children participants compose comics, sketches, paintings, etc. Furthermore, you intend to write a comic that will likewise be publishable and readily able to be distributed?

Jeff: The idea of comics being utilized within the academic arena has almost infinite potential. As a pedagogical tool, comics can share information and build understanding far and wide. They already do. From the instruction booklet of a new barbeque that needs to be put together to offering young children another way to understand medical treatment they will be engaged in, offering information through a sequential story that includes the combination of visuals and narratives is a great way to share information in a more absorbable way. As part of my PhD experience, I wish to retell my findings in the form of a comic so that those who may not interact with such a document as a doctoral dissertation will have the ability to learn about and understand my research. Publishing such a comic will offer an opportunity to connect with more and newly interested people.

Of course, not everyone shares my passion for comics. Part of including myself in my study, such as Cole and Knowles (2008) suggest, is to offer reflexivity in my research. I am drawn to comics but I want the children participants to follow their own passion to share their story, so their voices will be heard. To accomplish this, I will offer them a variety of opportunities to express themselves from the comics creation to sketches, paintings, etc.

Doug: You both have taken to heart a topic we've often discussed—praxis! You both also balk, as I preach, at the deficit model which has dominated much qualitative research over the decades. I want to note deficits, but also ways to move forward with more agency and imagination rather than being mired in suffering. The arts are uniquely positioned to transform our minds and souls, to help us question, feel, and react/enact in ways that inspire and motivate. I'm excited to be part of this creative journey with each of you. I think a few things are clear. You both started off as primarily quantitative researchers. I certainly did not try to discourage this, since I

value both types of research. During your first summer residence, an intense four weeks of seminar style study in North Bay, we made each other's acquaintance as I was one of two instructors in EDUC6116: *Critical Conversations in Educational Research.* In this course, we compared tenets of quantitative and qualitative research. I remember when Jeff read my article, *My Arts-informed Narrative Inquiry into Homophobia in Elementary Schools as a Supply Teacher* (Gosse, 2005c). I used a narrative voice to reflect upon an action research project I undertook in an Ontario school board, and then synthesized the partipants' stories into a fictionalized, reflexive account that conveyed the main themes.

I remember the look of wonder on Jeff's face the morning we began to discuss it as a group. He said, ever so politely, "You're allowed to write like this?".

That was it. Jeff was intrigued. From there, he went on to take a another graduate course I taught, EDUC 5747: *Inquiry Through the Arts: Research Methodologies and Methods.* Jeff, the portions of the course specifically germane to comics-based research and graphic novels, just resonated with you. As you know, I've often said when we meet and discuss your dissertation, whenever we address the comic component, "Your whole face lights up!".

Jeff: Yes, it is true. Reflecting on the PhD experience thus far, I have come a long way in my understanding and appreciation of arts within research. At times, I still cannot believe that I am able to infuse my passion of comics with my research interests. I now find myself asking, "How could I *not* include my passion in my research?".

I reflect on the powerful words you offer: *transform*, *feel*, and *inspire.* As Stephens Griffin (2019) notes, comics in research have a way of bridging researchers' self-awareness to their research melded with the stories of their participants. I consider this true for all arts in research, recognizing that bringing creativity into a study can transform and inspire everyone involved: participants, academy, wider audience, and researcher.

Art, I believe, lights up all our faces.

Doug: Kari, each mentorship is unique. You and I share a sense of rebellion, of wanting to examine and try the unexplored or unique. We both have an avid interest in psychology, but flinch at some of the tendencies to set up walls in relationships due to binaries of therapist/client, teacher/student, or mentor/mentee. We want to break down walls, including how we conduct and present our arts-informed research. I think this common chord incites us to reach out for the *authentic*, the *painful*, the *hopeful*, and the *transformative.* I introduced you to the works of my two dear colleagues, Lander and Nahon (2005), and the integrity model of psychotherapy, which I feel has so many uses, yet to be tapped. The integrity models employs an existential approach and views stress and anxiety as arising from a lack of adherence to one's own set of values.

Kari: Often, we must disrupt to create change. I believe it is out of tragedy and struggle that we find substance and meaning—and anything worthwhile, for that

matter. It's something Nahon and Lander knew all too well, given that they, too, were existentialists.

I think that Doug and I both have been confronted, in a rather significant way, with the decision to either conform to the academy or to take the path of authenticity—"the path with heart" (Chambers, 2004, 5). Doug writes to break down walls around marginality, and I write to break down walls around mental illness. I use own my pain to help guide others through theirs.

Our propensity for disruption has also been the catalyst for my novel's decided-upon literary style—a postmodern dirty realism that is modeled after the infamous works of rebels like Charles Bukowski and Raymond Carver, which more closely resembles my own experiences and perspectives.

Doug: There are many modes and metaphors for doctoral supervision (Burnett, 1999), but I see myself as a facilitator. I am there when you need to talk, when in person, or via phone or virtually during the Covid pandemic. Damrosch (2000) talks of mentors and tormentors, and some discomfort is part of the creative research journey. If there are not moments of discomfort or *ruptures*, then are we truly learning?

Jeff: Even in the most difficult challenging times, there's always this aura or understanding that I'm very privileged to be here.

Doug: Kari and Jeff, you will add new dimensions to our quest as arts-based researchers to broaden the definitions of what educational research *can* and *might* be in your perspective fields of psychology and social work. Thank you both for this dialogue.

Kari: Thank you!

Dissertation Award Information

Outstanding ABER Dissertation Award year: 2005

Dissertation Title: Breaking silences, an inquiry into identity and the creative research process

Supervisor: Dr. Ardra Cole

Committee Members: Dr. Gary Knowles, Dr. Peter Trifonas

Degree Granting University: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE-UT

Dissertation Link: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/services/theses/Pages/list.aspx?NW_S=Gosse%252c+Douglas

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Jeffrey Thornborrow, PhD (ABD) is an Assistant Professor in Nipissing University's School of Social Work and a Registered Social Worker (RSW) with 18 years' experience working with children and families. Jeff's dissertation, *Exploring Attachment Bonds between Kindergarten Students and Educators: A Creative Appreciative Inquiry,* captures student voices by using art to highlight positive elements that help build teacher/student emotional connections. Jeff will be including the use of comics in his dissemination efforts following his PhD defense.

Kari Janz, PhD works in private practice as a mental health therapist in Toronto, Ontario. She features an educational novel in her dissertation, *Blondie: A Narrative Existential Inquiry,* which aims to act as a widely accessible and immersive modality for mental health treatment. Kari has garnered several graduate awards and nominations for her research in psychopathologies and aims to publish her latest work publicly. Kari successfully defended her dissertation in Dec. 2022.

Afterword: Mentorship and Allyship in Arts-Based Educational Research

Rita L. Irwin, Richard Siegesmund, and Barbara Bickel

Abstract Reflecting upon the ten chapters in the edited book and the co-authors own experience of mentorship and allyship in the field of Arts-Based Education Research (ABER) this chapter offers questions and suggestions for building and strengthening the field for future generations of ABER scholars and their scholarship. While many may have stereotypical views of what mentoring and being an ally might entail, we suggest that those in ABER, are eager to make, to invigorate, and to create anew our relations with those who enthusiastically embrace evocative or similar ideas to our own.

Keywords Mentorship · Arts-based educational research · Allyship · Supervisory committee · Outstanding dissertation awards · Emerging scholars

The preceding chapters elicit questions regarding the complex yet essential roles of mentorship and allyship in the ever-unfolding field of Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER). The neoliberal university system continues to be in much need of creative, disruptive and integrative ways of inquiry, learning and knowing. Each chapter in this anthology uniquely shares ways the authors have intervened with and contributed to a still heavily quantified, white supremacist, homophobic, patriarchal and competitive educational culture. As editors and ABER scholars ourselves, we come to this anthology with a diversity of mentoring and mentee experience. We offer this chapter as a closing reflection upon mentoring and allyship by building upon

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the themes that arose or perhaps were missing in the chapters, along with essential understandings acquired from our combined involvement in the field over the past three decades.

Receiving the ABER SIG Outstanding Dissertation Award is a brief moment of recognition, that is frequently—but not always—preceded by many years of support, encouragement, and constructive challenges from ABER mentors and allies. While some of the award winners benefited from stronger mentoring than others, all award winners received some form mentoring and introduction to the field of ABER. For an ABER scholar to continue to succeed in the field of ABER within the academy, they need continued mentorship from within a larger community of ABER scholars. Ideally, they in turn will become mentors to future ABER scholars, especially to those who obtain an academic position. Douglas Gosse, as the inaugural recipient of the ABER SIG Outstanding Dissertation Award, demonstrates this kind of exemplary mentorship by extending an invitation to co-write his invited chapter with graduate students, Jeffrey Thornborrow and Kari Janz. We would venture to say that through offering high quality mentorship, faculty can cultivate allies for themselves and for the future expansion of ABER across disciplinary boundaries. Both mentee and mentor benefit from the relationship as it assists in the expansion of the individual's research and abilities, which in turn influences and contributes to the development of the larger field of ABER. As we know in the academy, it is essential to be publishing and presenting at conferences. To be invited to publish and co-present with a mentor is a gift that often results in the mentee being recognized and contributes to their future success. Several chapter authors write of gifts received and given to them from other ABER scholars as well as from the inquiry through art itself. To attempt engaging this path without skillful mentors can be a daunting and harrowing undertaking.

Conceiving ABER mentorship as a gift to the mentee and by extension to the mentor, as well as to fields of scholarly inquiry creates a healthy circulation system of giving, receiving and sustainability (LeBlanc et al., 2019). The academic tradition of citing others scholarship in publications assists in the building, validating, strengthening and sustaining of the field of study. It is critical to seek out this network. It will not magically appear through a keyword search of Google Scholar. It requires diligence and persistence through the evitable setbacks that will occur. ABER would not have the presence it has in the academy today without colleagues studying, critiquing, sharing ideas and citing their colleague's artful research. The simple gesture of citations and acknowledgments is a gift when it is given with respect and care. Poet and author Lewis Hyde's (1979/2006) writing on the gift economy that sustains the science community can be applied to the ABER community. He writes that there are,

> several reasons why ideas might be treated as gifts, the first being that the task of assembling a mass of disparate facts into a coherent whole clearly lies beyond the powers of a single mind or even a single generation. All such broad intellectual undertakings call for a community of scholars, one in which each individual thinker can be awash in the ideas of [their] comrades so that a sort of "group mind" develops, one that is capable of cognitive tasks beyond the powers of any single person. The commerce of ideas—donated, accepted (or rejected), integrated—constitutes the thinking of such a mind. (p. 104)

Life in the academy includes a wide diversity of experiences. The work of teaching and learning, researching and discovery requires entering uncharted waters that are often turbulent, especially if a scholar is stepping outside of the scholarly norm of their colleagues and institution. Written about in many of the chapters are a range of supervisory committee experiences from the perspective of the mentee. We recognize the essential mentoring and facilitation work that circulates within supervisory committees. As well, we want to recognize the community of allies beyond supervisory committees who buoy up this work through the assessment practices undertaken beyond committees. Together, these faculty members can create safe and positive spaces for this work to flourish. Indeed, when this network is not evident in a university, the potential for ABER work is limited if even possible. What is underscored here is that with every awardee there has been a community of scholars behind them ready to encourage them, guide them and to stand up for them when academic defense is needed. Perhaps, not all circles of support were as successful as others, but nevertheless all of the scholars in this book point to hands that reached out to help them.

Indeed, working with a committee who imagines creative forms of research alongside the candidate opens an incredibly generative space. When this is possible, everyone benefits as students and faculty members are both enlivened. Should a supportive academic collective not exist in a particular university, this kind of creative research may be impossible or extremely difficult to undertake. As ABER scholars, we have been contacted countless times by students trying to pursue ABER work in academic environments where this support does not exist. While it is crushing to suggest, unless there is genuine interest, ABER may not be a good choice in those environments. Moreover, as some of our awardees would state and many ABER scholars would attest, once hired, they may still be or feel alone in their pursuits. University faculties and departments with more than one or two ABER scholars often seems like a luxury. In these situations, mentorship may be best found beyond the boundaries of our immediate departments and universities and best found within the larger ABER community. Perhaps this is why conferences have become so important to this community. We not only perform our craft on these occasions, we talk and discuss at length, reimagining what could be and how we might travel the path forward. A young scholar, offering their research for the first time in a conference, may find that another researcher, not affiliated with the scholar's home institution, may reach out to them as a colleague or a mentor. Acknowledgement and respectful support from senior scholars for emerging scholars at conferences can be extremely significant and offered to varying degrees that can nourish both emerging and senior scholars. Supporting the larger field of ABER includes supporting new scholars in constructive and caring ways. Conference attendance and participation allows serendipity to find you. The chapters attest to hands reaching out internationally to help, as best they can, this fledgling community.

Learning about the pathways of emerging scholars and stories of their behind-the-scenes mentors is very instructive as we imagine the future for ABER scholars. Finding university programs that have created environments for ABER scholarship to flourish is an important first step for anyone wishing to pursue this direction.

Mentored in her Ph.D. by Rishma Dunlop, who defended and published the first Education dissertation written as a novel in a Faculty of Education in Canada in 1999, Kathleen Vaughan's chapter traces the history of support for arts research within her own universities and current geopolitical region that continues today with faculty, institutional and government support. Indeed, Dunlop's own dissertation research committee was comprised of ABER scholars encouraging her to be experimental. In this instance, ABER scholars exemplify the significance of mentorship being passed forward to future generations. Although unable to be part of this book, the 2006 awardee, Christina Marín later mentored the 2020 awardee, Silvia Rodriguez Vega. Their story, although untold in this book, attests to the significance of taking on the mantel of ABER mentorship to encourage and produce future generations of ABER scholars.

A thriving ABER environment requires not only individual scholarly encouragement between faculty and students but also on-going university wide administrative support. For example, in the early years of ABER dissertations at The University of British Columbia (UBC) Rita Irwin spent a great deal of time with the Faculty of Graduate Studies advocating for ABER scholarship and how it required more creative formatting and representation than traditional dissertations. Using the success of UBC as a guide, scholars at other universities drew from the UBC ABER dissertation examples and guidelines as exemplars to support ABER at their universities, including the inclusion of creatively formatted and engaged documents. Over time, senior leadership in the Faculty of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies at UBC changed, and so began a retrenchment of expectations for written dissertations. Ironically, Irwin had to turn for scholarly, creative and policy support to the same universities that first used UBC as a guide for innovative and creative Ph.D. work. Such is the ebb and flow of support for the arts. The lesson learned here is that we will continue to need one another in our own universities and beyond to the larger ABER community that draws from numerous universities internationally. We have to know that we need to remain vigilant as the arts always seem to face reduction or elimination first in times of financial cutbacks in the educational system and the larger arts community.

We further recognize that ABER would not have been circulated or present in the field of educational research to the extent that it is without allyship from researchers and educators in the field of qualitative research and the groundbreaking work begun at the end of the twentieth century. It needs to be affirmed that over the years support has come from qualitative and curriculum scholars who are not ABER scholars per se but who promote, teach and write of the importance of ABER scholarship (e.g., Norman Denzin, William Pinar, Madeleine Grumet, Jerry Rosiek, Elizabeth St. Pierre). It is also notable that numerous supervisors of the ABER Dissertation Award recipients were not arts-based researchers themselves but qualitative researchers supportive of this work. Given this we can see there is a need to move even further beyond qualitative research, to recognize the importance of ABER in transdisciplinary research, crossing fields such as forestry, architecture, psychology, social work, health sciences, studio practice-based research and more. Pauline Sameshima,

in her chapter shares how obtaining an Arts Integrative Canada Research Chair position in her ABER career led to forming allyships with researchers across different disciplines. As part of diverse research teams, they have been able to ensure the arts are funded as an integral part of international interdisciplinary research studies, findings and dissemination of findings.

Searching out and cultivating allies, whether as a graduate student or faculty researcher, is essential across one's career as an ABER scholar. As described earlier, if a student attends a university where ABER scholarship or allies are not present it becomes extremely difficult for the student to complete an ABER dissertation or find an academic position. As chapter author Karinna Riddett's story attests, having the passion and finding a supportive supervisor for their committee does not shelter one from career obstacles despite the scholarly strength and importance of their ABER work. Perhaps one lesson of ABER is developing skills in finding supportive allies both within and outside academia.

Ironically, ABER scholars do not always find their most comfortable home in the arts. Sometimes home is better found in other academic areas where qualitative research has influenced scholarship. For instance, as a faculty member, Barbara Bickel found her own School of Art and Design faculty ambivalent or even hostile to ABER scholarship. To continue to engage with and teach ABER she found very strong support in another college within her university from the Performance Studies faculty. In turn, she became the university external examiner for many of that college's performance-based dissertations as well as a dissertation committee member for a number of their students. These cross-college faculty colleagues in turn promoted Barbara's classes and consequently students from Performance Studies helped fill the Arts-Based Educational Research elective classes offered through the Art Education program. This university-wide support enabled these classes to be offered each year and consequently influenced many students across campus regarding ABER practices.

Attending qualitative research conferences in one's own university or beyond, is an excellent way to make connections with scholars that may be unknown to you. For example, Richard Siegesmund found that searching the program for qualitative researchers from his own university when attending the International Congress for Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI) was an efficient way to find cross-disciplinary allies with similar research interests at his own university. These networks proved to be immensely important for his own work and for his students to identify members for their doctoral committees. Another way to expand one's ABER network is to sit-in on an unknown scholar's presentation. If the work resonates, introduce yourself and start a conservation. Conferences like ICQI carefully coordinate social events that allow informal networks to blossom. Inviting ABER scholars from other universities to speak at your university is an additional strategy for building allies of ABER scholarship across universities. Reciprocating speaking invitations also help to prove a young scholar's connection to the field and often is valuable for annual performance reviews and advancement to tenure.

The ABER SIG at AERA has had mentoring and allyship formation at its core from its inception. The Dissertation Award being just one way to offer all applicants

mentoring feedback on their ABER scholarship.[1] A tradition of hosting joint Arts SIG events has emerged over the years where the Arts SIG executives collaborate to host a social gathering or pre-conference. Many of the Arts SIG members overlap and the SIGs have made an effort to convey that the SIGS are not in competition but are instead multiple avenues for scholars to present their work at AERA, at this time these include: the Arts & Learning SIG, the ABER SIG, the Arts and Inquiry in the Visual and Performing Arts in Education SIG, and the Eisner SIG. The AERA Qualitative Research SIG has also demonstrated strong support for ABER scholarship and offers its own mentoring opportunities. Over the years the ABER SIG has offered pre-conference hands-on workshops designed to connect ABER scholars. It has also organized pre-conference panels with, for example, journal editors discussing the ins and outs of publishing ABER scholarship or in-depth dives into current theory with noted scholars. Conferences and pre-conferences are traditionally fertile ground for developing and sustaining scholarly relationships and initiating collaborations. The change that has taken place with in-person conferencing to on-line conferencing has benefits as well as drawbacks. It will take an effort on all of the key components of conferences—hosting organizations, scholars and students—to keep and expand the gifts of conference mentoring and allyship formation that takes place at in-person conferences to an on-line environment. Mentorship of young ABER scholars, whether in-person or virtual can be promoted by pairing seasoned ABER scholars with young scholars—offering designated and facilitated spaces for them to connect during conferences.

We acknowledge that attending conferences can be daunting and difficult and even traumatic to varying degrees for both new and seasoned scholars. Academics can be casually cruel with each other, often due to the need to be overprotective of ones' position, which is promoted in the competition-based model of the neoliberal university. We need to take heed of how we might knowingly or unknowingly ostracize one another. All of us have suffered skepticism or outright repudiation from colleagues within our home institutions. This academic skepticism is often enforced by self-appointed gatekeepers. These individuals position themselves on committees and boards to keep things straight: to make sure good order is maintained. You will frequently spot them in the first row of your conference presentation, ready to render judgment on your performance. We have all felt the sting of being told that our research is irrelevant and does not measure up to some other external benchmark. Yet the field of ABER has emerged and thrived in a large part due to conferences and a significant number of ABER scholars recognizing the essential relational task of supporting each other within the field.

Laurel Richardson (2014) calls on us as scholars to not be gatekeepers but gate openers. As we rise within academia to positions of authority, she challenges us to use that power wisely to nurture those who come behind us. Many of us have found

[1] The chair of the ABER Outstanding Dissertation Award sends the dissertation award submission to reviewers who give feedback on each submission. The feedback is then sent back to the applicant. Whether the applicant receives the award or not they receive international expert feedback on their ABER scholarship that is invaluable. See Dan Harris's Foreword in this book for more details of the Award process.

support in the ABER community to withstand the rejections. The scholarly ABER community has the knowledge and proven ability to support and sustain each other. In this community, we have heard voices that say yes. Voices that encourage us to continue, rather than the chorus of no that may otherwise inundate us. The stories shared in this book validate this support but also remind us that we can still do this better.

Equally significant, new ABER scholars need to assume responsibility for contributing to the field and take the risks of stepping forward and offering leadership. As we have stated, conferences have been critical to the advancement of ABER. Conferences need to be organized. Communication with members needs to be maintained on a variety of social media platforms. Service work needs to be done. Offering service to the field, having one's name seen and heard in a variety of communication duties for conference SIGs and having it recorded in the vitae of an emerging scholar makes it easier for senior scholars to write strong supportive letters of reference when asked. Senior scholars recognize the people who contribute to the advancement of the field. They take note and include these young contributors in their networks.

As we draw this afterword to a close, we revisit the concepts of mentoring and allyship. Interestingly, we discovered that using 'ship' as a suffix takes English back to some of its older Germanic roots with the word 'schaffen' meaning to make. In time, as English adopted the word it came to refer to the condition or state of being related to the word it modifies. While many may have stereotypical views of what mentoring and being an ally might entail, we suggest that those of us in ABER, are eager to make, to invigorate, and to create anew our relations with those who enthusiastically embrace evocative or provocative ideas. We know that to be in creative relation with others may not be easy and challenges abound, yet the potential of community, personal and scholarly enrichment are immense.

Here, it is important to note, and appropriately close on, the critical importance of reflexivity in the practice of ABER. Reflection is to think about something. It works within an existing paradigm. It does not challenge one's fundamental orientations. Reflexivity is a deliberate practice of reexamining the conceptual framework of one's own actions; it is a practice of self-re-invention. It is peeling back layers to force something new into visibility. The literature suggests different ways of approaching this task. It can be done through acts of listening, writing together, editing to let go of one's own tunnel vision of the world and allow another vision to emerge: not just tolerate it, but take it on as one's own (Gouzouasis et al., 2016). Another approach is by stretching to think through new and difficult philosophical theory. What initially might have seemed as nonsensical gibberish suddenly becomes a new way thinking. The world quietly reorders itself in previously unimagined ways. It is a method for coming to know what we previously could not conceptualize.

Reflexivity is particularly challenging for it is never finished. It continually challenges us to push our settled understanding by confronting the new by, as Elliot Eisner (2005) phrased it, perpetually working at the edge of incompetence. A destination is never reached; there is always a new horizon of new understanding.

ABER is committed to discovering these unknown plateaus, the worlds that are-not-yet. Thus reflexivity—not just reflection—is critical for refining and rethinking the methodologies of ABER.

We have witnessed how those in ABER are committed to creating, to recreating, and creating again and again. This disposition precedes our very being. We find a depth of meaning in our commitment to creating and in all our relations committed to that circle of creation. This may be the essence of allyship we are striving to articulate in this closing chapter. We can be closely related to those pursuing this work, whether as friends or adversaries. This book highlights for us the strength of the very best of mentorship and allyship. And still we wonder—what stories have not been told in this book, stories that remain silent? stories that could raise sobering questions? what if mentorship and allyship could be stronger, not just during the dissertation research but beyond and into one's career? We encourage everyone to think more deeply about their roles as learners, mentors and allies. The field of ABER can guide us and it also needs us. Our universities, communities and the world need ABER more than ever as an entryway into cultivating diversity and arts education research that confronts many of our worlds pressing concerns. In sharing exemplar examples in this book, we hope to contribute to further developing, creating and sustaining a strong, critical and caring ABER community who together continue to be makers of the ship. The future can be strong and favorable for the deepening of ABER scholarship and in turn for the outstanding dissertation awardees yet to come! May our dissertation awardees and so many others take up this critical call as we go forward.

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