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in a
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WalkingLab

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8 A walking-writing practice

Queering the trail

We trudge single file into the screaming snow. Piercing flakes force our heads downward into the cover of our coats. Our footfalls timid on the black ice. The sharp smell of cold stings our noses and slices through to the back of our throats. We scurry, slip, and slide. The squall subsides and we're enveloped in a muted landscape of blue. Shadows from bare tree branches penetrate deep into the snow-banks. Streetlights become salmon infused halos. The air crackles and hums. The squall is already a body-memory. Enveloped in the purple blue haze of a Toronto winter's evening, we walk for hours.

The final chapter of *Walking Methodologies in a More-Than Human World* serves two purposes. First, it responds to on-going questions that have been asked of us, at conferences and by colleagues and students, regarding our collaborative walking-writing practice. Second, but intimately connected to the first point, the chapter functions as a kind of summation, drawing together pivotal concepts that structure the book and our walking-writing practice such as: *land and geos, affect, transmaterial, and movement*.

The chapter is presented as a series of walks. We use the propositional form for this chapter because propositions are not directions or procedures for writing (see Chapter 5). Propositions act as hybrids between potentiality and actuality: they propose what could be (Truman & Springgay, 2016). According to Whitehead (1978), a proposition is a “new kind of entity. Such entities are the tales that perhaps might be told about particular actualities” (p. 256). As a propositional form, we invite readers to engage with each section as a walk. We propose a walk you might take while reading the section. These are merely suggestions and we encourage you to propose your own walks too. We use the propositional walk form to: examine the entanglements of walking and writing; explore our walking-writing as speculative concept generation; consider the affective surfaces that arrive in the walking-writing process; interrogate a feminist politics of collaboration; and consider how rhythm and time's queer touching instantiates an ethics that is accountable to the infinite encounters of which we are all a part.

Each walk should not be taken as a formula. This is not a how-to manual. Rather, the purpose of the walk is to think-in-movement as “techniques of relation,” which Manning and Massumi (2014) evoke as a catalyzing and modulating

gesture (p. 91). Walking-writing is a practice of invention, where the movement of thought is *more-than* a moment of walking, thinking, or inscribing.

In the first walk, *queering*, we introduce different walkers who investigate walking as a thinking-making-doing, and as a political praxis. While there are numerous books and resources on walking that feature walking-writers, artists, and researchers, there are fewer comprehensive sources focused on women walkers, racialized and Indigenous walkers, queer and trans walkers, and differently abled walkers. Amy Sharrocks and Clare Qualmann (2017) organized a series of events and a study guide that includes a directory of women walking artists and a detailed bibliography. The *Walking Women* events and study guide are indebted to the ongoing scholarship of Dee Heddon and Cathy Turner on walking women, and Dee Heddon's and Misha Myers' the *Walking Library Project* (Heddon and Myers, 2014; 2017). The Walking Library is a project where the artists-scholars and the people they walk with, carry a library in a large backpack. The project investigates how collective reading and writing in situ affect the experience of place. The project also seeks to make visible women walkers and women who write about walking. Sharrocks, Qualmann, Heddon, Turner, and Myers all note the lack of visibility of walking women from the canon of walking research. *Walking Methodologies in a More-than-Human World* expands on their *Walking Women* resources to include a diversity of walkers that are excluded from the literature on walking.

In the first walk *queering*, we introduce walks by women, Indigenous walkers, people of colour walkers, and queer and trans walking artists, whose methods of walking defamiliarize the historical tropes of the lone walker drawing inspiration from the landscape. Some of these artists' projects link walking and writing, while others illustrate a thinking-in-movement.

The next five walks are walking-writing propositions that shape our collaborative practice. These are: *differentiation*; *surfacing*; *activation devices*; *with*; and *touch*. The final, seventh walk, *contours*, re-visits key concepts in the book and reflects on the implications of walking methodologies in a more-than-human world.

Walking-writing is a thinking-in-movement. Walking-writing is a practice of concept formation. We do not conceptualize walking in one register and writing in another, any more than we understand our research-creation walking events as pre-writing. Walking activates the creation of concepts. To walk is to move-with thought. In addition, we understand writing as something more-than what exists on a page or in a book. Walking-writing is experimental and speculative. Walking-writing surfaces. It is viscous and intense. Walking-writing is collaborative.

Walk one: queering the Euro-Western walking tradition

Read this section then go on a walk. Queer the trail. Defamiliarize Euro-Western traditions and other heteronormative, solo perambulations that link walking with unfettered inspiration.

Artists and writers experiment with different methods of walking and writing including poetic structures, the body, and land. For example, African American poet Harryette Mullen's (2014) book *Urban Tumbleweed* documents her daily walking practice through 366 Tanka poems written for each day in a year, plus one. Tanka is a traditional form of Japanese verse, and Mullen incorporates this sparse poetry with her walks in Los Angeles through diverse neighbourhoods, exposing the ephemeral, lived experience of her daily practice. Barbara Lunder's *Writing/Walking Sticks* is a set of 26 custom-made walking sticks, each one fitted with a small self-inking stamp on the bottom. Each stamp bears a different letter of the English alphabet and leaves a water-soluble inked impression on the ground. Vanessa Dion Fletcher investigates her relationship between language and land, specifically her Potawatomi and Lenape ancestry, in her walking projects. In *Writing Landscape*, Dion Fletcher walks repeatedly on the land as a form of bodily writing.

Blue Prints for a Long Walk is a project by Anishnaabe artist Lisa Myers whose walking practice maps invisible lines of family history, settler colonialism, and cultural memory. The project traces a 250-kilometre path along the northern shore of Lake Huron, Ontario, between Sault Ste. Marie and the town of Espanola. This path, often forged along railway lines, marks the route her grandfather took home when he ran away from a residential school, and subsisted for days on wild blueberries that grew along the track. In addition to walking, she created 54 postcard-sized etchings of railway ties and screen-prints made out of blueberry pigments. These postcards map out a section of Myers's walk topologically, through its waterways and the path of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Walking becomes a means to interrogate and animate a personal and collective history that is shaped by land, rhythm, and the sensuous textures and tastes of blueberries.

Trans Black artist and activist Syrus Ware's practice takes on many different forms. As part of the *New Field* project organized by *Public Studio* and in partnership with *WalkingLab*, Ware collaborated with youth from the Lawrence Heights area in Toronto. *Future Rememberings* – a daylong walk on the Bruce Trail – incorporated wild foraging and off the grid sustainable living to inquire into environmental and socio-political crises. The walk, which took the form of an ecology and mobile drawing class, speculatively and experimentally imagined collective futures.

Latai Taumoepeau uses walking and performance to examine issues of climate change in the Pacific region. In her piece *Ocean Island Mine*, she moves a 500 kilogram block of ice using a shovel and by walking over a short distance repetitively. The work excavates the 'solid white' rock into invisibility. In *Stitching up the Sea*, she walks, wearing brick sandals on her feet on broken glass. Using a Tongan mallet (which is typically used to beat plant fibres into pulp) to smash glass waste material, the durational walking performance, activates Indigenous knowledges and identities alongside larger questions regarding climate change.

In yet another example, queer Black writer Rahawa Haile walked the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine and wrote about her long-distance solo-hike.

As the only Black woman to walk the trail solo end to end, Haile's project examined the relationship between walking, race, and belonging. On the walk, she carried books by Black authors, which she left in trail shelters along the way.

In academic scholarship and popular literature, walking is extolled and prized because: it benefits health; inspires creativity; attunes the walker with landscape; and is a tactic for re-writing the city. While these fraught inheritances nudge at our practice, *WalkingLab* has intentionally sought out collaborations with women walkers, Indigenous walkers, queer and trans walkers, differently abled walkers, and people of colour to *Queer the Trail*. This is the ethical-political thrust of our walking-writing practice.

Walk two: differentiation

Pick a destination. Walk to this destination. This could be an errand stroll. You might walk to a store. Or you might pick a destination, such as a creek. Where you go doesn't matter; but it's the kind of walk where you have an intention. Take a different path than you might normally walk. Walk slowly.

We've been writing for what seems like days. Teacups perch precariously on stacked books on the dining table. Trails of cracker crumbs coated in tahini and miso gravy weave their way through papers that contain hand-written notes, diagrams, and doodles. Our laptops sit side by side. We write side by side. When we take notes from other scholarly texts or start thinking about ideas, one of us types, the other paces and talks. We shift roles frequently. We interrupt each other. *We argue!* When we write the sentences and paragraphs that shape our computer-generated texts, we sit next to each other. One laptop composes the text, the other has our notes open for references. We still scribble ideas and maps and thinking-doodles on scraps of paper. Both of us like pencils. Sarah likes mechanical pencils. Stephanie isn't as particular, just as long as the pencil is sharp. Occasionally we use Google Docs and write over Skype.

We arrive at a concept, a theory, a word, or an incomplete idea. We need to move. We propose a walk. We need nutritional yeast. We walk to the store, walking-thinking the concept as we move. We walk around the block. We walk the road at the cottage, to the end and return. We go to the bank. These are strolls with a destination. They are short walks. They get us away from our laptops. They move us away from tables and chairs. They are practical. However, these walks are not 'breaks' from writing. We write as we walk. *We walk a concept*. Or as Erin Manning would say: "Take the thought for a walk" (cited in Truman, 2016b, p. 104). Move thought. Think-in-movement. Writing doesn't begin at the moment of inscription. As you amble to your destination you are still writing. You are writing in movement.

Walking-writing generates speculative middles. Speculative middles, as we discuss in Chapter 5, are propositional, excessive, indeterminate, and frictional. Manning and Massumi (2014), use Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) concept of a "disjunctive synthesis" to describe the middle (p. 33). This is a paradoxical state, (in)tension, where the composition of things coming together produce

something else. Walking-writing intentionally activates a disjunctive synthesis. Walking-writing is a practice of muddling things, of making problems, and agitating thought. In the speculative middle, one does not resolve or clarify an idea, rather walking-writing complicates, stirs, and unsettles thought. In fact, sometimes nothing comes out of a speculative middle. Sometimes it's about failure and a letting go.

On one such walk 'around the block' we problematized the use of methods in qualitative research. Thinking-with our own practices of research-creation we struggled to find language to describe the middle, muddling, excessive milieu. Our walking-writing gesticulated, we raised our voices. Walking-writing allows us to engage with different registers. There is an affective intensity through the mobility of thought. The speculative middle is actualized, we are in it, but simultaneously it's differentially linked to all kinds of speculations of what could be. Walking-writing actualizes at the very same time as producing the virtual, which in turn makes new actualities become possible. As a differential, it keeps propelling itself, but in difference.

Walk three: surfaces

Go for a long walk. Time, distance and direction are dependent on your own abilities and needs. It's not important where you walk, but that you spend time walking. This is a walk that surfaces.

One of the places we frequently walk-write is the road behind Sarah's parents' cottage on Georgian Bay in Wahta Mohawk Territory. The road is hardened gravel and winds and twists its way through boreal forest and sharp cuts of the Canadian Shield. Twelve Mile Bay flows on one side of the road, while on the other is 'undeveloped' Crown Land. Pine trees and moss scent the air; raspberries ripen on bushes. The sound of mosquitos swarm around our ears. For cottagers, this is land of privilege and luxury. Family holidays and writing retreats. Across the bay is the Moose Deer Point First Nation.

Kathleen Stewart (2013) describes place through terms like atmosphere, surface, and event. Surfaces are ambient and affective. Surfaces do not refer to a specific location or form but the tonality, the expressiveness, and undulation of body-space. Surfaces vibrate, flow, and move. Surfaces are not without duration. Surfaces are not the site upon which walking-writing takes place, but full of "drama, intensity, an energetics of tension and release" (Stewart, 2013, p. 276). Surfaces are affective, their intensities pass between bodies and "spread out across a vast atmospheric field" (p. 276). In a walk that surfaces, you are not traveling to the store to buy something. Unlike the errand stroll, where the intensity lies in pushing thought to an edge, surface walks are visceral, bodied, and shimmer.

Surfacing is writing. Surfacing writes the body. Surfacing is "tentative, ephemeral, incidental though powerfully felt. Something atmospheric distributed across a geography of elements that swell" (Stewart, 2013, p. 276). Surface walks foreground bodily intensity. On these walks we might get thirsty, sweaty, or need to pee. In the winter, coldness seeps in. We feel the walk in our calves and on the

soles of our feet. The pace of walking undulates. There is an irregular rhythm of speeding up and slowing down. Surfaces pause. Surfaces lose their way. They disorient and defamiliarize.

On such walks, conversations drift between theory, stories, observations and are also punctured by long periods of silence. The intensity is shaped by duration, pace, and the topology of place. Speculative middles happen, but these walks don't necessarily begin with a particular thought or concept that needs to be pushed to the edge. Ideas are not concretized. They *quiver*. It's all about surfaces. These surfaces are atmospheric. Surfaces as affective walking-writing. Surfaces are not the subject of the walking-writing. Sarah Cefai (2016) states that "the rhythm of a place enters us, enters the process of writing" (p. 14). This is a rhythm that surfaces. It shimmers or folds like a wave.

Walk four: activation device

Go on a walk and bring some kind of activation device. This could be a camera, sound recorder, some wool to felt, paper to write poems, postcards, a geothermal measuring device, mirrors, or walk scores. Use the device on the walk, not to record or capture your experience of the walk, but to alter the function of the walk.

The activation device experiments with the walk and enables new ways of thinking-making-doing. Much like the speculative middle, the activation device pushes walking-writing to an edge. It forces something new to occur. The activation device is not intended to extract or collect information, but to insert itself within the walking-writing practice as a thinking-making-doing.

One possible activation device is an altered gait walk.¹ On such a walk, participants modify habits of walking through various modalities. For example, carrying a giant bouquet of helium balloons, walking backwards using a handheld mirror, carrying a bucket of water that reflects the sky, wearing high heeled shoes, wearing a roller skate on one foot, or filling your pockets with rocks. Some of these are captured on the *WalkingLab* website. For other examples, see Chapter 5 where we discuss pinhole photography, walk scores, and the *dérive*, and Chapter 2 where we introduce synaesthetic methods.

Stephanie frequently hand felts wool around rocks as a 'writing' practice. Posing the question 'How to write as felt?' she interrogates the process of making felt with wool (felt as force and intensity), as affective feelings (felt as affect), and as a felt event (felt as transmaterial) (Springgay, forthcoming). She invokes these various *matterings* of felt in order to generate a practice of writing that engenders bodily difference that is affective, moving, and wooly. She is particularly interested in thinking about felt's engagement with touch, for felt invites, if not demands touch. Felt is a dense material of permanently interlocking fibers. It is a non-woven fabric made using natural fibers, a binding agent, and a process of agitating the fibers such as rubbing. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) use different textile processes to flesh out the concepts of striated and smooth space. Because weaving has a warp (threads set against the loom) and weft (threads that move in between the warp) it creates a

striated space that is delimited. Felting and some needlework like crochet and embroidery on the other hand create, what they call smooth space. This is space that vectors out, spreads, and surfaces.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call felt an “anti-fabric,” made by the agitation or entanglement of fibers (p. 475). It has no warp and weft, and “is in no way homogeneous: it is nevertheless smooth, and contrasts point by point with the space of fabric” (p. 475). Felt spreads out infinitely. Felt is irreversible. Once wool is felted it cannot be undone and the fibers returned to their original state. “Felt comes into existence, comes to matter, as a result of an unpredictable interaction of tendencies (of the fibers, of the manner and the conditions in which they are worked)” (Thompson, 2011, p. 23). Felting rocks while walking Stephanie describes as a touching encounter composed between human and nonhuman matter. Felting is a practice of writing as a *thinking-making-doing*. Felt, writes Jeanne Vaccaro (2010) “cannot be known mathematically, like textiles – calculated, quantified, or mapped on a horizontal-vertical grid. It is the result of the destruction of a grid. There is no pattern to follow” (p. 253). As felt emerges it builds into itself the possibility of improvisation; a rhythm without measure. Felting invokes the intimacy of touch (Springgay, 2008). To felt, scales of wool touch and entangle, and fingers and hands wrap around each other and the wet woolly mass. To felt demands friction, and friction is indebted to touch. To touch is the opening of one body to another; it is an interval, an event.

These examples, as we keep re-iterating, are not methods of data collection or documentation. They rupture and queer the walk, they slow us down and change our gait, they problematize what it means to walk, they agitate and provoke. Activation devices are not required for every walk, but they might be necessary. They propel us into a speculative middle and churn our thinking. They surface. They function propositionally because we don’t have a clear procedure of how they will activate the walk beforehand. They are prompts for further walking-writing, as opposed to a representation of the walk. Manning and Massumi (2014), writing about thinking-making-doing at *SenseLab*, comment that terms like improvisation, emergence, and invention and a general sense of just letting things flow, lack rigor and focus, and risk being used in a cursorily manner. We extend their arguments, to add, that activation devices can’t sit outside of the walking-writing event. By this we mean they can’t simply be creative activities, such as collaging data transcripts, that bear no weight on the walking-writing event inside the event. Activation devices need to mobilize thought, stimulate differentiation, and act as tentacles – capable of being stretched, but also in frictional tension.

Walk five: ‘with’

This walk requires a group of humans and/or nonhumans. The group can be of any size. The group composes only one aspect of ‘with.’ ‘With’ is about co-composition rather than inclusive collaboration. Bring a notebook and a pencil. A blanket or a ground cover is recommended but not necessary. Walk until you find a comfortable place to sit and write together.

Astrida Neimanis (2012) writes that transcorporeality, intra-action, relationality, companion species and other concepts that inform new materialisms and posthumanisms all engender a form of ‘with.’ She wonders, though, why the concept collaboration is rarely mentioned in the pivotal feminist texts that mark this burgeoning field. Perhaps, she argues, there is a danger in idealizing the sentimentality of collaboration. We need, she contends, to differentiate different kinds of collaboration, to ask questions about the consequences of relating. “Collaboration,” she writes, “is sweaty work replete with tense negotiations” (p. 218).

WalkingLab organizes *Itinerant Reading Salons*, where we gather groups of people together to walk and read. Sometimes readings are shared before the walk and we use the walk to discuss the readings closely. We might select a quote or a ‘minor concept’ that we work as we walk (Manning & Massumi, 2014). In other instances, we bring the readings on the walks and pause along our journey to read out loud together. Reading out loud changes the pace of reading, its tempo and shape, much like a walk alters our movements, rhythms, and pace.

One such ‘with’ walk took place on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia, with *WalkingLab* collaborators Mindy Blaise and Linda Knight. Our week-long *Itinerant Reading Salon* began propositionally with the question: “What if we stand speculative for a moment before the speculative turn and check our feminist itinerary again?” (Åsberg, Thiele, and van der Tuin, 2015, p. 164). Having attended a number of academic conferences, where the new materialisms and posthumanism proliferated, but without any critical regard for its feminist genealogy, we felt the need to re-visit some of the feminist contributions to the field and to ask questions about ‘with’: inheritance, relations, response-ability, friction, and situatedness.

We read together. Out loud. We took notes individually in our notebooks, and we scrawled concepts, questions, and ideas on chart paper and in the sand. We walked along the beach and over volcanic rock. We sheltered ourselves from the sea wind in a bower of Moonah trees to write. One of our writing propositions was ‘tentacles.’ We wrote for 30 minutes. Then each of us read aloud to one another. We followed this by asking further questions from which another writing proposition emerged. We wrote again. We continued until we reached a point where the wind and flies were no longer bearable. We walked back to our accommodation. More questions emerged as we cooked together and continued reading out loud, writing together and apart. ‘With’ “demands work, speculative invention, and ontological risks. . . [and] [n]o one knows how to do that in advance of coming together in composition” (Haraway, 2008a, p. 83).

When walking-writing, the ‘with’ has to be held (in)tension all the time. It’s not just that four feminist academics were working together, but that we were thinking, problematizing, and speculating on ‘with-ness,’ response-ability, matters of concern, and situatedness as ongoing propositions. This ‘with’ can also be extended to include a politics of citation. Citational practices, argues Sara Ahmed (2013), structure a selective history of disciplines. She writes that these structures are “screening techniques” where “certain bodies take up spaces by screening out the existence of others” (np). The academic collective *Feminist Educators*

Against Sexism (#FEAS), organized by Mindy Blaise, Linda Knight, and Emily Gray propose a ‘Cite Club.’² FEAS has established an e-mail group where members share their work and cite one another when possible. Cite Club addresses the call by Eve Tuck, K. Wayne Yang and Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández (2015) to “consider what you might want to change about your academic citation practices. Who do you choose to link and re-circulate in your work? Who gets erased? Who should you stop citing?” (np). ‘With’ requires that we walk-write-think-cite as a political practice of co-composition.

Walk six: touch

Go on a walk. Feel your feet on the earth. Touch the breeze. Attend to impressions. Caress the thoughts that weigh on you as you amble. Feel the haptic; the corporeal. Walk in a graveyard if you can find one.

We enter the mossy Victorian gates into a grove of tall trees. City traffic becomes muted and our footfalls crackle on the gravel path. Petals lilt off the branches, grass winnows, and crumbling tombs mark our passage into the heart of the cemetery. As walkers, we return to cemeteries because of their affects and surfaces, because they are places of thresholds, where edges touch incommensurably.

Walking-writing invokes the intimacy and rhythm of touch (Springgay, 2008). Touch involves the physical contact of skin on matter. Touch conjures the immediate, proximal, and bodily. When we touch, Manning (2007) explains, “we reach toward that which is in-formation or trans-formation . . . altering us” (p. 85). Touch threatens boundaries opening up different corporeal ontologies.

Walking-writing evokes what Barad (2012) refers to as a queer self-touching. When we touch ourselves, she states, we encounter an uncanny sense of the stranger or otherness within the self. Using quantum theory to shape a theory of self-touching, Barad explains how a particle touches itself creating an infinite set of future possible virtual particles. The infinite set of possibilities of interaction entails a particle touching itself, and then that touching subsequently touching *touch* itself. She writes: “Every level of touch, then, is itself touched by all possible others” (p. 212). This radically queers any notion of difference and identity. Self-touching, she argues, “is an encounter with the infinite alterity of the self” (p. 213). In touching,

each individual always already includes all possible intra-actions with “itself” through all the virtual Others, including those that are noncontemporaneous with “itself.” That is, every finite being is always already threaded through with an infinite alterity diffracted through being and time.

(Barad, 2012, p. 213)

This self-touching, Barad states, is a queer perversion of being and time. If there are infinite possibilities of touching, then all matter is composed of infinite variations and multiplicities. Queering touch emphasizes difference as multiplicities as

opposed to difference ‘from.’ This is another way of saying that matter emerges from entangled intra-actions and relatings, and that matter itself is “always already touched by and touching infinite configurations of possible others, other beings and time” (Barad, 2012, p. 215). Walking-writing the cemetery means we need to think about touching encounters beyond the actualized ones concretized through our feet touching the ground. Walking-writing needs to extend beyond an embodied and sensuous description of how a body encounters a place in the present, to consider the queer self-touching perversions of which we are all a part.

If matter touches, then this has profound effects on our place in the world. As Barad (2012) contends, touch has an immense impact on how we become response-able. Touch queers and perverts individual identity. Touch, for Barad, doesn’t require that we foreground inclusions. It’s not about admitting what is excluded but about thinking the thresholds of the touching encounter, the thresholds of limits of what is included and excluded. Touching then is an “ethics committed to the rupture of indifference” (Barad, 2012, p. 216). This isn’t an ethics that determines who gets to belong or participate, but an ethics that queers and undoes the limits of what counts as human or otherwise in the first place. Self-touching means thinking about alterity – our touching indifference – within ourselves. It requires an ethics response-able to the inhuman within us. Walking-writing recognizes the radical indeterminacy and openness, the ongoing inventive intra-actions of difference that make up the world. For example, Mel Chen (2012) writes about walking a city street and ingesting the bodies of self and other: skin particles, perfume, body odor, and hair follicles. To walk incites a touching encounter.

Eva Hayward (2010) evokes another discussion of queer transmaterial touching through their haptic concept *fingeryeyes*. *Fingeryeyes* enable tentacular multi-species encounters, which are “impressions, thresholds of emergence” (p. 580). Invoking the terms *pervert* and *invert*, as queer transmaterial touchings, Hayward muses on bodies’ pliability and modification. Tentacular touchings are an ethics that is “about responsibility and accountability for the lively relationalities of becoming of which we are a part” (Barad, 2007, p. 303). From a methodological point of view, touch dislodges the reliance on occularcentrism so prevalent in qualitative research, to consider how transmaterial bodily practices re-configure how we come to know. To *pervert* means to twist, warp, and misinterpret. Perversion arrives in the form of *Queering the Trail*.

Cemeteries conjure up a pastness that is indebted to enduring clock or chronological time. Gravestone markers etched with beginning and end dates tick out a metered understanding of life. Queer self-touching evokes other approaches to time, that teem and unfold in the microcosms that proliferate as multiple touching encounters. This is a time that is imperceptible, absolute, and decisional.

Scholars like Eleni Ikoniadou (2014), Lisa Blackman (2012), and Patricia Clough (2010), who write about affective dimensions of media, note that what affect does to mediation is to push rhythm beyond a metric conceptualization towards rhythm “as an assemblage of tensions traversing all participating bodies-living or inanimate” (Ikoniadou, 2014, p. 152). Affect as force and intensity surfaces rhythmically, where rhythm is sensation, not metric chronological

time. For Deleuze (1994), rhythm exceeds the cognitive and the rational through affective force. Clough (2010) calls this “rhythm affect,” where time pulses with vibrations, “with rhythms ready for propagation or infection” (p. 228). Walking-writing understood as an affective and rhythmic practice displaces linear time. Self-touching perverts time. Inverts it. Time is contemporaneous and tentacular – spreading out pastness, presentness, and futurity all at once. As Ikoniadou (2014) writes: “Understood in this way, rhythm no longer belongs to a body as a quality or asset and it is not attached to anything other than itself. Rhythm may not emerge tied to a plane of action or to something else outside it, allowing instead for an (inter)action between different planes, or bodies” (p. 154). Walking-writing lends to both a metric and an affective understanding of time. As metric, we might think of patterns and tempos marked out as feet touch the ground. But this is only one aspect of walking and time. This linear time normalizes bodies and space. Time progresses from one individual moment to the next shaping the past and the future. This is an orderly and sequential understanding of time. It also marks out an interior and an exterior understanding of bodies and place. But affect, surfacing, and vibration require time be conceived differently. This is time as indeterminate, instable, and intensive.

Walking-writing, like other affective mediations, are modes of expression that enable the insensible, incommensurate, indeterminate to be felt. Walking-writing offers the possibility of touching materiality. This opens us to a transmaterial ethics. As we have written throughout the book, ethics is not about including the inhuman, or bringing it into the centre. Rather ethics is a recognition of

the inhuman, the insensible, the irrational, the unfathomable, and the incalculable that will help us face the depths of what responsibility entails. A cacophony of whispered screams, gasps, and cries, an infinite multitude of indeterminate beings diffracted through different spacetimes, the nothingness, is always already within us, or rather, it lives through us.

(Barad, 2012, p. 218)

We emerge from one graveyard and find ourselves in another city and another threshold. This time we descend 130 steps into the Paris Catacombs. The rock layers of the catacombs travel back in time 45 million years, and the deep cavernous tunnels of limestone date from the Lutetian geological stage. The name Lutetian comes from the Latin name for Paris. The catacombs were created in the 18th century in abandoned underground quarries. These quarries which extracted limestone, marl and gravel, beauchamp sand and other materials were dug out from beneath the city to build the city above ground. Small plaques dot the walls of the tunnels, indicating street names and other directional signs from above ground.

In the 18th century the tunnels were filled with remains from the largest Parisian cemetery, ‘The Saints-Innocents.’ The catacombs are what Kathryn Yusoff (2017b) calls ‘earth archives’ – deep histories of nature-culture entanglements. Here Yusoff is using the term archive to note not only the layers of geo-strata, but to emphasize the ways that the human and geology are imbricated in one another.

The geosocial catacombs attest to the complicated histories of stone that have constituted different becomings. The deep time of geo-strata is intertwined with piles of bones, destabilizing chronological time. Time in the catacombs becomes synchronous. It spreads out like a wave enmeshing walkers' bodies with stones, dust, and geo debris. Queer time, where time becomes affective, variant, and indifferent.

The *Stone Walks* that *WalkingLab* organizes and performs in various locations considers stones from the perspective of inhuman animacy and the geo-social (Springgay & Truman, 2017c). Our walking-writing practice emphasizes the animacy of stone, thereby unhinging affect as solely a human quality. The animacy of stone, Jeffrey Cohen (2015) suggests, is significant in shaping an ethics that is not human-centric but an ethics that ruptures "ontological solitudes, defying exclusive taxonomies, undermining closed systems" (p. 228). This shifts ethics from a moralizing discourse directed by humans towards inhuman others, to a responsibility that is shaped by relations, entanglements, and intra-connected touchings.

Walk seven: contours

Contour walks follow edges. Contours edge. Edges are the limits, the thresholds, marking passages between things. To edge means to move gradually, carefully, or cautiously. Take a walk that contours.

Contours can be lines, outlines of a form or a body. Contours edge things. As a verb, contours make and shape things. Contours are processual. Contours germinate and assemble. Walking-writing contours thinking-in-movement. As a practice of edging, contours are thresholds – an in-between space. Thresholds are full of potentiality. They seed things.

The contours that edge walking-with – *Land and geos, affect, transmaterial, and movement* – have been shaped and assembled through our walking-writing and the many *WalkingLab* events and projects that are the basis for our scholarship in this book. Part of our contouring has been to hold in tension the history and inheritances of walking and walking methods. Who walks, how they walk, and where requires constant queering.

We are indebted to the rich and extensive body of scholarship on walking methodologies across a range of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. Particularly those artists and scholars that have collaborated with us at *WalkingLab* pushing our walking-with to a threshold.

Walking Methodologies in a More-Than-Human World extends critical and diverse walking methodologies and proposes: i) walking-with Land and geos as crucial aspects of critical place-making; ii) understanding hapticality and affect as differential components of sensory inquiry including the ways that affecting subjectivities attend to the affective forces of race; and iii) enlarging an understanding of individual embodiment through transmateriality and theories of trans movement that proliferate as difference. Furthermore, the more-than-human theories of Land and geos, affect and transmateriality have generated different ways

to think about: iv) participation as immanent movement; v) the need for qualitative research methods beyond proceduralism; vi) walking as counter cartographies and anarchiving practices that emphasize relational and regional ways of re-mapping space; and vii) walking-with as critical practices that de-centre humanisms in landscape and literacy in-school contexts.

Shifting the focus from walking as a method to move from one point to another, towards an emphasis on walking as an entangled, transmaterial, affective practice of experimentation, our research considers the ethical and political dimensions of ambulatory research. Frictionally theorizing walking scholarship with feminist new materialisms, posthumanisms, queer and trans theories, critical race theory, Indigenous scholarship, and critical disability studies offers vital interventions into walking's potential as a research methodology. Our queer orientation to walking methodologies is significant because it emphasizes the speculative and experimental potential of walking as research, while simultaneously attending to the complexities of subjectivities, mobilities, and situatedness. *Queering the Trail*, as concept for critical walking methodologies disrupts the all too common tropes of walkers drifting through the city or rambling along a country path, and the normative narratives that inscribe walking as inherently healthy and meditative.

Walking can be overlooked in qualitative research because of its ablest Euro-Western history or because it is assumed to be uncritical. Likewise, with the increasing advancement and turn to digital technologies, walking is marginalized because of its pedestrian and everyday nature. Conversely, walking can be romanticized as a method to counter technology, and conceptualized as a practice of 'returning' to something 'more-human and more-embodied.' The theories and experimentations that compose this book attest to walking's capacity to interrupt these assumptions. *Walking Methodologies in a More-than-Human World* demonstrates that walking is an important methodology and method for thinking ethically and politically about bodies, movement, and place. Walking-with becomes a practice of thinking-making-doing that attends to transmaterial knottings between all matter.

The sun is contouring and edging its way out from behind a low-lying cloud, and the mountains on the fjord shift into dark purple and green focus. We conclude with this walking proposition:

Take your research for a walk. How will you respond by walking-with?

Notes

- 1 The altered gait concept is borrowed from artist Donna Akrey.
- 2 Feminist Educators against Sexism (FEAS) seeks to challenge and eradicate sexism and gender inequality in the academy. www.genderandeducation.com/issues/introducing-feas-cite-club/