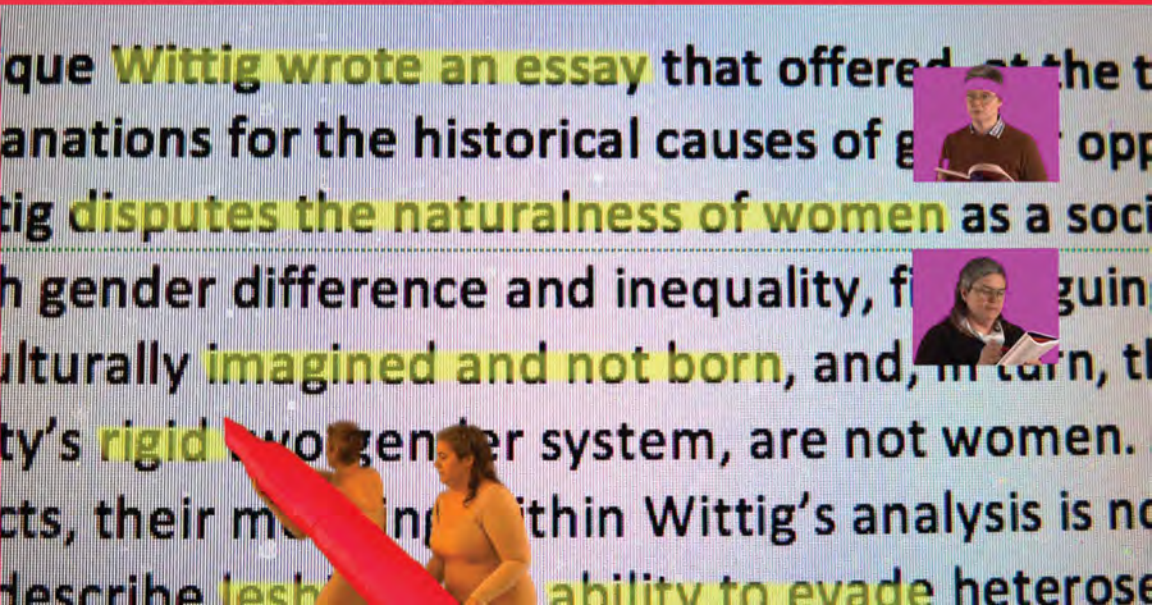
How to Make Art at the End of the World

A Manifesto for Research-Creation

NATALIE LOVELESS



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This book is dedicated to the student I was,

the students I've had, and the university that I fell for.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I COULD NEVER HAVE written this book without having had the immense privilege of a tenure-track and now tenured position in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. The department has a long and important history. It was, for example, the first program in Canada to offer a Master of Visual Arts (established in 1970), when the BFA was still the reigning terminal degree. Here in Art and Design, I find myself in an open-minded, creative, forward-thinking place, filled with generous colleagues who have supported me in developing my research-creational vision on the ground, testing and playing with research-creationalizing my courses in the History of Art, Design, and Visual Culture, and, through this, learning what works, what doesn't, and what is possible given the larger constraints of the twenty-first-century university.

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Earlier versions of some of the arguments found in this book are published in Natalie S. Loveless, "Reading with Knots: On Jane Gallop's Anecdotal Theory," *S: The Journal of the Jan van Eyck Circle for Lacanian Ideology Critique* 4 (2011): 24–36; "Practice in the Flesh of Theory: Art, Research and the Fine Arts PhD," *Canadian Journal of Communications* 37, no. 1 (2012): 93–108; "Towards a Manifesto on Research-Creation," *RACAR: Revue d'art canadienne/Canadian Art Review* 40, no. 1 (2015): 52–54.

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We need researchers able to participate in the creation of the responses on which the possibility of a future that is not barbaric depends.
—ISABELLE STENGERS, *In Catastrophic Times*, 73

The recognition that one cannot know the other or the self, but must ask in respect for all of time who and what are emerging in a relationship, is the key.
—DONNA HARAWAY, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, 50

To be a teacher is my greatest work of art.
—JOSEPH BEUYS, *Energy Plan for the Western Man: Joseph Beuys in America*, 8

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INTRODUCTION

Art in the Expanded Field

IN 1979 ART HISTORIAN Rosalind Krauss published a now well-known essay called "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." In it, Krauss argues that she can no longer analyze emerging artistic forms using the tools in the contemporary art toolkit at her disposal. New hybrid forms demand new, expanded categories if they are to be accountably dealt with. Sculpture has been remade, she tells us, not only by categories such as the Duchampian Readymade and the neo-Dadaist Combine, but by the emerging categories of installation and earth or land art—artistic gestures that are transforming sculpture from the production of distinct three-dimensional objects on pedestals to something less clearly definable, something that hovers ambivalently between architecture and not-architecture, landscape and not-landscape, and that properly belongs to neither (Krauss 1979, 37).[1]

What is most interesting to me about the categories Krauss proposes is the way that they oscillate between the strict corners of her definitional world, pulling in different directions, tumbling out of the very structures that she develops to contain them. Because of this, the essay is one that I still teach today, yearly, in an undergraduate lecture course called Themes in Contemporary Art. I teach it because it does a wonderful job helping students grapple with the genre-bending and social-and-spatial-remaking

capacities of mid-twentieth-century artistic practice, helping us move from an understanding of art as easel painting or bronze cast sculpture to being able to read, analyze, and situate expanded contemporary practices such as new genre public art, relational aesthetics, art-as-social-practice, and works that fall under what has been called the educational or pedagogical turn (Bishop 2012; O'Neill and Wilson 2010; Podesva 2007; Rogoff 2008).[2]

While not its explicit focus, the pedagogical turn in contemporary art is one with which this book is in conversation. In the pages that follow, I attend specifically to the ways that dialogic, socially oriented, and research-based art practices are remade within the university-as-site. I begin by situating research-creation—a sister term to what is often called artistic research—within a local context, that of the Canadian university in which I currently teach. This situated focus grounds my analysis, but my words and thoughts are not simply offered here to the Canadian academy. They emerge from my experience as an AmeriCanadian (dual) citizen, trained primarily in England and the United States, now teaching in Canada. With this book, I aim to contribute not only to readers in Canada, and not only to the visual arts, but to those in other, related, sites of debate on artistic research in university contexts.

Drawing on texts that are common currency within these debates (for example, Christopher Frayling's 1993 "Research in Art and Design"), as well as texts that are not (such as Jacques Lacan's 1964 lectures on the gaze as *objet petit a*), this book-length manifesto offers itself as both love song and lament. I interrogate research-creation as a genre full of exciting pedagogical and institutional possibility. I also lament the hopeless exhaustion I see in colleagues all around me, as our system follows quickly on the heels of the UK and Australia, with an increased corporatization of the university and a complex and insidious evisceration of experimental pedagogy and research (Davidson 2017; Jeppesen and Nazar 2012; Royle 2003).

The manifesto is a genre that I invoke in the title as well as the form of this book. It matters deeply to my project and is inspired by Donna Haraway's two, well-known, manifestos (1985 and 2003). A manifesto is a call to action. It mobilizes declarative and persuasive language and works to manifest a different world, performatively. In the case of this book, I offer a hybrid formation: something between the rigor of a scholarly mono-

graph and the heartfelt framing of a manifesto. I do this toward a vision of a university not in ruins (Readings 1997), not abandoned to professional justification and defensive metrics, but of a feminist university of creativity, experiment, and what I will frame in the pages to come as a mode of *eros* that is committed, cathected, and sustaining.

As a strategy of resistance to the resignation that surrounds me daily in the arts and humanities wings of the university, I look to research-creation, even as it is being commodified right under our feet, as a site of generative recrafting: a touchstone and orienting point that might help render daily life in the academy more pedagogically, politically, and affectively sustainable. That said, the research-creational struggle that animates this book is not for acknowledgment (a seat at the table: "Look! Now artists can be researchers too!"). It is for the insertion of voices and practices into the academic everyday that work to trouble disciplinary relays of knowledge/power, allowing for more creative, sensually attuned modes of inhabiting the university as a vibrant location of pedagogical *mattering*.

As I have written elsewhere (Loveless 2012), I first began grappling with research-creation (although not under that name) in 2001, when, as an art student (MFA) at a US museum school, I found myself craving a level of academic training that the museum school was not, at the time, set up to support. I had many excellent teachers there. They read philosophy and literary theory, made art, and provided a critically informed studio environment that was top notch.[3] But different training practices (pedagogical, institutional, academic) carry with them different needs, orientations, and expertise. Being at a museum school designed to support excellent studio (and poststudio) practice aimed at a professional art market and extended art world, I was not going to get the kind of attention to my scholarly thinking and writing that I would under different institutional and disciplinary conditions. So, to get what I needed, I added, in 2002, a second degree (an MA in contemporary art history and theory) at a nearby university, and completed both in 2004.

The craving that led to this desire was twofold. It was a craving of the *heartmind*: I simply fell in love with the kind of thinking, reading, and writing practices associated with the work of contemporary art theory and criticism. It was also a craving that emerged endogenously from the work I was doing in my studio: the more I gravitated toward conceptual and feminist art practice, the more theory and history I needed. I couldn't

"get" Mary Kelly's germinal *Post-Partum Document* without also seriously grappling with Lacan and Freud. And I couldn't grapple with Freud and Lacan without serious study and pedagogical mentorship. Of course, such theory and history could have been studied, enjoyed, and directed toward an informed artistic practice, as has been done by many a research-based artist. But, it turns out, in terms of my outputs—in terms of the things I wanted to *make* in the world—academic or scholarly essays, articles, and books also appealed to me. More than appealed. I found myself desiring both, and driven to do both, simultaneously and in equal measure. And I had the privilege of being located at two institutions (the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Tufts University, Medford—then not combined as they are now), each of which provided me with the space and conditions of possibility to flourish in concurrent, overlapping, nonidentical worlds (degree programs). This, as I will return to in the pages that follow, turned out to be key.

My story is not unique. While it was not the norm at the time, and arguably is still not the norm today, I have since met many a kindred spirit with a similar story. For instance, in my hometown of Montréal, at the very moment that I was navigating these drives and forging what looked (to me) like new paths, a range of university-based practitioners and scholars were already developing studio-laboratories (Century 1999) dedicated to exploring, championing, and supporting such practices under the term *research-creation*, the Université de Québec à Montréal (UQAM) had already started the first fine arts PhD in Canada (in French), and in the UK doctoral degrees in the fine arts were already being awarded.

Research-creation is a geographically specific term that works in tandem with alternatives such as practice-based research, practice-led research, research-based practice, research-led practice, creative-praxis, arts-driven inquiry, arts-based research, and, increasingly, artistic research. This ever-growing roster speaks to the ways that artistic practices come to be understood as research methods and outputs in university contexts and the different ways that artistic practices with research bases or bents have been codified since (at least) the 1990s when, in the UK, doctoral degrees in fine or visual arts practice began to be awarded (Barrett and Bolt 2010; Biggs and Karlsson 2011; Haseman 2006; Leavy 2009).[4] Distinctions between these terms and the practices they stand for are debated regularly,

and these debates are linked not only to new doctoral programs but also to national funding structures and, increasingly, national research chairs.[5]

The website for Creativity and Cognition Studios, started by Linda Candy and Ernest Edmonds in 1996 at Loughborough University (UK) to explore intersections of art- and technology-based research (now housed at the University of Technology, Sydney), distinguishes *practice-based* from *practice-led* research thus: "Practice-based research is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice. In a doctoral thesis, claims of originality and contribution to knowledge may be demonstrated through creative outcomes in the form of designs, music, digital media, performances and exhibitions. Whilst the significance and context of the claims are described in words, a full understanding can only be obtained with direct reference to the outcomes." Practice-led research, on the other hand, "is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice. In a doctoral thesis, the results of practice-led research may be fully described in text form without the inclusion of a creative work. The primary focus of the research is to advance knowledge about practice, or to advance knowledge within practice. Such research includes practice as an integral part of its method and often falls within the general area of action research" (Creativity and Cognition Studios n.d.). If we parse these passages to clarify one of the distinctions this book will examine, we see that *practice-based* research generates new knowledge through or by means of artistic practice itself, and *practice-led* research draws on artistic methods to generate new knowledge for or about artistic practice in written form. In other words, it is the *mode of output* (all text, versus part text + part creative outcome), and the weighted role of artistic practice within this, that remains central to the definitions at stake. As I will go on to argue throughout these pages, these are definitional debates that matter not to the making of research-based art in general, but rather to the use of artistic forms and methods as *the rendering public (publishing) of research* within a university context.[6]

Initially seen as a way to support artistic research practices in university contexts, research-creation took hold in Québec after several pilot programs—starting at UQAM in 1980 and slowly integrated into Québec's provincial research councils in the mid to late 1990s—and was then expanded nationally by the Social Sciences and Humanities Re-

search Council of Canada (SSHRC), the primary humanities and social sciences funding body in Canada.[7] The definition of research-creation given by SSHRC is telling. Since June 2016, the SSHRC website has defined research-creation as "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 2016). Distinguishing itself from SSHRC's definition, the Canada Council for the Arts, the national granting board that supports artistic development and production in Canada, initially framed research-creation as *research/creation*, stating that their grants provided "artists with opportunities for creative renewal, experimentation, professional development and research" (CCA n.d.). Of interest here, beyond the particularities of nationally specific granting structures, is the subtle way that a research approach or *act* (what is being produced and how) is foregrounded in SSHRC's definition, while artistic disciplinary *identity* (who is doing what) is at the core of the Canada Council's.[8] While Canada Council's "slash" prioritized the professional identity of the artist, SSHRC's hyphen indicates a hybrid formation, part research, part creation, part experiment that focuses on the *output of the research*.

At the heart of terminological distinctions such as those proposed by the Creativity and Cognition Studios, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, is the question of the status of art as itself a form of research. While sensitive to the disciplinary stakes of this question, unlike many books in this genre, mine is not an argument for the validity of artistic practice as a de facto legitimate form of research. The project of raising the category "artist" to the status of "academic researcher" in the university hierarchy, while pragmatically important, is of less interest to me than the consideration of what research-creational approaches offer to the project of rethinking interdisciplinary practice and politics in the North American university today.[9] In this context, it seems to me that, in very many ways, giving "art" the status of "research" does little more than echo early feminist interventions into the canon that took the form of "add women and stir"—a tokenistic gesture of inclusion that does nothing to change the logics that structure these exclusions in the first place.[10]

In the context of the university, while research-creation is (most often) linked to artistic production, its real potential rests in its demand for an in-

ter- or transdisciplinary perspective that, while marshalling the insights of emerging and developing fine arts research methodologies, exceeds the fine arts proper.[11] Research-creation, read in this way, demands a reconfiguration of standard academic pedagogical training and assessment practices—what we permit our professors and students to do and how—as well as our divisional and departmental making practices. Here, and in what follows, my focus is not on research-based art practices in general but on what research-creation does *in*, *to*, and *as part of* ongoing university discourse in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, with specific attention to what research-creation does to our understanding of scholarly form at the graduate and doctoral levels.

Fine or Visual Art PhD (and Doctor of Fine or Visual Art) programs have existed internationally since the early 1990s, and have recently gained traction in the United States and Canada. There is some debate over where and when the very first doctoral degree in visual arts practice (i.e., some version or other of research-creation in art, in English-speaking contexts) was offered. Fiona Candlin was among the first in the UK to earn a research-creation–like doctorate with her dissertation, "Artwork and the Boundaries of Academia: A Theoretical/Practical Negotiation of Contemporary Art Practice within the Conventions of Academic Research" (Keele University, 1998), and Gavin Renwick was the first to do so in Scotland with his project, "Spatial Determination in the Canadian North: A Theoretical Overview and Practice-Based Response" (University of Dundee, 1998). A decade and a half later, in 2012, Kevin Rogers ("Out of Order: Thinking through Robin Collyer, Discontent and Affirmation (1973–1985)," University of Western Ontario) and Risa Horowitz ("Disciplining Art Practice: Work, Hobby, and Expertise in Practice-Based Scholarship (Blurry Canada, Potager, Scrabble)," York University) were awarded (to the best of my knowledge) the first English-language research-creation degrees in the visual arts in Canada—both, in fact, on the same day (August 23). These latter were fine arts doctoral degrees based in both a written document and artistic output.[12]

The awarding of degrees such as these has caused much debate, mostly focusing on the relation between art and the academy. Sometimes concerns come from those in the humanities and social sciences who have trouble imagining how a "chapter" can take the form of a performance or installation. At other times the concern comes from those who have been

trained as artists, worried that their disciplinary modes of knowing and producing are being forced to become more "academic" even when they don't want (or need) to be. Such anxieties (of place, category, and orientation) are compounded by the fact that at the same time as many universities in the United States and Canada have been working to develop research-creational PhD programs, art academies—for example, Canada's oldest conservatories such as the Emily Carr School of Art and Design, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and the Ontario College of Art and Design—have reconfigured themselves from "art school" to "university" (i.e., becoming the Emily Carr University of Art and Design, NASCAD University, and OCAD University). Given the legitimization of art-as-research in universities (under the banner of research-creation) and in the art-school-reframed-as-university, artists often find themselves, whether they want to or not, having to learn how to navigate the legitimating (and often confining) structures of social science- and humanities-based university granting boards, and the modes of output and assessment specific to those areas of the university. In this context, many ask whether these shifts, for both art conservatories and research universities, are simply a matter of bums in seats and the financial bottom line: Are art schools just trying to survive by widening their market and access to public funds through accreditation? Or, from the university side, are universities simply using art as an attempt to render research outcomes "relatable"? Is art being used as a lackey in the university's push to prove "real-world" impact (what my home university frames as "for the public good")? Is this *really* why research-creation is being supported—when it is—in academic contexts?

My hope—a hope that emerges from almost a decade of thinking about and teaching in research-creational contexts—is that while, certainly, each of these anxieties has merit, it is not *only* these things that are at work. Despite the seemingly all-pervasive instrumentalizing and optimizing push governing university climates at this historical moment, one that renders many of my colleagues suspicious of research-creation and the uses to which it is being put, I continue to see research-creation as one of those cracks (to paraphrase Leonard Cohen) that lets the light shine in, through its experimental and dissonant forms of practice, research, and pedagogy. It is for this reason that, instructed and inspired by colleagues both national and international, I mobilize research-creation

as a mode of resistance to individualist, careerist, and bibliometric university cultures.[13] Research-creation, on this reading, is a potent pedagogical method of resistance within a university landscape that, in the wake of Bill Readings's (1997) canonical "university of excellence," has emerged as the enduringly neoliberal "university of business" or the "all-administrative university" (Ginsberg 2011).

This "all-administrative university" depends on new economies and ecologies of university life grounded not only in an untenably precarious and exploited labor force (with adjunct and sessional positions replacing tenure-track ones) and the progressive turning of professors into "busy-work" administrators at all levels of the university, but ever increasing speeds of production than earlier models of art and humanities scholarship.[14] This is a university landscape governed by the desire for clear and immediate individualized impact metrics, by greater online, informational (rather than critical interpretive) content in classes, larger class sizes, fewer full-time professors, and any putative research time that is imagined to come with the job of "professor" eaten away at by increasing administrative tasks as a result of fewer academic hires combined with extreme cuts to administrative positions. In this context, research-creation, in any configuration, with the extra resources, time, and engagement that it requires, may seem a fool's errand.[15] Indeed, the rise of research-creation can be, and has been, read as an attempt on the part of the neoliberal university to accreditize and instrumentalize every one of its corners, including artistic practice, making us all do triple the labor in half the time and with less and less support.

Without denying the conditions that are (alas) the case, in this book I assert research-creation as more than this. I claim research-creation as the logical outcome of interdisciplinary, conceptual, and social justice/activist legacies in contemporary art such as those that stretch from Mary Kelly to Bracha Ettinger, or Hans Haacke to Beatriz da Costa, or Joseph Beuys to Tania Bruguera; it is an extension of the pedagogical turn in the arts to which I referred above (Joseph Beuys's infamous 1973 walkout "Democracy Is Merry" and his Free International University come to mind here, alongside more recent extra-institutional pop-up universities such as the Copenhagen Free University and the School of Panamerican Unrest).[16] As the past few decades (at least) have taught us, when the dialogic and pedagogical start to be used as artistic *material*, the university becomes

both a site of institutional critique and an exploratory playground (Bourriaud 2002; Kester 2004, 2011; Kwon 2002).

What I am trying to highlight here is that while it is fair to say that research-creation is, in many important ways, driven by institutional desires to increase university funding profiles, it has, at the same time, *everything* to do with longer (interdisciplinary, feminist, and other social justice) shifts in how we do arts and humanities thinking, as well as with dialogic and pedagogical shifts in the world of artistic production and discourse. These art-world shifts have had profound effects not only on the artworks/events/projects that animate our contemporary biennial, triennial, and exhibition circuits, but on the worlds of art history, theory, and criticism that have flowed out from these disciplinarily intertwined locations into other spaces of the university. In other words, rather than new or alien, research-creation is very much entwined with *endogenous* drives in contemporary art practice, theory, and history.[17]

Simply put, and to reiterate: While artistic perspectives, methods, and skills are central to the critical discourse of research-creation, what distinguishes research-creation from an already robust world of twentieth- and twenty-first-century art practices with research bases is a new institutional context in the form of national granting structures for university-based art practices leading to new graduate degree granting programs. As such, research-creation is a category produced *within*, *with*, and *for* an ever-adapting university landscape. While it is true that research-creation is crucially informed by new and historical directions in the field of the professional fine arts (that is, grounded in a history of social, pedagogical, dialogic, conceptual, and institutional critique in the visual arts), and that research-based, theoretically driven art is everywhere in the art world, in this book I attend to research-creation, first and foremost, as an urgent challenge to reigning pedagogical and research modalities and outputs in the university today.

Whether one is for or against these new developments in university-based and university-adjacent contemporary arts, what is undeniable is that the discourse surrounding the fine arts PhD and research-creation in general is burgeoning. And, as these new practices and programs spread, debate surrounding them is marked by anxiety and hope: anxiety that the creation of a new terminal degree will put artists satisfied with the MFA, as *the* terminal degree in the field, out of work or demand that they en-

dure years of unwanted extra schooling; hope that in these new programs we will see a kind of training responsive to the needs of those equally committed to scholarly and artistic practice, and wanting these hybrid practices to be recognized in a university context. These are hopes and anxieties that are often placed at odds with each other, as if caring for one necessitates the obliteration of the other, rather than understanding these concerns as operating at different registers of practice and analysis for which we must care differentially but equally; these are hopes and anxieties that become even more marked in the face of increasing budget cuts to the arts and humanities—that is, to culturally oriented areas of the university that are undervalued (where STEAM—a structure including arts, both fine and liberal—has no place within the dominant ideologies of STEM).[18]

As noted above, one of the most common concerns voiced by those whose dominant identification and professional training is that of "artist" is that faculty initially hired for their artistic excellence—artists who make and show art in the contemporary art world (museums, galleries, biennials, and triennials)—in the face of the "research-creationification" of university art departments now find themselves "matter out of place" (Douglas [1966] 2002). The fear here is that university art departments will no longer be understood as sites of proficient "making" but instead become sites of artistic research vetted solely through humanities and social science research logics and languages. This is in many ways true. Studio faculty are often required to ask: How does their (artistic) research attract and fund graduate students? How does their (artistic) research develop fruitful collaborations within and across departments? How does it fit strategically into university agendas and national research priorities? And, for students, rather than (and I am offering a straw-person narrative here) being trained toward traditional MFA outputs that stake a claim for an original and talented artistic vision ready for recognition by those standing at the gates of the art market, they are trained to look toward the PhD and ask not "What is my vision?" but "How will this artistic output forward the research question at the heart of my thesis?" This worry is set up as a structure in which the value of one term (*research*) will necessarily eclipse the other (*art*).

While this binary structure is one of the things that this book resists, I understand it all too well. In the art and art history practices within which

I was trained, the artist and artwork have served, more often than not, as objects for the disciplinary fields of art history, theory, and criticism. It is historically commonplace for departments of art and art history to be organized around a model of knowledge production in which philosophy takes charge of and frames art—a hierarchy of knowledge endemic to the university. George Smith speaks to this point by tracing a history of philosophical debate surrounding the relation of artistic praxis to epistemology, suggesting that "were it to get us finally out from under the dialectics of knowledge and aesthetics, the philosophical education of the artist would necessarily entail the philosophy of history, but also the study of history *per se*: the history of art, yes; but as importantly, the history of ideas, the history of science, and the geopolitical history of the State, as these histories mix with the history of art. . . . *That the philosopher knows and the artist makes is one rule of specialization on its way out*" (2012, 153; emphasis added).[19]

The way that the arts have historically been devalued in the academy at large mimics the structural relation of art maker to art thinker in the discipline of art history itself, which too often presumes that artistic practice, while it can be seen as a vehicle for research or thinking with the capacity to seriously *impact* rather than only *express* or *reflect* social experiences and issues, still fails the benchmark of rigor and accountability to which academics hold themselves. Historically, within the discipline, the job of the art historian or theorist or critic has been to step in as that translator capable of making an argument for the artwork's greater (historical, political, social) value. Obviously, this is a culturally and historically specific caricature, and one that few of my colleagues would recognize themselves in. But it is one, nonetheless, with ideological staying power, and that I still have presented to me as a truism by students in both disciplines (studio art and art history) on a regular basis. It is in the context of such perspectives that research-creation programs can be seen as particularly potent locations from which to reassess and reconfigure how we, in the overlapping fields of art, art history, and visual culture, understand our subjects, objects, and methods of study and publication.

This conceptualization is particularly relevant at the doctoral level, a level constitutive of "new knowledge" that is vetted and disseminable and therefore able to further discourse in a field (or fields). This is because a research-creational approach insists that, at the doctoral level, artistic

production is no longer solely an *object* of scholarly inquiry but is itself legitimate *form of research and dissemination*, which in turn raises questions regarding the book-length monograph as the only legitimate product of a dissertation in the arts and humanities.[20] To state the obvious, how one does one's pedagogy in a field impacts what *can* and *is* done in that field. How we train our students to think about their practices impacts how, and where, and why they move forward toward the futures they are developing. Learning environments impact the kinds of questions that can be asked, and the ways in which students are supported in asking them. As feminist, antiracist, and decolonial theorists have long taught us, pedagogical ideologies—regimes of truth—configure the parameters of legitimate research questions as well as what counts as rigor or excellence for both student and teacher. And, in turn, the ways in which internal and national granting boards understand the stakes and parameters of a field, and how these line up with that granting body's areas of interest (such as the endowment's conditions, the university's mandate, or the national granting body's target areas), has *everything* to do, in the contemporary university (as Howard Singerman powerfully argues in the context of MFA training in his 1999 *Art Subjects: Making Artists in the American University*), with what kind of work is supported, therefore what kind of work is more likely to be made, seen, acclaimed, and given the chance to impact others. This is not, as I've already stated, to say that research-creation cannot be and hasn't already been, in certain ways, assimilated by the disciplinary logics of the neoliberal university. It is, instead, to ask how drawing on earlier, arguably more hopeful, approaches in political art practice and the interdisciplinary humanities might offer us a roadmap that can be collaged into an old/new way forward.

This book is my attempt to do so.

In what follows, I work with texts that I love, and with my experience of being disciplined via art history (even as my own formation crosses many boundaries). This means that my arguments and examples sometimes fail to fully account for the ways that similar debates have been taken up in allied interdisciplinary nodes in the academy, such as the digital humanities and design studies, as well as for voices and texts from other cultural, geographic, or institutional locations. I attempt to flag these other directions and voices at key moments in the text, and I recognize that the choice to tell one set of interlocking stories here results in others not being told. All I

can hope is that what is missing does not overshadow what is present, and that the claims at the heart of this book come across with respect and care.

Chapter 1, "Haraway's Dog," locates us in the classroom as I teach research-creation to students pursuing degrees in art and art history. In this chapter, I am taught by two texts, Donna Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) and Thomas King's *The Truth about Stories* (2003). These texts not only tell important, innovative research stories; they are also *about* stories—how stories craft and *re*craft worlds, and the political importance of participating in such retellings and recraftings. Accordingly, this first chapter offers stories of pedagogy, of art, of research, and of the intertwined pressures that we face in the neoliberal university today—pressures that affect not only our capacity to keep up with ever-increasing service and administrative loads, but, linked to this, our very capacity to speculate, dream, and imagine otherwise.[21]

Chapter 2, "Discipline(s)," then situates research-creation within a lineage of interdisciplinary interventions in the academy. My primary argument in this second chapter expands on what I have claimed in this introduction: that while research-creation is the result of endogenous impulses in the world of contemporary research-based art practice, it is not just that. Research-creation is also indebted to a history of academic interdisciplinarity that includes interventions such as feminist studies, cultural studies, critical race studies, Indigenous studies, and gender and sexuality studies—interventions into not only *which* knowledges might be deemed valuable, but *who* might produce such knowledges and *how*. In the latter half of the twentieth century, interdisciplinary social justice and studies-based programs worked to remake the university, nurturing pedagogical landscapes within which *who* was able to research was shown as central to shifting *what* research was being done. Indebted to this history, research-creation pushes at the limits of how we understand what it means to "write" and publish—render public—our research.

If chapters 1 and 2 ground the formal and institutional concerns of the book, chapter 3, "Polydisciplinamory," offers the beginning of a theoretical framework for the research-creational approach presented thus far. In it, I argue for the importance of learning to navigate the attachments that guide a "multiple" approach to research-creation (multiple in terms of discipline, method, and form) by drawing on the affective literacies of theoretical polyamory. Grounded in this literature, I propose the neolo-

gism *polydisciplinamory* as a way to differently structure our negotiations of the affective attachments needed for a robust practice and theory of research-creation. I do so not only through attention to *poly lit* but also through psychoanalysis, introducing the Lacanian figure of the *sujet supposé savoir* as one way to trouble disciplinary relays of knowledge/power that would say that to be institutionally legible—to be hired, to advance, to be recognized—we must commit to one disciplinary field, sometimes dabbling or learning from others, but always in contained ways that return us to the monogamous hearth and home of our primary disciplinary spaces. Here, psychoanalytic theory is my friend, helping me to theorize research-creation as a method attentive to cathexis and situated curiosity in ways that necessarily tumble out of the frame of the monodisciplinary.

Taking up this methodological proposition, chapter 4, "Drive(s)," describes the Lacanian objet petit a, the "object-cause of desire," as a structuring force for the critical discourse of research-creation. Reading Lacan idiosyncratically, the objet petit a, in this chapter, becomes a figuration that helps put desire and drive center stage in the research-creational game. It does so in a way that matters as we think about not only what distinguishes research-creation but why we might take research-creation seriously as one of the forces remaking what we do and how we do it in the university today. In this chapter I argue that the objet petit a, research-creationally speaking, is what we are in the grip of when we find ourselves pushing our projects into disciplinary and formal directions that we don't yet know how to justify. The objet petit a doesn't describe a curiosity—a desire—that we mobilize, that we control. It names a curiosity that *grasps us* as much if not more than we *grasp it*, and it is this mode of being driven by our cathected curiosities that, in this final chapter, I tie back to the modes of driven curiosity and love described in chapter 1 through Haraway and King.

The book then concludes with my own objet petit a. Here I turn to the question of how to make art at the "end of the world"—a framing taken from Timothy Morton's (2013) influential work on what he calls the *hyperobjectivity* of global warming. In so doing, I end this manifesto (or perhaps this is a love story, filled with the ambivalence that constitutes all stories of love) by situating the work of research-creation within the context of what is contestedly called the Anthropocene, a term proposed by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer in 2007 to name the geologic impact

of humans on the planet.[22] In this final fold, the book emerges as both a manifesto on research-creation as an institutional remaking practice and, to a lesser degree, a manifesto on mobilizing research-creation for (and in) the Anthropocene.

That is, while the Anthropocene is not its focus, this book emerges from my thinking about how *I do what I do* in the university today. And I cannot think about my daily life in the university without acknowledging that I write and teach from within Treaty Six territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and others, roughly three hundred miles south of the Athabasca oil sands, one of the greatest environmental blights on the planet, during what are undeniably petrocultural end times.[23] In thus situating myself, I flag both the historical specificity of the moment at which I write and the particular pressures of this moment as they manifest themselves in the northwestern Canadian province where I have found myself living since 2012.

There is no longer any question that we are living in compromised times, within which the fantasy of an uncompromised self is isolationist, privileged, and dangerous (Shotwell 2016). Global ecological and economic collapse are discussed with alarming regularity in the newspapers and newsfeeds that surround us, where headlines such as a recent one from *The Atlantic* tell us that "a typical person is more than five times as likely to die in an extinction event as in a car crash" (Meyer 2016). The arts have an important and often overlooked part to play in this context. They offer modes of sensuous, aesthetic attunement, and work as a conduit to focus attention, elicit public discourse, and shape cultural imaginaries. "How might the world be organized differently?" is a question that matters urgently, and it is a question that art—particularly art attuned to human and more-than-human social justice—asks in generative and complex ways.

Oriented by this assertion, I spend most of my time thinking about intersections of art and research as they impact how we do our institutional and pedagogical work in the university in the context of human-induced climate change. That I can do so in the specific ways that I do—research-creationally—comes in part from being situated at a university that has

come late to the political and institutional work of research-creation. When I arrived at the university where I have had the privilege of working for the past six years, there was very little institutional understanding of research-creation. What this means is that I have been able to develop a research-creational culture around me that is largely idiosyncratic, one that emerges from the principles and perspectives that I explore in this book, and has been largely informed by my students.[24]

This matters.

It changes the contours of what I write in these pages. While I refer to some colleagues (both within my institution and without), my primary source of learning, inspiration, and motivation has been the classroom. It is in the classroom, developing research-creation streams in art history courses, developing research-creation independent studies, seeing research-creational master's theses through from start to finish, and working with research-creation PhD students, that I have developed my thinking on the topic. It is the work of former and current students that insists to me that what is happening in the "ivory tower" matters in significant ways that are not confined, as certain critics might have it, myopically, to the classroom.

That said, as is clear by now, a central contention of this book is that while research-creation happens in interesting ways outside the university, the claiming of doctoral status for such practices offers one of the most interesting contemporary interdisciplinary provocations to (at least) the arts and humanities side of the university today. As Derek McCormack writes in his "Thinking-Spaces for Research-Creation," "Research-creation is, of necessity, more-than-disciplinary" (2008, 1). Precisely how this is so is one of the things that this book explores. We already have excellent research-based artists in the academy, and if research-creation simply renames and rebrands them, then it has already done its fundamental job as an organizational category that, while it may still need administrative championing, needs no critical discourse. However, if we understand research-creation as an approach to bringing academic and artistic tools together in more-than-disciplinary ways that challenge the current hegemony of the book-length monograph as the only legitimate outcome of a PhD in the arts and humanities, then it does, indeed, need a critical discourse that exceeds the parameters of disciplinary legitima-

tion. This book is a provocation toward just such a critical discourse. While it takes the form of a traditional book (a form that I genuinely love), it invites us to think beyond this form, to denaturalize it, and ask ourselves how we might, each, engage in remaking and reshaping our institutions by bringing artistic literacies, modes, and approaches to bear on the wicked problems that surround us—if we are looking—every day.[25]

CHAPTER ONE

Haraway's Dog

> Stories are much bigger than ideologies. In that is our hope.
> —DONNA HARAWAY, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, 17

> Want a different ethic? Tell a different story.
> —THOMAS KING, *The Truth about Stories*, 164

IN THE WINTER OF 2014, I taught a seminar at the University of Alberta on research-creation. The seminar, Debates in Art and/as Research, began with the reading of two texts, neither of which made obvious sense to my students given the topic, as neither refers explicitly to research-creation, nor to arts-based research, nor, indeed, to "art" very much at all, but that instead speak to intertwined sites of Indigenous and ecological genocide: Thomas King's *The Truth about Stories* and Donna Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*.

The Truth about Stories is a small volume of transcribed lectures by King, a novelist and broadcaster who was invited, in 2003, to deliver the annual Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) Massey Lectures.[1] In these lectures King speaks to the textures, effects, and logics of colonial violence, and to the promise of decolonized futures. He does so through

the sharing of stories. Stories that speak to the imbrication of settler-colonialism, lived histories of genocide, and the production of the "Native Other" in the settler-imaginary. They also model the ways that different languages, different forms, tell different stories and, perhaps more importantly, *tell stories differently*.

Stories are powerful. The stories that we believe, the stories that we *live into* shape our daily practices, from moment to moment. They have the power to promise some futures and conceal others. They encourage us to *see* some things and not others. Entrenched stories like "race," "gender," "class," and "nation" have historically done this very well, prescribing who might accomplish what, where, when, and how. King underscores this when he reminds us that "we see race. Never mind that race is a construction and an illusion. Never mind that it does not exist in either biology or theology, though both have, from time to time, been enlisted in the cause of racism. Never mind that we can't hear it or smell it or taste it or feel it. The important thing is that we believe we can see it" (2003, 44).

To call race a story, however, even when invited by King to do so, may cause some to pause. Right up front let me assure the reader that I am in no way suggesting, from my (Euro-settler) perspective, that race is a story to be taken lightly, or that the material, historical force of such stories can be shifted through sheer force of will. To say that *stories produce worlds* is not to say that changing stories is an easy practice, nor innocent, nor always possible. Stories, here, must be understood as productive of and produced by ideological worldviews with real-life consequences that, as Judith Butler (1988, 1990), among others, has taught us in the context of gender- and sexuality-based violence, require telling and retelling. The work of telling new stories, or new versions of stories that need retelling/recrafting, is propositional; it requires ongoing engagement and a willingness to denaturalize the social, disciplinary, ideological structures within which we are embedded (to speak *parrhesiastically*, as Foucault might have it).[2] King says as much in the afterword to his book, in his final repetition-with-a-difference: "*Want a different ethic? Tell a different story*" (60, 164; emphasis added).

Here, stories begin to have a weight they didn't have before.

Stories such as race, class, gender, and nation are hegemonic; they are discursive practices that shape us ideologically and bodily and that come with violent (although not only violent) effects. And it is for this

reason that the central provocation of *The Truth about Stories* is that stories are "wondrous things. And they are *dangerous*" (King 2003, 9; emphasis added). Stories are wondrous in their capacity to reorganize our approaches to our social-material worlds; they are dangerous for their capacity to produce themselves as compelling objects of belief,[3] naturalized, as all too many of us see year in and year out in the classroom, into calcified truths. Which is why King uses repetition—iteration, stories remaking stories, telling and retelling—to remind us that the telling of stories is a political performative. A world-making, knowledge-making practice.

One of the ways King does this is by opening and closing each of the five chapters of his lecture-text with the following repetitive structure: each chapter opens with someone, somewhere, in a dialogic setting, telling a version of a creation story in which the earth floats on the back of a turtle that is on the back of another turtle that is on the back of another turtle: "turtles all the way down" (2, 32, 62, 92, 122). This introductory story is followed in each case, word for word, by the following sentence, invoking the title of the book: "The truth about stories is that that's all we are." Each chapter then ends by reflecting back on the story told: "Take [X's] story, for instance. It's yours. Do with it what you will. . . . But don't say in the years to come that you would have lived life differently if only you had heard this story. You've heard it now" (29, 60, 89, 119, 151).

Don't say in the years to come that you would have lived life differently if only you had heard this story.

You've heard it now.

Through this repetitive narrative structure, King invites us to think about stories as material-semiotic events that impact—indeed, configure—worlds. He invites us to attend carefully to which stories *stick*; which stories, by performing themselves as compelling objects of belief—being convincingly *retold*—have the sticky staying power to change how one sees the world, and thus how one acts within it. Through repetition and direct address, King invites us to be attentive to which stories *we are crafted out of* as well as which we participate in crafting; which stories we teach, and which stories we are taught by.

Donna Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto* makes a similar call for the power of stories. Haraway, a feminist theorist and science studies scholar, begins her book, published the same year as King's, with the following: "I tell stories about stories, all the way down" (2003, 21).

The Companion Species Manifesto, like her 2007 *When Species Meet*, is a densely poetic and, for those not already familiar with her world of reference, sometimes frustratingly allusive text. Read with each other in mind, these two books of Haraway's can be seen to respond to similar questions, and although these questions are worded differently in each, the way that they are articulated in Haraway's later text—specifically, "Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?" and "How is 'becoming with' a practice of becoming worldly?" (2007, 3)—is key to both.

Whereas King focuses on the ear, on our capacity to be altered through ethical listening and speaking practices—forms of listening and speaking that render us response-able and, through this response-ablility, able to be moved to act—Haraway asks us to attend to the material-semiotic stories we inherit when ethically touching—being in touch with—the world around us. For Haraway, we are always already "becoming-with" and imbricated by all that we touch and that touches us; what and how we touch and are touched by participates in constituting the stories, the worlds, within which we live.[4] For King, the relation of storyteller to story-listener conditions which stories are whose to tell and when, producing stories not only as sites of knowledge but as ethical relations. One invites us to attend to how we are remade by all we speak and hear. One invites us to attend to how we are remade through all we touch and are touched by. Both frame these intertwined sensorial relations as productive of *stories that matter*.

Stories of the magnitude at stake here are never innocent. They always do certain things and not others; rely on certain things and not others. What King and Haraway ask, each in their own way, by mobilizing different stories in different ways, is that we seriously attend to and recognize the constitutive power of the stories through which we come to understand the world, and, when necessary, give our all to reorganize them. Importantly, within both King and Haraway's texts, it is *curiosity* that emerges as key to our capacity to make such changes.

Haraway's curiosity, in *The Companion Species Manifesto*, driven by her "companion" questions, pulls her into the telling of three stories in particular, each with its own narrative arc: first, a story of species-time (human-canine coevolution); second, a story of breed-time (the Australian Shepherd as an instrument of colonial expansion); third, a story of phenomenological-time (her specific agility training relations with Cay-

enne and Roland, two dogs with whom she was living and loving at the time of her writing). Haraway tells these three story-arcs as provocations that model her situated attempts to "cobble together" practices of living ethically *with* significant others, others with whom our differences emerge as significant—for example, the kinds of alien differences that emerge at the intersections between species (Haraway 2003, 7). Attentive to the histories and presents at stake when the question "Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?" is taken seriously, Haraway suggests that to "find arguments and stories that matter to the worlds we might yet live in" (3) we must investigate, with the curiosity of she-who-does-not-already-know, the material-semiotic entanglements, the "worldliness" out of which each of us, at any given moment, emerges.[5] Curiosity, here, emerges as key to the political capacity of stories to remake worlds and is the kind of curiosity that also figures prominently *The Truth about Stories*.

Contrasting what he calls "scientific, capitalistic, Judeo-Christian" creation stories with "Native" creation stories (2003, 12), King tells his reader-listeners that "contained within creation stories are relationships that help define the nature of the universe and how cultures understand the world in which they exist" (10). One of the first of these stories is the story of Charm, who creates the world cooperatively with nonhuman others, almost, it seems, by accident. The story begins with Charm digging a hole so deep that she falls through it, and through space, until she lands on a Pangean version of Earth.[6] She was warned of course (by Badger) not to dig too deep—not to be *too* curious. But she cannot help it. She digs and digs, her curiosity getting the better of her. That said, rather than a possessive division between "her" and "her curiosity," the *driven* version of curiosity that King ascribes to Charm takes over her very sense of self such that her actions are no longer volitional but are constitutive: she doesn't make them; *they make her*. And it is in this way that Charm's curiosity becomes what King calls the "dangerous" kind (2003, 10–13)—the kind of curiosity that gets one into (methodological/ontological/epistemological/disciplinary) trouble.

It is just such a curiosity that, taught by Haraway and King, I would like to claim as central to the approach to research-creation for which this book argues.

King's and Haraway's perspectives, while speaking with seriousness to histories of genocide that have given us this world, can also be taken as

powerful invitations to attend to the ecologies of our pedagogical practices in the university, practices that structurally privilege certain modes of knowing, certain stories about knowledge production and dissemination, and not others. Standing on the shoulders of this assertion, what I suggested to my students in Debates in Art and/as Research, is that reading *The Companion Species Manifesto* and *The Truth about Stories* not only for their content, but for the worldviews that they model through the narrative and poetic forms that they mobilize, helps us to understand the power of stories as something that emerges not only at the level of content but that of *form*. Both authors implicitly insist that to do research—of any kind—is not simply to ask questions; it is to let our curiosities drive us and allow them to ethically bind us; it is to tell stories and to pay attention not only to which stories we are telling and *how* we are telling them, but how they, through *their very forms*, are *telling us*.

At the end of his book, echoing many a poststructuralist theorist, King draws on the words of poet and novelist Jeanette Winterson to assert that language is not something we speak; *it speaks us* (King 2003, 2). Languages (discourses) precede us; research methods and disciplines precede us. We enter into them and they work to craft the possible forms of our questions. Thus, when examining our research practices, it is crucial to ask: which stories are animating our choices? Why might this research choice *matter*? Alternate (research) stories create alternate (research) worlds. Conversely, different storytelling strategies (methods and practices) emerge from different worldviews and commitments. If we understand our research in the university as the production of a set of interlocking stories that are, indeed and ideally, world-changing fictions (Haraway [1985] 1991, 149)[7]—interventions, micro though any one intervention might be, into the givens that organize our social and material worlds—the next logical, research-creational, pedagogical, step is this: to open the university up not only to different *writerly vocalities*, as decades of feminist, literary, Indigenous, critical race, deconstructive, and performance studies (the list goes on) scholars have done, but also to different *tangible forms* (for example, a song, beadwork, a performance, or a video installation) as valid modes of rendering research public.[8]

It is with this in mind that I proposed to my students the following—slightly opaque—provocation as central to research-creation in its strong form: *the crafting of a research question is the crafting of a story that is also*

the crafting of an ethics. Following this, in a room full of students who self-identified as art historians and artists (along with a few sociologists and performance studies students), I, perhaps even more provocatively, proposed research-creation as a methodology that, therefore, *necessarily* sidesteps disciplinary allegiance. That is, I suggested that rather than letting our research questions be conditioned by the structures of legibility and value given by, say, one's self-identifications as painter, or early modern art historian, or feminist theorist, we take seriously King's call to *tell stories differently* and pair this with our own versions of the questions that Haraway asks herself: "Whom and what do I touch when I touch my dog?" and "How is 'becoming with' a practice of becoming worldly?" (2007, 3).

Throughout the semester, "Haraway's dog" then became our touchstone for developing research approaches and orientations. Sometimes this appeared as a question from one student to another: "So . . . what is *your* dog?"; sometimes as a description within the classroom setting: "For my final project I've chosen 'desire lines on campus' as my dog; I'm asking: 'Whom and what do I traverse when I follow the desire lines across our campus fields?'"[9] Together we discovered that to frame a research question in this way helped to unpin it from a primarily disciplinary orientation; to frame research in this way foregrounded the researcher's positionality and moved beyond primary accountability to a specific discipline while still keeping the door open to discipline-specific knowledges. Simply put, *it placed the curiosity-driven question first*.[10] What these texts modeled for us was an approach to research rooted in process, multiplicity, context specificity, and contingency—one that might even be called *emergent*.

In *The Companion Species Manifesto*, Haraway writes: "The obligation is to ask who are present and who are *emergent*. . . . Situated emergence of more livable worlds depends on that differential sensibility" (50–51; emphasis added). This term—*emergent*—is peppered throughout *Companion Species*, and it is often paired with *symbiogenesis*. The terms rhyme conceptually. While *symbiogenesis*, forwarded by the evolutionary theorist Lynn Margulis ([1967] 1993), speaks to the relational origin of organisms (an understanding of the contested distinction *species* as emerging through symbiosis rather than mutation), *emergence* describes an aggregate property of elements, none of which demonstrate that property inherently within them. Water, in its liquid form, and snowflakes, as specific

crystallized forms, exhibit compound properties that are not seen at the (molecular) levels below. Water is emergent. So are snowflakes.

Emergence is relevant to research-creation not only because it is a recurring descriptor in writing on research-creation and its synonyms—which it is[11]—but because it refigures disciplinary research objects in ways that invite us to think interdisciplinarity-as-emergence: as productive of outputs that exceed what is demonstrably present in their constituent parts. An approach to research modeled on emergence insists on the complexity of lived histories and worlds, and on the difficulty of accounting for and responding to such complexity.[12] It also insists on recognizing that this complexity is not simply a failure that adequate perspective—the capacity to somehow *see better*—might correct (what Haraway has called a *God trick* [1988, 582], the view of everything from nowhere), but rather that complexity is *the name of the game*, whether we are talking turtles (King 2003), elephants (Haraway 2003, 12), or metaplasm (54); it is "stories about stories, all the way down."

The political practice of working with and through stories "all the way down," of telling and retelling and weaving and reweaving, is far from politically neutral; it is also far from *affectively* neutral. In both the content and form of her text, Haraway models the "grain" of a research practice attentive to what I will call *love*. The love at stake, however, in the terms of Haraway's text, is more akin to *eros* than *agape* (2003, 99). If agape figures a *knowing in general*—so-called unconditional love—eros figures something that is conditional (in the sense of being *situated*) and that is both critically unknown and unknowable (in the sense of being *emergent*): "Just who is at home must be permanently in question. The recognition that one cannot *know* the other or the self, but must ask in respect for all of time who and what are emerging in relationship, is the key" (50).

This distinction between eros and agape can be clarified further through one of Haraway's key questions, which emerges toward the end of her *Companion Species*, as she reflects on the imperative of her guiding questions regarding whom and what she touches when she touches her dogs Roland and Cayenne. Haraway asks, "Beyond the personal, simple fact of joy in time and work with my dogs, why do I care? Indeed, in a world full of so many urgent ecological and political crises, *how* can I care?" (61). Understood at the level of agape, of love "in general," Haraway's love of her dogs is *apolitical*. If eros figures the love at stake, however, we are telling a

different story. In a way that I will expand on when we turn to the psychoanalytic frame of reference and the *objet petit a* in chapter four (and that echoes Audre Lorde's ([1984] 2007) work "The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power" to which I will also return), the *how* of Haraway's caring must be erotic in order for it to be ethical.

Haraway's book (as does King's, in a different idiom) implicitly argues that it is in allowing ourselves to be drawn by our loves, our intensive and extensive curiosities, attentive to what and whom we are *driven* to explore, and examining the complex web of relations that we inherit thereby, that we might inhabit research questions ethically. Ethics and eros, in this Aristotelian sense rather than a Freudian one,[13] are inescapably intertwined, and this intertwining, this *chiasmus*, is crucial. As psychoanalysis teaches us, such "erotic" knowing is *always* partial and situated, always intertwined. Indeed, it is this partiality, this situatedness, this intertwining, that structures our (feminist) (research) stories as *accountable* (Haraway 1988). Within this paradigm, an ethical mode of accountability *needs* eros. Agape, in its unconditionality, its lack of situated attention-to-the-conditions-that-are-the-case, fails "to fulfill the messy conditions of being in love" (Haraway 2003, 35)—a love that is both driven and noninnocent.

It is only eros that can fulfill these messy conditions.

In other words, when in love-as-eros, the story is never told; it is always in the process of unfolding, and therefore always in need of new ways of accounting and rendering accountable. Haraway loves Roland and Cayenne. It is that love, and her need to take what she inherits with that love seriously, that guides her research in *Companion Species*. True love (eros) leads, as Haraway models for us, to true curiosity—to truly *driven* curiosity. The kind of curiosity that lends itself well to the "drive" that psychoanalysis thinks with; the kind of curiosity that can get one into trouble, and that forces one to try and figure out how, in Haraway's idiom, to *stay with* that trouble.[14]

At the heart of this book is the proposition that taking research-creation seriously, as a relatively new turn on the art-academic stage, gives those of us operating as artist-researchers/researcher-artists the opportunity to re-envision and re-craft—to re-story—our practices and labor, and, perhaps most importantly, our pedagogy, within university ecologies. As a full-time academic in the Canadian university system, it is my experience that one may be rewarded for being an artist-scholar, hired in studio

art, who does research-based work that takes artistic form. Similarly, one may be rewarded for being a scholar-artist, hired in art history, who does practice-led work that takes the form of academic writing (although this happens less often than the former). But to do both, simultaneously or sequentially, is, at best, to have half of one's labor demoted when it comes time for merit-based adjudication for pay increments or tenure; at worst, it is to be deemed a "dilettante."[15]

As I phrased it in the introduction, the struggle, here, is not for acknowledgment (a seat at the table: "Look! Now artists can be researchers too!" or vice versa). It is for the insertion of voices and practices that trouble the relays of knowledge/power that figure the disciplines impacted by any given research-creation practice. As part and parcel of questioning the stranglehold of disciplinary legibility on our practices in the university—as teachers, as researchers, as colleagues—today, we must attend to the ways that the disciplined university, with its merit boards and granting agencies structured to assess faculty outputs on the basis of contribution not to "new knowledge" *in general* but to new knowledge within *a discipline*, often renders those who would work *practicetheoretically*, attentive to King's ethics-producing stories and Haraway's curiosity-bound eros, both illegible and, in the most hostile of assessments, suspect. Research-creation, as an emergent, ethico-erotic form, allows us to tell new stories in new ways in the university landscape—stories that demand, in turn, new research literacies and outputs, modes of assessment and accountability, and new pedagogical modalities.[16] Rather than allowing discipline to tell us what questions are worthwhile and what methods are appropriate, a research-creational approach insists that it is to our deepest, doggiest, most curious loves that we are beholden, and that it is love—eros—that must drive our research questions as well as our methodological toolkits.

In asserting this, I am in no way arguing against the value of disciplinary seriousness and care. Attention to disciplinary inheritance is crucial. Disciplinary attention and care, the *how* of doing things in certain contexts toward certain ends, matters, materially and politically. What I *am* suggesting, however, is that an ethical structure of research cannot, if we understand the ethics at stake here to be something expressed in the form of Haraway's love for her dog(s) or Charm in her digging, be given *first and foremost* by discipline.

Disciplinary approaches are, more often than not, organized by mor-

als and not ethics precisely to the degree that they think they know the parameters of the question and the appropriate form for the answer.[17] Disciplines discipline us. Eros has no truck with such disciplining. To organize one's topic or method according to discipline may be pragmatic, and in many cases even necessary, and oftentimes incredibly useful, but not, on the psychoanalytic model I am taught by, *ethical*. Instead, a research-creational approach informed by King and Haraway insists on a multiplicity of responsive practices structured by situated (emergent, erotic, driven) accountability. While there are surely times when ethnography or discourse analysis or actor-network theory are the tools needed to get at what needs to be gotten to, research-creation, as a "problem-oriented" modality, puts situated curiosity—troubling and troublesome, erotic curiosity—at the helm.

Further, while research-creation can be understood as a mode of engagement allied with many interdisciplinary, curiosity-driven, problem-oriented approaches in the academy, given its grounding in artistic practices and methods, it also insists that artistic process and production be understood as transmissible knowledge with a ranked equivalence to the knowledge-making practices of other disciplines (Candlin 1998). That is, most commonly, it asserts a form of making that has traditionally been understood as expressive rather than analytically communicative (often, although not always, art making), as equivalent in value (though different in kind) to the knowledge-making practices of traditional academic disciplines.[18] In this respect, research-creation is taught by the ways that feminism has dealt with the denigration of certain forms of work (maintenance and care work) and certain vocalities (the "personal voice"). It is taught this not only by feminism, but by Indigenous, decolonial, and antiracist scholarship challenging institutional structures and intellectual traditions that draw their power from seeing certain kinds of research as nonresearch.[19]

I think here of works like Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's (2013) *Islands of Decolonial Love* and Audre Lorde's ([1984] 2007) *Sister Outsider*. Each of these texts is made up of interconnected fragments: Simpson's is a collection of poignant stories that make palpable the different worlds made by Native and settler stories in (what is now called) Canada; Lorde's is a collection of essays tracking her experience of histories of systemic, localized oppression on the basis of race, gender, and sexuality in (what is now called) the United States. Both are calls to consciousness. And

in them, the personal takes many forms. It takes the form of Simpson's pointed storytelling; it takes the form of Lorde's passionate first-person address. Both texts leap off the page, inviting us to think carefully about which stories we are telling, why, and *how*, in the university today.[20]

The *how*, here, is crucial.

As I have been claiming it, research-creation, at its most interesting, emerges when the modes of interdisciplinarity that have become common to the early twenty-first-century university (the bringing together of different methodological literacies that illuminate new ways of thinking and doing relevant to a pressing problem but that results in a single species of output, for example, a book) shift to allow for the bringing together not only of different methodological literacies but of different species of output (a book and a video or an essay and a performance) that, while dissonant in terms of their language, are understood to have *equally weighted value* as objects of knowledge production and impact within university communities and their assessment rubrics. Such work, while crossing "practice-theory" lines in the literacies that it mobilizes, does not result in *either* a written essay *or* an exhibition, but insists on the "double-headedness" of multiple, equally weighted, output forms, and has impact at the methodological level for practitioners, at the assessment level for institutions, and at the dissemination level for both. These distinctions are key.

While, for example, artistic works such as conceptual artist Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* (1973–79) or academic ones such as anthropologist Natasha Myers's "Anthropologist as Transducer in a Field of Affects" (forthcoming) model an interdisciplinary approach to practice and theory that has relevance for research-creation, because of the weighted values of these outputs they are not generally understood as research-creation strictly speaking. Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* is a conceptual and research-based art installation that tracks and analyzes Kelly's first six years of motherhood through a Lacanian developmental lens. It takes the form of found object and text panels paired with psychoanalytic text panels (139 pieces in total). It also takes the form of a book that includes theoretical essays and art-historical reflection.[21] Myers's "Anthropologist as Transducer in a Field of Affects" is an academic essay that mobilizes dance literacies, daily-practice performance art, and drawing to develop new tools for ethnographic analysis. Importantly, Myers's writing does not explicate the creative practice or process as an equally weighted

mode of rendering public the research, but, rather, describes its use as a methodological tool for transforming the field of anthropology.[22] Both of these projects have something to offer to an expanded understanding of research-creation in an interdisciplinary context. However, as representative examples, they help show how relations of "practice" to "theory" can be made to resolve quite easily into legible disciplinary identities—a work of research-based conceptual art (Kelly) and an innovative anthropological essay (Myers) without in any way diminishing their brilliance.[23] Here, "Anthropologist as Transducer in a Field of Affects" and *Post-Partum Document* emerge as relevant for but not exemplary of research-creation due to the fact that, while each work succeeds in interweaving "practice" and "theory," one side of the binary is understood as support/developmental or conceptual material for the other. An "exemplary" research-creation practice resists this hierarchy in the context of the academy, rerouting our disciplinary orientations in such a way as to allow both forms of output to hold equal professional weight.

This latter is what Simon Penny (2009) calls *deep interdisciplinarity*.[24] Penny distinguishes deep interdisciplinarity thus: "[What is at stake is] the formation of practitioners who are neither artists nor engineers, [but] who are equal parts both" (2009, 33). In alliance with Penny, the mode of research-creation argued for in this book works from the premise that interdisciplinarity requires being attentive to disciplinarily "othering" habits that privilege either artistic *or* technoscientific *or* social scientific *or* humanities-based habits of thought and dissemination. Further, to be both *equally* and *responsively* weighted between practice and theory means not only that written components and artistic components are structured as equally-weighted-though-differentially-vocalized research outputs, but that the very forms of each must be made responsive to the research at stake. If robust interdisciplinarity asks that one start with a research question and then bring together the disciplines most useful for addressing that question, research-creation pushes this one step further, asking: what output forms—modes of publication—might most interestingly and generatively render that research public?[25] As Roland Barthes wrote in 1972, "in order to do interdisciplinary work, it is not enough to take a 'subject' (a theme) and to arrange two or three sciences around it. Interdisciplinary study consists of creating a new object, which belongs to no one" (72).

Belonging to no one, research-creational outputs, in this context, might

be productively understood as what Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Leigh Star (1999) call *boundary objects*. Bowker and Star define boundary objects as "those objects that both inhabit several communities of practice and satisfy the informational requirements of each of them. Boundary objects are thus both plastic enough to adapt to the local needs and constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites. They are weakly structured in common use and become strongly structured in individual-site use. . . . These objects may be abstract or concrete . . . but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable, a means of translation" (297). If disciplines articulate themselves by laying claim to specific research objects, methods, modes of attention, questions, and lineages of discourse, what a boundary object does is create something like an *uncanny* tie across disciplines, retaining a certain amount of internal coherence while denaturalizing methodologies and analyses endemic to different disciplinary locations. A boundary object *does things with disciplines*, satisfying certain of their requirements, without, however, belonging properly to any one of them.

Owen Chapman's 2015 *Alphabet Radio* provides a useful example for thinking through the relationship between Bowker and Star's understanding of the boundary object and my arguments regarding research-creation. Chapman, an associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Concordia University in Montreal, describes *Alphabet Radio* thus:

> *Alphabet Radio* is one part of a larger project called *Audio Toy Box*. A handmade interactive electronic device made out of cardboard, it responds to decks of specialized cards featuring images, symbols, icons, colours, and other visual cues. Each card has an embedded RFID chip that causes a unique sound to playback when the card is presented to the integrated RFID reader. These sounds, related to the featured images, include words, syllables, phonetic sounds, musical elements and other short audio files—each crafted with specific pedagogical/therapeutic goals in mind. Sounds are stored on easy to switch SD memory chips (commonly used in digital cameras). Different sets of memory chips along with different decks of cards allow a user to create tailor-made, repetitive, audio play/learning experiences.

> The project is driven by a strong familial love. My daughter was diagnosed with "global developmental delays" when she was quite young. The larger *Audio Toy Box* project (of which *Alphabet Radio* is one component) comes out of my desire to create new, more creative and engaging, ways of living and working with these so-called delays and seeks to present alternative frameworks for developing and sharing non-ableist, affordable and adaptable/customizable pedagogical toy designs. The project approaches the study of disability from an artistic and interdisciplinary perspective and questions cultural narratives and discourses that posit disability as inherently tragic for individuals and families.[26]

Alphabet Radio is a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council–funded research-creation project. It functions as a DIY social-art intervention, a maker-lab object, and a pedagogical tool in critical disability studies contexts. As Chapman conceives of it, it is all of these things at once, and properly none of them. I'd like to suggest that what allows *Alphabet Radio* to function as a boundary object not solely claimable by any one context is that, while remaining legible to a number of disciplinary sites, it fails to *fully* fulfill the criteria of any one disciplinary location. In some ways, it is an *in-coherent* object. That is, *Alphabet Radio* speaks well enough to each disciplinary context to be legible and meaningful, without fitting *so well* as to be naturalized within any of them.

This is compounded by the fact that *Alphabet Radio* is but one element of Chapman's larger *Audio Toy Box* project. *Audio Toy Box* adds into the mix the production of academic writing and the desire to contribute to both the disciplines of communications studies and interdisciplinary field of critical disability studies, as well as artistic, designerly, and activist sites. *Audio Toy Box* has outputs that are academic, outputs that are artistic, and outputs that are activist, and each of these sets of research outputs are (designed to be) weighted equally, with the research question itself hovering between them, and addressed and cared for differently by each of them. The project is not built to circulate in the art world, nor the world of marketable pedagogical disability aids, nor to embody the gadget-gear-cool-factor badge of maker-lab circulation, nor the university. It promiscuously inhabits all of these spaces, speaking to each, resisting being fully claimed by any one disciplinary location while being nonethe-

FIGURE 1.1 — Owen Chapman, *Alphabet Radio*, 2015. Photo courtesy of the artist.

less legible across all of them. Holding its own as a research-creational object that denaturalizes the givens of each of the disciplinary spaces at stake, it places curiosity, desire, and love at the helm.

Another example we could turn to in this context is artist and academic Beatriz da Costa's *Pigeonblog* (2006–8).[27] Part art-as-social-practice/new-genre public art, part academic intervention, part citizen science, and part activism, *Pigeonblog* is a multimodal project that, at its core, functions as a speculative proposition: What if we all worked in minimally invasive ways to generate local knowledge, collaboratively, in our communities, on complex issues related to social and climate justice? What kinds of worlds might we be able to generate by cultivating more grassroots, creative, accessible relationships to technoscientific knowledge production? And what role might art play in such reworldings?

Pigeonblog was developed specifically to track air quality in local neighborhoods and visualize the information gathered online and in exhibition (see da Costa n.d.). For the project, da Costa (in collaboration with her ACE grad students at the University of California, Irvine, Cina Hazegh and Kevin Ponto) used custom-built miniature air pollution–sensing devices, working with the pigeons and their fanciers over many months to develop a pack the pigeons would agree to fly (Haraway 2016, 20–24). These packs enabled the pigeons to send air-quality information in real time to an online server, which was then translated into a visualization schema using a Google map of the area the pigeons were flying through.

Like Chapman's *Audio Toy Box*, *Pigeonblog* was "published" in multiple forms—public performance, gallery exhibition, and written text—with each of these publication modes holding equal weight. It required that da Costa perform as artist, legible within the field of art-as-social-practice; as engineer, working collaboratively on microelectronics with other engineers; as a theorist of what da Costa framed as *tactical biopolitics*;[28] and as social justice activist attentive to multispecies relations and ethics. As da Costa writes in her project statement "Interspecies Coproduction in the Pursuit of Resistant Action," "*Pigeonblog* attempted to start a discussion about possible new forms of co-habitation in our changing urban ecologies and made visible an already existing world of human-pigeon interaction. At a time where species boundaries are being actively reconstructed on the molecular level, a re-investigation of human to non-human animal relationships is necessary."[29] This call for ecological and technoscientific

FIGURE 1.2 — Beatriz da Costa, *Pigeonblog*, 2006–8. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT NIDEFFER.

justice lies at the core of this and much, if not all, of da Costa's work. Her work models a research-creational approach to multispecies ethics and pedagogy that speaks across academic and nonacademic divides, one that uses artistic forms as spectacular lures and mobilizers of affect and action.

Research-creation, as modeled by Chapman and da Costa, is a particular kind of curiosity-driven, inter- or transdisciplinary method, a method that learns from the interdisciplinary humanities, but that adds to these debates by crossing "practice" and "theory" lines in ways that, like Krauss's expanded field, tumbles outside of our attempts to contain them, and that demands new literacies (indeed, taught by Krauss we could argue for research-creation as something that hovers ambivalently between "art and not-art" and "research and not-research"). To do research-creation in this way is to produce objects that work not only across discursive fields but challenge the norms of those fields, producing boundary objects that insist on being undutiful.[30] Pointing to the ways that disciplinary knowledge claims ("sorting things out") always highlight certain elements while masking others, research-creation, thus figured, insists that curiosity, in all its erotic pluripotency, be its guide, pushing us to tell new stories in the academy, stories that denaturalize singular disciplinary locations while nomadically claiming space within all of them;[31] stories that unmake as much as they remake how we understand what we are doing as *maker-thinkers* in the—disciplined and disciplining—university today.

CHAPTER 2

Discipline(s)

> As Freud was himself forced to acknowledge, however implicitly, the uncanny . . . calls into question the basis of all judgment; the position from which distinctions are drawn. This mixing of genres poses a challenge to a notion of scholarship that still insists that knowing and not knowing are mutually exclusive.
> —SAMUEL WEBER, *The Legend of Freud*, 20

> The truly revolutionary insight—the truly revolutionary pedagogy discovered by Freud—consists in showing the ways in which ignorance itself can teach us something, become itself instructive.
> —SHOSHANA FELMAN, *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight*, 79

LITERARY CRITIC AND PSYCHOANALYTIC theorist Shoshana Felman begins her 1987 book, *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight*, with the following anecdote: While working on her PhD in France, Felman finds herself attracted, at the moment she decides to buy a copy of Lacan's infamously dense 1966 collection of essays entitled *Ecrits*, by the very warnings she receives to stay away from it—to remain ignorant. "Don't buy it," says a kindly storekeeper, looking out for his student clientele by protecting them from Lacan's famed opacity of language. However, as Felman

tells it, rather than functioning as a deterrent, the storekeeper's prohibition (like Badger's warning to Charm) works not to quash but to *ignite* her curiosity. It becomes an invitation to question why, in an academic environment (a university bookstore), one might possibly be advised *not to learn*.

Felman addresses herself, in the wake of this experience, to a "history of reading [that] has accustomed us to the assumption—usually unquestioned—that [the point of] reading is finding meaning" (1987, 45). Reflecting on this, Felman asks us to shift our pedagogical habits from a practice of searching for the known or knowable, the manifest content of a reading practice, to a reading (and research) practice that is attentive to the aesthetic, excessive dimensions of knowledge. She invites us to cathect not only the content of (in this case) the Lacanian text, but its poetic, excessive, and difficult *form*.

I first read Felman's book over a decade ago, followed, soon after, by the other book I cite above, philosopher and literary theorist Samuel Weber's 1982 *The Legend of Freud*. At the time, I was beginning a dissertation on interdisciplinary pedagogy, and both Felman's and Weber's invitations to cultivate a robust relationship with the "pedagogical unknown" struck me as fruitful. Today, a good thirty years since their publication, these texts still touch me; their quintessentially poststructuralist stance seeming both out of fashion and yet, somehow, needed more than ever.

Informed by perspectives such as Felman's and Weber's, this chapter asks: How can we create spaces that bring the terms *research* and *creation* together in the context of the university in such a way that they denaturalize and displace each other, allowing sites of ignorance and curiosity to flourish?[1] How might we best mobilize research-creation as a site of resistance and remaking within ever-more-corporatized university spaces? How to claim a term (*research-creation*) so easily disciplined in creative and knowledge economies, and interrogate it in renewed ways that open up its possibilities rather than consolidate and instrumentalize them? This line of questioning emerges from years of teaching in which I ask self-identified artists and art historians to think about what distinguishes a research-creational approach from other ways they have been taught to do things in art and art history. In this context, and as I understand and teach it, research-creation speaks with and to a long history of debate in the arts and humanities on the promises and perils of the *interdisciplinary*.

As with most academic buzzwords, interdisciplinarity has many origin stories (Frank 1988, 91, 95; Klein 2005, 2–3; Moran 2002, 14–15).[2] One of the most common origin stories for the critical interdisciplinarity of the late twentieth century, as we inherit it in North America, is the post-1968 intellectual revolution marked (and, by some accounts, inaugurated) by the May 1968 Paris uprisings.[3] Often highlighted in this "post-1968" version of the story is the impact of a certain wave of European thinking on the US and Canadian theoretical landscape that achieved its most visible form in 1980s poststructuralisms and 1990s multiculturalisms. These were politically grounded academic approaches that, even as they came under fire and were remade through critique and engagement—by, for example, feminist materialists insisting on situated research within poststructuralist theory and Indigenous scholars highlighting the erasure of Indigeneity in critical race discourse—worked to challenge existing structures of knowledge and education. Asking not only what gets to count as "knowledge" (objects and methods of study) but who gets to count as a scholarly knowledge maker (the inclusion and valuation of different voices and perspectives, different bodies, within the academy) and how scholarly knowledge is allowed to be transmitted (a question of writerly vocality, most commonly), critical interdisciplinarity, as it emerged between the 1960s and the 1990s, hand in glove with the rise of poststructuralist, feminist, queer, and critical race theoretical approaches, asserted that the relation between *what we think that we know* and *who we think that we are* is never straightforward.

To work interdisciplinarily, on this reading, is to attend to *who* is producing knowledge and *how* that knowledge is being produced in ways that defamiliarize and reorient discipline from *identity* to *act*—to a thing one *does* rather than a thing one *is* (Foucault 1978). This shift doesn't deny the need for training in the specificities of a discipline, nor does it preclude disciplinarily coherent work. It simply places the research question *first* and lets the necessary disciplinary skills follow. Recalling Haraway's dog, instead of a research question emerging from disciplinary histories and habits ("Ah! No one in the field has written a monograph on thus and such an artist" or "No one in the field has attempted to analyze thus and such new aesthetic form"), the methods, tools, and approaches used, that is, the specific skills and literacies needed to pursue a research question or problem, are determined as a back-formation *from the question or problem itself*.

As Bill Readings suggests, in his prescient *The University in Ruins*: our job, here, is to orient ourselves toward "not a generalized interdisciplinary space but a certain rhythm of disciplinary attachment and detachment, *which is designed so as not to let the question of disciplinarity disappear, sink into routine*" (1997, 176; emphasis added).[4]

Research-creation, taken as critical interdisciplinary praxis, asks us to attend to how we habitually justify our research through disciplinary stories, those that we tell and those we have been told along the way. It also, as I have been describing it, asks us to attend to the *form* of those stories. A research-creational approach not only asks us to attend to whether we personalize our writerly voice, render it poetic, or write in a "neutral" voice of authority; it asks us to question whether writing, on a page, in an article or book format, is, indeed, the appropriate, most effective, persuasive, or interesting way to "write" our research. What if the most powerful way to communicate the research embodied within a certain "chapter" is not to write about it on a page, but to "write" it through video? Or in a multimedia installation? Or with a live performance event? Or through an art-activist intervention? How do we begin to understand these latter as "publications" of research that can be tied up with, and be disseminated as part and parcel of, a larger academic research project, viable and judicable (and citable!) within university (and university-adjacent) cultures?

As with *any* scholarly work, the need to assess, peer review, and render citable research-creation projects requires experts in each of the relevant disciplinary fields, ready and willing to work together to assess the value—disciplinary and interdisciplinary—of the work. This, for the most part (in my experience), works just fine for, say, a doctoral defense, as long as all adjudicating members are willing to listen when a colleague from a neighboring field explains why what may seem banal from the perspective of one field is, in fact, important, even innovative, to another. The assessment problem in research-creation emerges less at the level of an individual masters or doctoral defense (where the terms for success can be developed in camera and in situ) than at the level of the standardized translation frameworks needed to generalize the form—and value—of the work to an institution or granting body that is assessing or accrediting the work at a remove.[5]

In contexts such as annual evaluations (at my own home institution we are required to submit our outputs yearly to a committee that then as-

sesses their value relative to the work of our colleagues and assigns our salary increments accordingly), research-creation outputs, because of their newness, are most often coded in ways that have been developed within the fine arts to explain artistic outputs to other areas of the university for promotion and advancement. For example, a large-scale solo exhibition in a top museum might be translated as a single-authored book; a group exhibition in a local gallery might be translated as a chapter in an edited volume at a low-ranking press. While these translations are expedient, emerging from an attempt to find impact equivalences, they often fail to account for the specificity of research-creation at the level of innovation as well as of labor.

I am thinking here of a recent graduate, Michael Woolley, who, on September 14, 2017, defended a research-creation MA in the History of Art, Design, and Visual Culture investigating debates in performance art documentation through theory, history, and artistic practice. Woolley's thesis was composed of three formal elements: a written document of 173 pages, *Performance and Its Documents: Revisiting Debates in Performance Art Documentation*; an exhibition, *Performative Documents and the Labouring Body*, which ran from August 22 to September 16, 2017, in the department's public gallery (the departmental standard for MFA candidates); and a live performance-lecture given the evening of August 24, 2017. Each element worked to communicate and render political and palpable an entrenched and complex debate, ongoing since the 1970s in performance art practice and theory, surrounding the status of the document in relation to the live act. And each element did so through a different formal strategy: the written document mobilizing performative writing (Phelan 1993; Spry 2001) to retell and reinvestigate the story of performance art's relation to documentation in a contemporary context; the photo, video, and sound-based installation rendering the very act of researching and writing the thesis visible through an intimate, reflexive, and vulnerable documentation practice; the live performance-lecture anatomizing the historical debates through a live, yet always already mediated body, doubled uncannily across the spaces and pages of Woolley's multimodal thesis.[6]

Requiring more of both Woolley and his thesis committee than a traditional MA thesis would have done, the project's value exceeded what the university's metrics schemes are designed to capture. Not simply or fully "art," nor simply or fully "art history and theory," yet mobilizing artistic,

FIGURE 2.1 — Michael Woolley, *Performative Documents and the Labouring Body*, installation image, FAB Gallery, Edmonton, 2017. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

art historical, and art theoretical methods, Woolley's graduate thesis set departmental precedent. It did so by being the first thesis in the History of Art, Design, and Visual Culture at the University of Alberta to refuse the mandate to "write" the research only on the page while also refusing to let go of its status as art history and theory, claiming the artistic innovations as part and parcel of the art historical and theoretical work.[7]

For those of us situated in departments of art and art history (in North America, at least), research-creational MA and PhD programs challenge not only the methods and aims of traditional art and art history education, but also the status of the art object and its circulation. Research-creation, in important ways, resists the illustrative frameworks in which a thesis or dissertation explains, justifies, or describes an artistic practice (and vice-versa), exploding the inherited binary between the artist-object and the theorist-subject, and offering something that, while using the tools, literacies, and skills of both artistic practice and art history, does something different to, with, and from these "homes." It challenges a historically prevalent, sticky and tricky, ideological insistence that artistic output, the "art object," cannot effectively communicate scholarly research. It can emerge from research and invoke ideas, but always, only, in a fragmentary and fugitive mode. Art, it is said, is evocative, generative, even confrontational, but too open-ended to constitute research dissemination per se; art does not make conclusive, defensible arguments and therefore cannot be, strictly speaking, research; art, as object (or process, when process replaces object as artistic form), *fails* if it communicates too didactically, too clearly, and thus cannot function as scholarly research, representative of new, transmissible, disseminable, and archivable knowledge. These givens structure the institutional histories that govern the idea of contemporary art in the academy, in spite of how dated these ideas might seem to many in the field: art as cultural exemplar, elevator of the human spirit, mirror of the soul or to the world.

Sadly, in refusing the artistic gesture as an academic one—refusing it *as knowledge* and allowing it only expressive/affective/interventional cultural value grounded in the excessive, the open-ended, and the interpretive—all too often (although not always) the academic gesture, in contradistinction, becomes anchored to a logic of implementation, accountability, and predictable modes of disseminability.[8] This perspective does a disservice not only to those disciplinarily located in the fine arts, but to

those across the university working with artistic forms and sensibilities in their research, teaching, and publication practices. In such a context, the extension of interdisciplinarity's historical limits within the university to include "extratextual" forms only compounds and expands anxieties surrounding interdisciplinary practices in general, and does so in increasingly hostile conditions for such work.

To work interdisciplinarily has always carried with it certain risks, such as the revelation of incompetence possible when the skills of one discipline prove insufficient in another context. While research-creation carries these same risks, it raises the stakes significantly. To bring scholarly disciplines together with historically nonacademic practices—such as art-activist production (in the case of my research), Indigenous sex-positive storytelling (in the case of my colleagues Kim TallBear and Tracy Bear),[9] critical disability interventions (in the case of my colleague Danielle Peers),[10] or speculative multispecies care-spaces rendered through dialogic workshops and intermedia installations (in the case of one of my current MA students, Daniel Walker)—and then to engage these *as scholarly activities* is not only to challenge the questions and methods (and therefore blind spots) that structure a given discipline (the sine qua non for interdisciplinarity), it is also to question our very understanding of the work of the university. It is to push at the various ways that the university (specifically in the humanities and social sciences) has established for making scholarly research public—which modes of publication (what Lacan, in *Seminar XX*, famously called *poubellication*)[11] are seen as valid, useful, peer reviewable, and capable of pushing an academic discourse forward in ways legitimated by the fields at stake, and legible (enough) to those doing the work of assessment to *count*. It is to allow oneself to take on the risk of insufficiency without letting oneself off the hook for accountability.

It is to tell new stories, in new ways, in the academy.

And to be told by them.

In his 2003 book *The Uncanny*, literary theorist Nicholas Royle suggests taking seriously the affective economy of the uncanny as a mode of political resistance within the university. Royle's book was written at a moment in the UK when what was then called the Research Assessment Exercise—now called the Research Excellence Framework, a standard-

ized metrics framework to which university funding is tied—was newly reconfiguring the academic landscape. In the face of the increasingly strict need to instrumentalize all university labor within the logics of assessment metrics (that is, logics of equivalence and reportable impact), Royle suggests the uncanny, the *unheimlich*, as an interdisciplinary political mode resistant to any neoliberalizing drive that would appropriate it.[12]

Heimlich, referring to the *familiar, homey, native, tame, intimate*—to being safe within the walls of one's own house (*oikos*), to being "oneself"—suggests the *domestic* and *domesticated*, and, in the context of this chapter, the *disciplinary*. The *unheimlich*, on the other hand, asserts (for Royle, as for Freud) the ego's inability to inhabit a position of mastery within its "own home" (vis-à-vis the unconscious). That is, the unheimlich suggests not simply the unfamiliar but the *threateningly* unfamiliar; it describes that profoundly disturbing experience of feeling estranged where one is supposed to feel at home and of *not knowing* when one feels that one should know. It is that *thing* that erupts unpredictably into an otherwise unremarkable moment, defamiliarizing it and rendering the presumed unclear.[13]

As many readers in the arts and humanities well know, given the broad impact of the concept outside of strictly psychoanalytic circles, the uncanny, as figured in Freud's original (1919) rereading of E. T. A. Hoffmann's "The Sandman," invokes not only the ambivalent experience of something simultaneously placing and displacing, but the *conjunction* of these positions—alien, native—in the formation of (psychoanalytic) identity. In psychoanalytic terms, to experience the uncanny is to always be, like a boundary object, *within* and *without* simultaneously. One is always conscious *and* unconscious, knowledgeable *and* ignorant. Situated between the animate and inanimate, the living and dead, the "self" and "other," the relevant insight of the uncanny is that relations between these poles are neither stable nor predictable. And it is this latter that renders the uncanny, for Royle, a site of resistance. In the Freudian uncanny, the security of a single-point perspective—intellectual certainty: I see from *here* and I see *that*—is shattered and transported into a register in which *perspectival certainty* is impossible.

Research-creation, in the ways that it so regularly *fails*[14] to resolve clearly into either "art" or "scholarship," and in the ways that it so regularly renders its makers illegible from one perspective or another, often

unpredictably, is, at its most interesting, a decidedly uncanny practice. And it is one that is linked to the libidinal drive, introduced in chapter 1, that I've been calling *curiosity*. This is the drive, linked to the unknown and the unknowable, that Felman and Weber mobilize above.

As Weber frames it, "the uncanny is not merely identical with . . . undecidability," for it includes an ambivalent defense against this undecidability in the form of a *curiosity* that is irrepressible (1982, 234).[15] In other words, the radical undecidability that constitutes the uncanny includes within it a drive toward knowledge; the uncanny instantiates a (curious) drive that hovers at the intersection of knowing and not knowing, belonging and not. You can't be curious about something you already know, but you need to know something about it in order to be curious.

Etymologically, *curious* has the same root as *careful* or *curate*: to care. It brings warning (caution), desire (to know), and considered choice (the *care* at stake in curation) together as the name of the (pedagogical) game. Such a perspective challenges pedagogical ideologies that imagine the teacher in the light of knowledge and the student in the shadows of ignorance, and, instead, tells stories that are much riskier for all involved, but more accurate (to my experience of the world, at least), and more interesting. When Charm was digging deeper and deeper, she did not know in advance what she was going to find on the other side, but she *did* know enough to think that there might be something there that was interesting enough to pursue (King 2003, 11). She had a direction in which her curiosity was driving her. And it drove her, like Felman against the advice of the kindly shopkeeper, to keep going in the face of warnings not to dig. Rather than moving from ignorance to knowledge ("the assumption—usually unquestioned—that [the point of] reading is finding meaning"; Felman 1987, 45), the uncanny asserts that feeling displaced (ignorant) at the moment one feels one should be at home (knowledgeable) *is the condition of knowledge making at its best*, the condition that drives curiosity (as a drive to *aim* rather than to *attain*), and a condition that cannot be predicted. Here, the "curious" brings together the quality of being eager with the assessment of something as "strange and unusual" ("Curiouser and curiouser!" cries Alice in *Adventures in Wonderland*). We cannot know in advance what will ignite our curiosity. Curiosity erupts. Similarly, we cannot know from where something will be rendered uncanny.

Interesting in this context is the degree to which (as Freud's text makes

clear) it is not in the *content* of Hoffman's story that the uncanny emerges, but its *form*. More than the story itself, *how it is told* is what renders it uncanny. The French philosopher Sarah Kofman reflects on this when she writes that it "is really *the form of the narrative* and *not the theme in itself* which plays the decisive role in the production of [uncanny] effects" (Kofman 1991, 137; emphasis added). This emphasis on form is borne out in Hoffmann's "The Sandman" in the way that the text unsettles, formally, the first and third person: the epistolary voice and that of the omniscient narrator. Weber highlights this as well: the uncanny, "already busily at work at the heart and hearth of every home, contaminating and corrupting all authority . . . blurs the boundaries between authoritative third-person and first-person narratives" (Weber 1982, 30–31). In other words, it is the degree to which the formal qualities of the narrative shift, rendering us uncertain *from where* the story is being told (is it "art" or "scholarship"?), that marks Hoffman's story as uncanny.

Unsurprisingly, then, as Freud tells it, anxiety is the most common affect associated with the uncanny. Anxiety is also the most common affect, from a disciplinary standpoint within the disciplined university, associated with being driven by a research project whose specific goals and outcomes cannot be articulated from the outset. This insight emerges not only from psychoanalytic but also from critical pedagogical literature—indeed, the two are inextricably intertwined in my thinking. For example, when I teach Brazilian pedagogical activist and theorist Paolo Freire's work in my graduate courses I highlight the way that he draws our attention not only to conscious emotional economies (those moments when a reaction to a teacher or a text can be clearly articulated and accounted for in positive or negative terms) but also to *affective* economies—those moments when reactions and bodily instincts or drives run the pedagogical show (be it curiosity or anxiety or both in equal measure).

In his 1998 *Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach*, Freire describes the act of studying (the work of the university) as a demanding occupation filled with emotion: pain (before difficult or seemingly uninteresting materials), pleasure (when points of connection emerge), victory (the "ah-ha" moments), defeat (when one feels at a loss), doubt (when one feels insecure or evaluated harshly), relief (when that insecurity vanishes), and curiosity (when faced with an unknown that, for whatever reason, emerges as alluring). This last, curiosity, with its po-

tential for drawing us in unpredictable new directions, potently resists the logics of what Freire (1970) calls the banking model of education. In the pedagogical economy of the banking model, professors have their hands on the reins of knowledge at all times, and aims to hand these over, with time, to their students. Rather than nurturing an irrepressible, unruly, and situated curiosity, the banking model understands knowledge as information bits that are depositable, retrievable, and usable at some moment completely separate from the original scene of learning—like a tool in a toolkit that, once one knows how to use it, can be wielded, to the same effect, at any given moment. This is one of the reasons that the banking model retains such power: it protects us—all of us!—from the anxiety associated with ignorance, an anxiety that emerges all too quickly in the face of modes of interdisciplinarity that bring with them the very real possibility of experiencing ourselves as uninformed or incapable (or, in today's university, *unaccountable* in the sense of not being easily translatable into standard metric equivalencies).

As Freud distinguishes in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* ([1920] 1955), unlike fear, anxiety is a structure without object, or, rather, without *predictable object*. If one has something to be afraid of—that one's research project will fail to account for an important text in the field or to accurately portray the perspective of one of the field's key thinkers—one's anxiety is transformed to fear: there is an object grounding the affect, and the steps to take to protect oneself are clear. Anxiety, on the other hand, does not have an object; it is the lack of defined and stable, predictable object that is constitutive of anxiety in its strong form. The problem with anxiety is that one never knows from where an attack might come—when one crosses many boundaries, the attack (the unknown; the unexpected) might come from anywhere. Characterized in this way, one might see why anxiety is a condition that is often ascribed to the experience of working research-creationally, and why the uncanny is a useful structure to think with in unpacking research-creation as a site of both promise and threat.

When confronting the interdisciplinary, in my experience, anxieties of disciplinary specialization are matched only by anxieties of dissolution: that the value of specialized knowledge might dissolve into an intellectual free-for-all, as the security of monogamous (read: serious, committed, and exclusive) disciplinary relations are challenged, opening themselves up to the *amory* of the unmasterable, unpredictable, and untamable—the

eros of Haraway's dog.[16] The problem lies, when it comes to the approach to research-creation that I am teasing out in this book, less in the seeming opposition between a "passionate drive" and a "disciplinary accountability" than in rules of propriety and exclusion that too often come with a commitment to a disciplinary home. As an uncanny practice, research-creation threatens us with never fully being at home, disciplinarily speaking, and this anxiety of insufficiency (research-creation's most oft-named peril) cannot help but erupt in the same breath as the exhilaration of creative pluripotency (its most oft-named promise).

It is this very quality, of course, that has historically been argued as the site of political and intellectual potential for the interdisciplinary humanities. As the editors of the *de-, dis-, ex-*, volume *The Anxiety of Interdisciplinarity* assert, "It is only by maintaining the degree of uncertainty that interdisciplinary work bears—while simultaneously producing critiques of earlier sites of interdisciplinary practice—that new sites can be progressively opened up" (Coles and Defert 1998, iii). These new sites, of which research-creation can be understood as one of the most interesting contemporary instantiations, combine the rhetoric of revolutionary potential with the fear that intellectual promiscuity might sully disciplinary property and propriety (the realm of the *oikos* and *oikonomia*).[17]

While the anxiety of interdisciplinarity is sometimes grounded in concerns over how to best serve an object of analysis, or tied to concerns over how a project might be read within a system—the university—whose acknowledgment and valuation is necessary for professional stability and advancement, pedagogically speaking it is also linked to the assertion that we can never know, ahead of time, where and how *value* will be articulated in the pedagogical encounter, especially when those encounters cross disciplines. While the affectivity of (disciplinary) mutual recognition is useful for its generative power—for the excitability, passion, and even encouragement that it can promote—it is nothing as an aim in itself. To facilitate the economy of "I know and now you know" ad infinitum is to be entrenched within the banking model oh-so-dear to the contemporary neoliberal university and its standardized deliverables—as if the pedagogical scene could be conferred via prerecorded video sound bites and registered learning outcomes.

Some training works this way, certainly. But not critical thinking, not political awareness, and not research-creation. In rejecting mutual under-

standing and predetermined knowledge bits as *the* central pedagogical values, and in asserting that the value of an educational encounter cannot be predicted and, more importantly, can only *sometimes* be recognized while it is happening—what psychoanalysis calls *deferred effect* or *après coup* (Laplanche 1999)—the process of education, as both act and entanglement, can only live in tension with the drive toward standardization.

It is in this context that the territorial and affective tensions that structure the uncanny are useful for research-creation. At its most generative, the affective discomfort of the uncanny invites us to question what it means to answer (and ask) a (research) question from within disciplinary boundaries that are never (fully) our own, and it reconfigures how we understand our subjects and objects of study by opening us up to disciplinarily foreign methodologies and questions. The uncanny is never—can never be—constative, predicted, or prepared for. The uncanny is an *emergent phenomenon*. It names the experience of being both at home *and not*, intellectually speaking, disciplinarily speaking, affectively speaking. It is never certain; it is always propositional and responsively *in* the encounter. And it is never comfortable. This is why, when it comes to research-creation, an approach that would de facto raise artistic practice to the status of research by recognizing its inherent knowledge bases and potentials, while valuable and interesting, is not enough. To do so (to include art, or other historically jettisoned sites, into the university) is an important step. But if, in so doing, art (among other nontraditional scholarly practices) is asked simply to accede to the reigning logics of the university without being allowed to *remake* the university through its presence, to render the university a site of potential uncanniness by rendering the familiar *unfamiliar*, then more is needed.

To help us think about this further, I turn to two important texts that work specifically to understand the formal intervention modeled by research-creation within university contexts. The first is Christopher Frayling's germinal 1993 essay "Research in Art and Design," which addresses itself to the (then) new development of fine arts PhD programs in the UK. The second is Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuk's 2012 "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances,'" an essay that refers to and extends from Frayling's earlier distinctions, but now in the context of a similar, though not identical, emergence (research-creation PhDs) in Canada. These essays participate in a body of literature

by scholars attempting, each in unique geographical, university, and departmental locations, to find language that is capacious enough to speak to the variety of practices that their students and colleagues, and they themselves, are developing while also being narrow enough to offer some methodological traction for those seeking to work within the genre(s).[18]

Frayling's short, yet influential, essay is mostly concerned with unpacking inherited caricatures that accrue to the figures of the artist (expressive), designer (experimental), and scientist (rational or mad), and in teasing out the many ways that the idea of research in art and design was circulating through the 1980s and 1990s art academy in England. Building on Herbert Read's 1954 *Education through Art*, the essay proposes three ways of parsing research practices relevant to art and design (these have had enormous impact on how research-creation and other allied programs have developed in the twenty-five years since the text was first published): research *into* art and design, research *through* art and design, and research *for* art and design (1993, 5).

Central to Frayling's distinctions is the question of what each of these modes looks like—the form—at the level of a doctoral research thesis. The first, research *into* art and design, refers to historical, philosophical, and/or aesthetic research *into* an art or design object, period, process, or issue that generally results in a written doctoral thesis or dissertation; the second, research *through* art and design, combines "practical" art or design production with written analysis relevant to that production, and results in a hybrid written thesis and artistic object, installation, or action exhibited and documented in some way; the third, and hands down the most controversial model at the level of doctoral output, is research *for* art and design. This final category is "where the thinking is, so to speak, *embodied in the artifact*, where the goal is not primarily communicable knowledge in the sense of verbal communication, but in the sense of visual or iconic or imagistic communication" (Frayling 1993, 5; emphasis in original). This last is the one mode that should *not*, for Frayling, result in a doctoral research-degree: "We do not at present offer research degrees entirely for work where the art is said to 'speak for itself.' Rightly or wrongly, we tend to feel that the goal here is the art rather than the knowledge or understanding. . . . And we feel that we don't want to be in a position that the entire history of art is eligible for a postgraduate research degree" (5). A quarter century later, the Royal College of Art (UK) still maintains this distinction.[19]

Chapman and Sawchuk's "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances,'" written almost twenty years later, offers distinctions that echo Frayling's but that are specific to research-creation in Canada.[20] The authors outline four categories for research-creation and the funding streams that support and encourage it, and highlight methodological and institutional shifts that they deem crucial for supporting new hybrid forms of academic production. More theoretically grounded than Frayling's, their essay draws on Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of *family resemblances* to suggest research-creational categories that have overlapping similarities rather than being firmly delineated.[21] The categories are research-*for*-creation, research-*from*-creation, creative *presentations of* research, and creation-*as*-research.

Research-for-creation names a practice in which research produces a final output that takes the form of a *non–academically standard* object, such as a website or exhibition, or rapid prototype (Chapman and Sawchuk 2012, 15–16). The work of the pathbreaking California-based eco-artists Helen and Newton Harrison (1969–2018), with their heavily research-based installations visualizing the effects of human-induced climate change, may be seen as an example of this. Their work is deeply collaborative and based in extensive situated research in different sites, both geographic and institutional, but the final work is conceived of and circulated as activist artwork.

For example, their 2007–9 *Greenhouse Britain* installation, in their words, "addresses Global Warming from an artist's perspective. The work proposes an alternative narrative about how people might withdraw as waters rise, what new forms of settlement might look like, and what content or properties a new landscape might have in response to the Global Warming phenomenon. It also demonstrates how a city might be defended" (Harrison Studio n.d.). In producing this installation, the artists bring history, ecology, activism, science, and policy together to invite us to learn from the speculative ways that art can *imagine otherwise*. And they do so as research-based eco-art activists. They model what *art* in the ever-expanded field can do *as art*. The art world is their (inter)disciplinary home, and, like Kelly (as discussed in chapter 1), this is how they understand their work.

Research-from-creation names an approach in which creative practices and processes are used to generate new understanding that results in pri-

marily written output—a monograph or journal article (Chapman and Sawchuk 2012, 16–18). A generative example of this is Lianne McTavish's *Feminist Figure Girl*. Between 2009 and 2011, McTavish, a visual cultural theorist specializing in the early modern history of the body, trained to perform in a figure girl (bodybuilding) contest, all the while engaging in autoethnographic reflection and feminist analysis on her blog. The project, part feminist autoethnography and part daily-practice performance intervention, involved McTavish, a tenured professor then in her mid-forties, making public the labor involved in the training she was engaged in, melding it seamlessly with feminist theoretical reflection, and rendering it visible as an intervention into normative academic labor. "I was," writes McTavish, "deliberately pursuing what was, for me, a new way of creating new knowledge" (quoted in Harvey 2015). This new way of creating knowledge, however, was one in which the training and performance practice held secondary status. Like Myers's "Anthropologist as Transducer in a Field of Affects," the performance-based aspects of the work were rendered not as primary academic outputs but as experimental, embodied research methods, here resulting in a single-authored monograph (*Feminist Figure Girl*, published in 2015 by SUNY Press).

Creative presentations of research, Chapman and Sawchuk's third category, references a now lengthy history of experimental academic practices, such as performative writing, anecdotal theorizing, autoethnography, and poststructuralist literary interventions that mobilize poetic and experimental form, as well as hypertextual writings (2012, 18–19). Here the distinction is writerly *vocality*, and the focus is on the imbrication of writerly form and content. Jacques Derrida's poetic *Glas* (1974) easily represents this category, as do Chapman and Sawchuk's primary examples, which include: "Walter Benjamin's (1969) innovative use of the allegory and the structure of the 'theses' in writings such as 'Theses on the Philosophy of History,' Marshall McLuhan's (1970) experiment with typography in *Counterblast* . . . , Donna Haraway's (1991) remixing of the manifesto, and Roland Barthes' (1977) deployment of the alphabet as a template for an examination of the discourse on love all [of which] indicate that academics have long-experimented with writing that challenges the logico-deductive or analytic forms of argumentation or presentation" (6). This category learns from the intersection of literary and continental

philosophical theory linked to the post-1968 version of the interdisciplinary humanities, and understands such formal interventions into textual vocality as key to research-creation.

Creation-as-research, Chapman and Sawchuk's final category, presented as their most "complex" and "controversial" (19), functions, in turn, as a kind of metacategory—one that is exemplary of research-creation both at its strongest and at its most difficult (19–20). Unlike her "Anthropologist as Transducer in a Field of Affects," Myers's *Becoming Sensor in Sentient Worlds* (2015–present), a collaboration with dancer and filmmaker Ayelen Liberona sited equally between art, multispecies anthropology, ecology, and feminist science studies fulfills the criteria for Chapman and Sawchuk's final category. Asking "what would you change if you knew that the trees were watching you?," *Becoming Sensor* works to, in the authors's idiom, "detune the colonial sensorium," tracking the *naturecultural* pasts and presents of the oak savannahs in Toronto's High Park.[22] Rather than *being* art, or anthropology, or theory, or criticism, or history, *Becoming Sensor* is all of the above, improperly, partially, and interconnectedly. It takes the form of experimental photographic and sound documents, drawing, academic essays, historical and situated narrative, and Fluxus conceptual art–like invitations (framed as "protocols for an *un-gridable* ecology"). These invitations to join Myers and Liberona in reattuning ourselves locally, sensorially, and politically, draw on (among others) the sound art language of attunement, the dancerly language of kinesthetics, the performance art framework of the *happening*, an anticolonial politics informed by scholars of Indigenous futurities, and a robust more-than-human orientation informed by scholars such as Haraway, Isabelle Stengers, and Vinciane Despret.

Understood as distributed across all of its constituent parts, *Becoming Sensor* challenges the notion of these categories as discrete in a way that is incoherent with Frayling's categories (*into*, *through*, and *for*) but that fits well with Chapman and Sawchuk's. As noted above, in the Frayling the general distinctions "art," "design," and "research" emerge in the context of higher education funding and practices relevant to the fine arts in the UK in the early 1990s. His propositional categories, *for*, *into*, and *through*, neatly divide those writing an all-dissertation PhD, from those doing a half art-or-design-practice/half substantial-and-linked-analytical-text

PhD, from those who are focused on the art or design object as primary output adequate to the professional art and design markets. Chapman and Sawchuk, not interested in policing boundaries but in describing potentialities and trajectories, offer, instead, "valences" for research creation, with research-creation understood "not as a thing, but as a concept with blurred boundaries" (14)—something closer to my invocation, above, of Bowker and Star's uncanny boundary objects. It is for this reason that, depending on what I am arguing for and when, I might (still with Krauss in my ears) read Beatriz da Costa's *Pigeonblog* as hovering between research-*for*-creation and creation-*as*-research, or McTavish's *Feminist Figure Girl* as both research-*from*-creation and a creative *presentation of* research. These valences are situated and performative, not constative (Austin 1962). They *matter* as sites of friction and debate that refuse (to recall Readings [1997, 176], above) "to let the question of disciplinarity disappear, sink into routine."

While research-for-creation is most likely to produce an art or design object as the outcome of an extensive research process, research-from-creation a written text that is grounded in artistic experimentation, and creative presentations of research a monograph or essay, in text or hypertext, that plays significantly and poetically with the relation of form to meaning, it is their final category, creation-as-research—as Chapman and Sawchuk make clear in their 2015 follow up to the initial essay ("Creation-as-Research: Critical Making in Complex Environments")—that speaks most powerfully to research-creation as a unique contribution to the contemporary university landscape.[23] What implicitly distinguishes this last category is that it *requires multimodality*; it requires that *more than one of the previous categories be mobilized in service of the project*. Research-creation, on this reading, is designed to produce polymaths skilled at working in multiple *modalities*, not just *vocalities*. It produces hybrid forms, defamiliarizing and uncanny, that oscillate between more than one "species" of production and that result in "offspring" that are often unthinkable, illegible within the current institutional frameworks of academia. It creates a chimera.

By bringing *research* and *creation* together in such a way that they unpredictably contaminate and remake each other, in such a way that they render each other uncanny, research-creation makes space in the univer-

sity for research practices that are grounded in nonhegemonic literacies, thereby challenging the naturalized assumption, in arts, humanities, and social science scholarly cultures, that the book-length monograph or peer-reviewed academic essay is the only valid—or only "top-tier"—means of research communication output; it also challenges perspectives that would argue for artistic production as de facto research. Practically speaking, research-creation pushes at the limits of traditional academic outputs *and* traditional artistic outputs; it is productive of work that, more often than not, fails to fully register on either scholarly academic or art-world exhibition fronts. In doing so, in failing to *fully belong*, and allowing that nonbelonging to denaturalize, emergently, its givens, research-creation tells *other stories*, *uncanny stories*, that (have the potential to) carry within them the *other ethics* that King invites us to attend to.

Here, taking King's invitation to heart, we must understand research-creation not only as a logical extension of post-1968 interdisciplinary and theoretical interventions into the academy, but as specifically indebted to feminist, queer, decolonial, and other social justice movements, as they have worked to remake the academy from within. Research-creation works in alliance with antiracist and feminist interventions that would ask us to pay attention not only to *who* gets to participate and *whose labor* gets to count but also *which modes of address* are permitted scholarly status. It recalls feminist, queer, and decolonial claims for the personal as not only political but relevant to (and constitutive of) scholarship. In this context, research-creation challenges reigning academic cultures less by asserting a new, disciplined and disciplining, academic identity, a *noun* (the artist-researcher), than by offering us something verbified and vertiginous, something that queers normative university discourse, propagating uncanny academic kinship structures and unexpected disciplinary intimacies and alliances.

Informed by the uncanny, this critical understanding insists that the question of *where* and *when* research-creation functions as noun (a site of attachment) or verb (a site of movement or undoing) remains open. It requires that one cultivate a robust capacity to follow curiosity *and* sit with anxiety. And it requires that one navigate multiple pulls across disciplinary sites, methodological approaches, and formal requirements. Which leads me to the following questions: If such experimental multimodal-

ity is crucial to research-creation, how do we—ethically—*manage* these multiple pulls? How do we do the work of stretching across, and moving between, more than one disciplinary, methodological, epistemological, affective, etc., set of differences, needs, and demands? How do we deal, to return to the eros that dogged Haraway's text in chapter 1, with the demands of multiple sites of attachment, of multiple *loves*?

CHAPTER 3

Polydisciplinamory

> These manoeuvres, particularly between art and philosophy, make me feel like an adulterous spouse. Each field demands my full energy, attention, and commitment; each resents my involvement with the other; each suspects such involvement when I am absent; each feels personally betrayed when this suspicion is confirmed; and each is absolutely and unconditionally unwilling to concede any legitimacy to that involvement, much less make any accommodation to it. Each field is morally outraged by the suggestion that I am a resource that might be shared with the other, to the ultimate advantage of both.
>
> —ADRIAN PIPER, "On Wearing Three Hats," 119

IN THE EPIGRAPH ABOVE, artist and philosopher Adrian Piper describes her experience of being an interdisciplinary practitioner, using the language of marital monogamy to describe what it feels like to be pulled in more than one disciplinary direction within a system that is governed by monodisciplinary logics. Thus far, as I have framed it, a central function of research-creation, prior even to its content(s), is to mark the practice of *thinking-with* as a multiple and productively discordant one in which the partnerships (disciplines, forms) at stake are always already, uncannily,

in question. Because of this, research-creation works as a potent intervention into university norms, one that, in this chapter, I want to suggest as polydisciplinary, or, rather, as polydiscipline-*amorous*.

The neologism *polydisciplinamory* takes interdisciplinarity's transgressive charge (to always be pushing at, and defamiliarizing, the limits of disciplinary boundaries) and brings it together with the insights of theoretical polyamory. Specifically, it learns from queer theory's contribution to critical pedagogy (Berlant and Warner 1995; Britzman 1995; Halperin 2003; Luhmann 1998; Pinar 1998), and adds to it polyamory's critiques of mononormativity as a way to reconfigure, and deepen, the previous chapter's critique of disciplinary specialization.[1] While the displacing structures of the uncanny and the denaturalizing of disciplinary givens matter for research-creation, it is the *love* and *driven curiosity* at stake in a research-creational orientation that this chapter returns to and deepens by attending to the structure of theoretical polyamory.

Unlike the queer, until recently the polyamorous has flown under the radar in most academic circles (Sheff 2006). This is perhaps because literature on polyamory has most often taken the form of practical guides such as Dossie Easton and Janet Hardy's 1997 *The Ethical Slut: A Guide to Infinite Sexual Possibilities* (reprinted in 2011) and Tristan Taormino's 2008 *Opening Up: A Guide to Creating and Sustaining Open Relationships*, both well-circulated "how-tos" detailing the successful—ethical—negotiation of multiple emotional and sexual partners. Since the early 2000s, however, a growing body of literature, largely from political and sociological sexuality studies, and more recently from Indigenous and feminist science studies, has begun to emerge.[2]

While attentive to this literature, what follows is not an attempt to say everything about the state of polyamory (nor nonmonogamy) in theory, practice, or history. Rather, in writing this chapter, I am assuming that decades of queer practice and theory, within the art-academic circles to which I address myself, have led us to a place from which we can assume a rich understanding of nonmonogamy in all its many forms. From here, I turn to the relatively new field of theoretical, or critical, polyamory to challenge monodisciplinary legacies and methods, drawing on a long history of queer pedagogical thinking to help open up a space from which to conceive research-creation as polydisciplinamorous.[3]

The concept of the queer as that which challenges normative identity-

political frameworks has been a commonplace (and contested) part of the theoretical landscape of gender and sexuality studies, since, at least, the term *queer theory* was coined in 1990 by Teresa de Lauretis (1991; see also Butler 1993, Halperin 2003, and Sedgwick 1993).[4] Drawing on this history in a 2010 essay titled "Theoretical Polyamory: Some Thoughts on Loving, Thinking, and Queering Anarchism," political theorists Deric Shannon and Abbey Willis argue for theoretical polyamory—like queer theory before it—not only as a sexual practice, one that challenges traditional monogamous frameworks, but also as a *strategic theoretical metaphor*. They suggest theoretical polyamory as a way of "drawing connections between the ways that we love and the ways that we think. Perhaps in the end," they continue, "this means . . . an embrace of a political anti-identity in much the same way 'queer' was meant as an answer . . . to questions about gender and sexual identity" (2010, 440).

In this invocation of the queer, Shannon and Willis draw primarily on gender and sexuality studies scholar David Halperin, who writes that the queer "is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without essence. 'Queer' then, demarcates not a *positivity* but a *positionality* vis-à-vis the normative" (1995, 62; emphasis added). In this same vein, literary theorist Lee Edelman characterizes the *queer* of queer theory thus: "Fluid, contextual, resistant to every attempted substantialization, queerness is *situational* but never *positivized* as an attribute, never fixed, that is, as a stable term that results in a coherent perspective. . . . As permanent eruption of a non-relation, of an unintelligibility, as the signifier of social non-closure, the empty signifier of that founding exclusion through which the social posits itself, queerness denotes *the set of those things that stymie categorization*, that impossible set of elements always external to any set, the paradox of particularity in the absence of specification" (2009, 31; emphasis added).

The queer, here, undoes; it disrupts; it challenges norms; it is always on the move. It is, as Halperin frames it (drawing on Foucault), a positionality (a verb), and never a positivity (a noun)—what the previous chapter framed as an act rather than an essence. It is, in Edelman's terms (drawing on Lacan), situational but never positivized. The queer, thus figured, demands that the work of queerness, of *being queer*, of *doing queerness*, remain always already unfinished; in other words, as a political project,

queer theory remains always in play, never done—an always already destabilized and destabilizing force.[5]

Because theoretical polyamory is that branch of the queer that insists on nonmonogamy as its constitutive tether, however, it pushes the balance of analysis from a critique of compulsory *heterosexuality* (Rich 1980) to one of compulsory *monogamy*, with the latter's structural dependence on the inequality of the heteronormative couple, and the couple form itself, as its analytic thrust. In other words (and stated a little more strongly than I think is, indeed, the case, but in a way that is nonetheless useful for distinction's sake), if hetero- and homosexuality are about *who* one loves and fucks, mono- and polyamory are about *how* one loves and fucks.[6] Through this subtle shift, theoretical polyamory brings attention to affective and kinship ties that are responsive to the polymorphous nature of desire not only in its (diachronic, metonymic) mode of undoing but *also and unpredictably* in its (synchronic, metaphoric) modes of attachment.[7] While queer theory commonly asserts that it is the *queering*, the *undoing* of (sexual/disciplinary) norms, that is at stake, the theoretically polyamorous steps in, in its wake, to invite us to develop and nurture *attachment* across multiple (sexual/social/disciplinary) sites.

It is important to note, here, that, within poly lit, not all heterosexualities or even monogamies are figured as equal. Compulsory monogamous heterosexuality, with traditional marriage as its exemplar, is understood as a system based on exclusion (Rubin 1992), and, as such, is at the top of that hierarchy of social legitimation that depends on a belief in monogamous heterosexual being—itself at the heart of inherited modern, Western conceptions of what is natural, right, and that marks the norm from which other practices, even when accepted rather than punished, deviate. Polyamorous practices, in contrast, allow for heterosexual and even monogamous *acts* while rejecting the imperative of what we might cumbersomely call repro-mono-hetero-normativity. In the words of cultural theorist Laura Portwood-Stacer, queer polyamory "is less an objection to heterosexual desire and more an objection to the idea that heterosexuality is normal, natural, and morally superior to other sexual arrangements. . . . [It] is less about advocating for particular sexual desires (for multiple partners, say) than it is about a radical commitment to people's freedom to determine the nature of their own sexual practice, without coercion by the market or the state" (2010, 483–84).

That said, the propositional freedom at the core of Portwood-Stacer's characterization, while a seductive rallying cry reminiscent of the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s, is a sticking point for contemporary poly theorists, including Portwood-Stacer herself, who challenge the presumed white-middle-class-and-able (in every sense of the term) presumptions that are often naturalized by *freedom* as a rhetorical descriptor (Klesse 2006b; Noel 2006; Portwood-Stacer 2010; Willey 2016). Critical of the volitional rhetoric of individual choice and personal agency that abounds in many poly texts, Portwood-Stacer qualifies the quote above by writing that the "literature that circulates within the popular polyamory movement promotes polyamory as a kind of self-help, a change in lifestyle that anyone might make. It fails to take into account the systems of domination that enforce hegemonic norms, particularly where those systems exert unequal pressure on different kinds of bodies" (2010, 485). Rather than uncritically embracing polyamory in practice or theory, Portwood-Stacer insists on the importance of challenging mainstream characterizations of liberal polyamory that ignore the systemic barriers that maintain the political and social agency of some bodies but not others, and invites us to think critically not only about the mononormative given that we can only be legitimately, legally, sexually, emotionally committed to one person at a time, but about the heteropatriarchal-colonial ideologies that often subtend that assumption. Attending to the ways that sexual subjectivities are too often made through denials that are historically and politically constituted, she works to denaturalize the hegemony of the couple form by developing critiques of compulsory mononormativity and its modern, heteropatriarchal, settler-colonial agent, the nuclear family (Barker 2017; Klesse 2006b; Morgensen 2011; TallBear 2016).[8]

Read in this way, theoretical polyamory informs and re-forms the approach to interdisciplinarity—the organizations of knowledge, attention to hegemonic power structures, and intergenerational reproductions—demanded by research-creation as it has been figured over the past two chapters. Traditional interdisciplinarity, with its intertheory thrust, could be said to be about *who* (which disciplines) one commits to, while research-creation, as a *polydisciplinamorous* orientation, becomes about *how* one commits to producing new kinship ties not only in terms of *content* (the "who") but in terms of *form* (the "how"). Taught by the poly lit detailed above, polydisciplinamory argues that not all *disciplinarities* are

equal: it sees monogamous disciplinarity as a structure of relating based on exclusion and a polydisciplinamorous one as allowing for disciplinary acts while rejecting the imperative of monodisciplinarity as the only site of rigorous legitimacy. It also, importantly, recognizes that not everyone has the privilege to choose to inhabit the university in these ways. In fact, most don't. Due to hostile departmental conditions or the need to be legible when going up for advancement and promotion, it is incumbent on those of us who have tenure, research chair positions, research centers, and grants to create conditions of greater possibility and flourishing for our students and our colleagues, whenever and wherever possible, without misrecognizing our privilege as a right that anyone can wield. It requires us to speak truth *to* power, *in* power, and *with* power.

Having set up polyamory as a structure to think with when theorizing research-creation as interdisciplinary praxis, I want to now interrogate one of its axioms, enlisting psychoanalysis to help us complicate things (as psychoanalysis is wont to do), but also to render things more interesting and useful for the project of research-creationalizing the university.

As anyone who has inhabited polyamorous and ethically nonmonogamous circles knows, *honesty* is one of its central axes of power.[9] Polyamory and ethical nonmonogamy are distinguished from other forms of nonmonogamy on the basis of an "ethical responsibility" grounded in honesty and consensus—in "truth." In popular as well as some critical literature on the subject, "uncommitted" or "unethical" nonmonogamy, which in the language of interdisciplinarity would be something like "disciplinary dabbling," is understood as focusing on sex and a lack of commitment to doing the work of *honest and ongoing communication*, while "committed" or "ethical" nonmonogamy or polyamory is characterized by situationally negotiated, multiple kinship nodes involving sexual and emotional intimacy,[10] grounded in the premise of and promise of radical (emergent) honesty.

If we return to Bowker and Star's characterization of the boundary object from chapter 1 in the context of this discussion of polyamory, it reads quite interestingly. Bowker and Star state that a boundary object is an object that can "inhabit several communities of practice and satisfy the informational requirements of each of them. Boundary objects are thus both plastic enough to adapt to the local needs and constraints of the sev-

eral parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites" (1999, 297). Changing the focus, within the quotation, from *informational* to *affective* requirements may help us think about this aspect of theoretical or critical polyamory in a new light. A polyamorous approach, read this way, allows one to "inhabit several communities of practice and satisfy the [affective/sexual] requirements of each of them. [Poly(discipline)amorous practice is] thus both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and constraints of the several parties employing them [relationship partners], yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites"—with this robustness seen as the direct result of the *honesty* invoked above, given that having multiple intimate relationships, be they sexual or not, without the knowledge of all partners involved does not allow for a "common identity across sites."

Honesty is thus underscored as the sine qua non of ethical polyamory. The stance can be caricatured as such: in polyamory and ethical nonmonogamy, multiple and differential (and often unpredictable) modes of relating across genders and sexualities are encouraged, with the caveat that all parties commit to a form of radical honesty with each other and agree on the rules of engagement. Too often, however, in much of the literature, the poly imperative to *know thyself* (the axiom of honesty within polyamory) emerges as a particular type of knowing that doesn't have to account for intersectional and historical injustices, or material and emotional inequalities. Nor, I hasten to add, for the eruptions of the psychoanalytic unconscious.

Relevant here is literary theorist Jane Gallop's 2002 *Anecdotal Theory*. A collection of essays describing the author's contribution to feminist psychoanalytic and deconstructive thinking, the volume powerfully refigures the feminist adage "the personal is political," asking what taking psychoanalysis seriously (and deconstruction, though here I focus on the former) does to our understanding of the political work of the personal within academic spaces. Specifically, Gallop asks how a theory of the unconscious (Freud) and the Real (Lacan) reorients the meaning of the personal *within* the political.

In order to do this, she proposes that we look to the structure of "anecdote," as a specific *storytelling* form.[11] Gallop claims anecdote as a form that erupts into our (feminist, antiracist) scenes of scholarship, refiguring inherited modes of scholarly authority and vocality, leaving us a little un-

sure as to when and where we have become too personal, and when and where it is precisely this grounding in the personal that is making our political scholarship, our theory, possible. To take anecdote as a storytelling practice seriously, as a way of acknowledging the webs of indebtedness that are constitutive of and give rise to any academic life, is first to anchor one's theory within the unpredictable affective terrain of daily life. In addition to paying attention to the grain of everyday life—university or otherwise—to work with anecdote is, however, for Gallop, given her psychoanalytic bases, to also acknowledge the generative power of *the unconscious*. In other words, to take anecdote seriously is not simply to suggest that it is out of the warp and weft of the everyday that we make our theory as feminist researchers. Nor is it simply to suggest that part of taking feminist antiracist challenges to the academy seriously is to wedge open a space of accountability for the private within the public as well as the personal within the political. While Gallop's project does, indeed, support such assertions, it ties these to the psychoanalytic insight that, given the structuring power of the unconscious, *one never knows (fully) from where one speak*s, and also that *one always speaks more than what one intends*.

To return to the axiom of honesty, then, what might it mean to be "honest" in the context of an unconscious in which one never knows (fully) from where one speaks? My suggestion is this: if we take psychoanalysis seriously, the honesty at stake must be understood as split, based both on a capacity to be honest and clear about the *manifest* content of given relationships while also being willing to be accountable to the *latent* content of relationships that emerge unexpectedly in unpredicted (affective/erotic) encounters. Such an approach lays the ground for a polyamorous model of accountability that is multiply responsive and response-able (Haraway 2007), but that needs a few more tools in its toolkit to effectively do its work. It requires tools that help us nurture not only a willingness to be accountable for our positionalities, affective attachments, and concrete choices in any and all love (and research) stories—that is, accountable for *where* and *how* and *with whom* we do our (disciplinary) coupling and uncoupling—but also a willingness to take seriously the eruptions and drives that can seem to take all volition off the table and render us followers, in much the same way that sexual desire can ignite one's attention forcefully and unpredictably in directions one never thought one would go.

There is one final psychoanalytic distinction that I would like to enlist,

here, for the project of research-creation as polydisciplinamorous praxis, and that is the Lacanian figure of the *sujet supposé savoir*. The analytic (and pedagogical) ethics mobilized by the sujet supposé savoir describes a way to negotiate polyamory's axiom of honesty, but from a psychoanalytic perspective that works *with* the unpredictable eruptions of the unconscious and that recognizes the pull of desire as a crucial and mobilizing one, even and especially when it grabs one unexpectedly. The sujet supposé savoir, taken in this way, teaches us *from where to take our bearings*, polydisciplinamorously speaking.

What do I mean by this? A term most often translated as the "subject presumed to know," the sujet supposé savoir names the structure that, for Lacan, organizes our unconscious desire within the analytic and pedagogical scenes. It is a way of talking about projections of power onto certain types of figures, such as the analyst, or the teacher, doctor, or parent in childhood. Although psychoanalysis teaches us that, to a certain degree, *any* subject can inhabit, for another subject, the position of the sujet supposé savoir, the exemplar of this is the analyst in the therapeutic situation—that situation that has been famously characterized as the "talking cure" (Freud [1910] 1955).

There are a number of projections mobilized by the sujet that matter here. First, there is the projection from the analysand onto the analyst (or the student onto the teacher, or the junior faculty onto the star scholar). This projection imbues the analyst or anyone inhabiting the position of the sujet supposé savoir with the power of the *one who knows*, and whose knowledge we *desire* (the Other in the other). While, to begin with (through the transference that ignites the process), we are driven to invest in this person-with-knowledge/power, the aim of analysis is to *work through* that projection in such a way as to lead to the realization that the sujet does not, in fact, possess the capital-"T" Truth (that kernel of knowledge/power that we so desired). Instead, if the sujet is doing their job well within this dynamic, they know, and we come to know, that the power we ascribed to them is structural. They wield it by dint of the position they hold (analyst/teacher/discipline) and not through any innate quality (though this is not to say that all teachers and analysts are equal and that it is *only* structure that is at work here). In other words, while we may indeed love something (a human, a dog, a disciplinary form), that love is also, always, a love of what they *represent for us* even before we know it.[12]

One must find oneself "falling in love" with the analyst (the teacher, the discipline, the practice), in order for the investment that would lure one forward enough to *care* to commence, in order for curiosity (in its ethico-erotic form) to be ignited. This is how things start. But it is not how things end. When it comes to the position of the teacher or the analyst, the psychoanalytic insight here is that the sujet supposé savoir, as a function, must not be misrecognized, either by the one inhabiting its position or the one investing in that position, as an ontological truth (as the actual object of love). Rather, it must be recognized as a *structural* truth, one that, while tied to an individual body, has everything to do with the function they are performing within the scene of exchange.

While this "deposition" is in itself important, it is crucial that the *route* to this realization—the realization that the sujet supposé savoir is a structural position (an act) rather than an innate quality (an essence)—is a fully invested one, characterized by erotic drive *and* love (what Freud and Lacan call *transference love*).[13] Investment in the sujet supposé savoir is necessary, in the analytic situation as in the pedagogical one. One must *cathect* for the process to even start. Understood this way, the sujet supposé savoir is a *lure*, a powerful lure that must be deposed in the end, but that is structurally needed as an attractor inaugurating the love and curiosity needed for the journey (the working-through) to begin.[14] In this context, the teacher, while they come to the classroom with knowledge, is not there only to teach that manifest content. They *are* there to do that but, also, they are there to model a structural relation to knowledge—a structural relation to knowledge that has everything to do with the negotiations of power and authority that make up disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and polydisciplinary thinking, and that recognizes that each of these ways of doing the disciplinary (mono/inter/poly) is about *doing authority and power differently*.

In her 1985 *Reading Lacan*, Gallop frames it thus: When it comes to the sujet supposé savoir, "one can effectively undo authority only *from the position of authority* in a way that exposes the illusions of that position without renouncing it, so as to permeate the position itself with the connotations of its illusoriness, so as to show that everyone, including the *sujet supposé savoir,* is castrated" (14). Here, the source and plenitude of knowledge (its origin) is not seen as located *in* the sujet, but rather as *produced* through an acknowledged asymmetrical relation of power within

the scene, *as well as a willingness to invest in this asymmetry*. Whether in the analytic or pedagogical scene, for Gallop as for Lacan, there is no vantage point outside of the specific structure of love that is transference—one can *interpret* the transference, work *with* it, but not *escape* it. One must, to return to the Harawayan framework of chapter 1, *stay with the trouble*.

To take seriously the theoretical structure of the sujet supposé savoir, then, is to flag the crucial point that within the psychoanalytic knowledge economy we are always already subjected, given, and driven. The task is to work noninnocently from *within*, and nurture the nodes of curiosity necessary for any truly pedagogical research practice to develop. It is to allow ourselves to be driven toward those locations and people and disciplines that seem to hold what we desire, knowing that what we desire will, however, always exceed anything that we find there.

This attention to the *working-through* of transference and countertransference in the scene of knowledge is what distinguishes the sujet supposé savoir misrecognized as *substance* from the sujet supposé savoir recognized as a *structurally* endowed position that, when not misrecognized, provides the ethical fulcrum of the pedagogical/disciplinary scene. It demands that the cathected, situated, and relational be valued rather than disavowed; it requires this, hand in glove with a deep attentiveness to divisions of labor, hierarchies of value, and canonizations of knowledge. Here, the structure of the sujet supposé savoir, as an ethical organization of that erotic kernel that lures us forward and *makes shit happen*, pedagogically speaking, is key to the kind of polydisciplinamorous relations I look to research-creation to nurture.

Research-creation, as mobilized thus far, invites an *other* mode of accountability. It demands that the eros of Haraway's dog, the *amory* of multiple-disciplinary-loves, and the negotiations that these demand, be placed front and center in our pedagogical worlds. The neologism *polydisciplinamory*[15] aims not only at the invocation of multiplicity that polydisciplinary study offers, but also at holding space for amory in both the sense of psychoanalytic libidinal cathexis *and* transference love (the supposition of desired/desirable knowledge to an other). It asks how the perspectives mobilized under the sign of polyamory offer a way to ground the love-of-knowledge that animates the relation marked by the sujet supposé savoir, unpinning our allegiance to discipline, and replacing an Imaginary relation to knowledge (the fullness of content) with a psychoana-

lytically ethical one attentive both to the desire that emerges at the site of the sujet supposé savoir, and to the drive I have been naming *curiosity*, a drive that erupts and takes us over. Here, polydisciplinamory, as a kind of eros-driven-curiosity, becomes an organizational principle for research-creation, one that helps tutor us in managing the frictions, dissonances, and different demands required by not only more than one discipline but more than one *form*, and to recognize these negotiations as always already imbricated in structures of power.

Research-creation, understood in this way, is a practice of love. It is an erotic, driven, invested practice. And, as such, it fails to fit into those models that see interdisciplinarity as a way to streamline and multiply research productivities. It is too disruptive for that. Research-creation follows desire, and builds spaces and contexts that allow the time and space to *experiment in unpredictable directions*.

This is not to say that research-creation cannot collaborate with and is not regularly assimilated within the disciplinary frames that configure normative university life; it is to say that research-creation—at its most innovative—is dissonant, failing to fully cohere or belong, calling the interdisciplinary into question as thoroughly as the disciplinary, and attempting to open up the playing field of disciplinary knowledge production to its polymorphous potential. Rejecting the logic of reproductive futurity (Edelman 2004), research-creation suggests a mode of knowledge production that does more than simply contribute to existing realms of interdisciplinary and disciplinary data. Instead, without eschewing the asymmetries of hierarchical disciplinary differences, it tumbles outside of these intellectual frameworks, challenging practice/theory divides as they police what gets to count as a valid object and method, within which disciplinary framework, where, when, and how.

In the pedagogical encounter, *who and how I am*, as both teacher and student, demands always asking *why*: Why is one interested in what one is interested in? What worldview is one inhabiting with one's research objects, forms, and practices? Taking ignorance and curiosity as our guides, we ask: What do I *not* know here? To what am I *not* attending? What is drawing me forward, and why?

How we *do, think about, think-with* our research practices—be they written, spoken, or danced—*matters*. In true poly form, what matters is our willingness to engage the multiple ways in which this "making" is a

fundamentally situated, relational construct. It is one that entangles us in relations of debt in ways for which we can never fully account, despite always being willing to be (emergently) accountable.

In my teaching practice, I have found polydisciplinamory an incredibly fruitful way to reframe the now normative interdisciplinarity debates within the academy as described in previous chapters. Research-creation, understood polydisciplinamorously, brings eros back into the grain of our pedagogical everyday, opening us up to the question of *who*, disciplinarily speaking, we will fall for, as well as *how* we fall and *when*. If rampant disciplinary promiscuity demands no commitment (welcoming one-night stands), polydisciplinamory, while in some senses promiscuous, does something different: it asks that multiple and simultaneous committed loves, at multiple levels—manifest and latent, conscious and unconscious—be taken seriously. Linking promiscuous curiosity with the mixing and mingling of disciplinary frames, research-creation takes the *poly*disciplin*amorous* as its particular charge, as opposed to the serial monogamy or polyfidelity of *inter-* and *multi*disciplinarity, failing to understand those disciplinary modes of filiality that structure the field-based conversations that, in turn, organize the space that we call the university today.

Toronto-based artists Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell's 2016 single-channel video *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon* offers a humorous and curious example of just such an approach: an emergent, responsive, undutiful, nonfilial research practice that follows one's situated loves and curiosities in a polydisciplinamorous mode, mixing the rules of avant-garde video with academic interrogation, and keeping both in antinomic tension through the sophisticated use of humor (indeed, in a contemporary queer idiom it recalls Mary Kelly's groundbreaking *Post-Partum Document* in its complex interweaving of theory and daily-practice). Their single-channel video starts with a domestic scene: one of the artists washing dishes in (presumably) their kitchen. This static shot lasts for forty-three seconds. After which the artists' domestic space is replaced by . . . a singing rock.

Immediately the tone for their research-creationally inclined video essay is set: the mundane juxtaposed with the absurd. To multiply this absurdity even further, the text being sung (and that runs along the bottom of the screen, karaoke style) is academic: "Artists use research methods

FIGURE 3.1 — Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell, *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave* (still), video, 24:32 minutes, color, English, 2016. VIDEO STILL COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS.

that a reader trained in traditional quantitative and qualitative scholarly research methods may not understand," the rock sings. The text comes from Brad Haseman's "A Manifesto for Performative Research" (2006). Intercut with scenes of dishwashing, the song continues: "Practice-based research is designed for those who wish to initiate and pursue their research through practice, and for those seeking new research paradigms." The intercutting of animated objects singing academic metareflection on "performative research" with domestic scenes of the artists in their home immediately reminds the informed viewer of the decades of art/life intervention—feminist, queer, and otherwise—blurring the boundaries between the labor of everyday life and artistic labor. It also, by the same token, recasts the domestic scenes that we are seeing glimpses of *as* a kind of research—what kind we don't yet know, until fuzzy cherries come on the scene to sing, "This film is about what we love and what we know."[16]

What we love and what we know.

The love and knowledge presented to us, over the course of the twenty-four-and-a-half-minute video, includes scenes of the labor of making the video essay itself (which was produced as part of a residency at the Art Gallery of Ontario) as well as formally enigmatic scenes of domestic life. These domestic scenes include sequences with the artists' cats taken with a camera mounted at cat's-eye level, fragments of the couple in bed, and suggestively stirred bowls of what looks like hummus out of which magical books fly. These are interspersed with what the video sets up, through Haseman, as sensuous "practice-led research" experiments *with*, *through*, and *on* the two books central to the research that Mitchell and Logue, we discover, are engaging through the video: Monique Wittig's 1992 *The Straight Mind and Other Essays* and José Esteban Muñoz's 2009 *Cruising Utopia: The There and Then of Queer Theory*.

The video unpacks these texts, playing with the tools of scholarly inquiry and imbuing them with eros. It enigmatically plays with scale, absurd juxtaposition, and anamorphic recalibration, with a disco-erotic tongue-in-cheek vibe that both draws one in and confounds any clear reading. Through these formal strategies, Mitchell and Logue queer the linearity of what Muñoz (2009) calls *straight time*. And as they do this, scale is their strongest ally.

The displacements of scale mobilized by the artists render every scene incredibly suggestive: an inch-long Mitchell climbs into the underwear

of a real-size Logue; the cats (pussies) that we came to know in the opening scenes, now shrunk down, wander through the crevasses of a cross-stitch vagina that looks *almost* like a landscape sunset. This scale play offers sites of potential for queer recoding of the research-and-love spaces of everyday (artistic) life. The scholarly labor of the video is imbued at every turn with erotic charge, their desires explicitly guiding their conceptual and aesthetic choices, and, without stating any research questions clearly, the fact that Mitchell and Logue are inquiring into the constructions of lesbian and queer identity articulated by the Muñoz and the Wittig is unmistakable.[17]

On this reading, Logue and Mitchell's *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon* inhabits a queer polydisciplinamorous space of possibility, modeling a relationship to academic knowledge production that is based on the capacity to *care* rather than simply *know*. Organized experimentally, emergently, not only at the level of content but also of form, it brings different disciplinary vocalities together, dissonantly, and offers a horizon driven by both eros and amory. Indeed, the closing scene of the video leaves us singing along to a song by the Canadian rock band Rush, calling each of us to come together to "mold a new reality closer to the heart" (see figure 3.2). Their version, however, offers women, philosophers, queer theorists, and artists as the protagonists of the song:

And the women who hold low places
Must be the ones who start
To mold a new reality
Closer to the heart
Closer to the heart
The blacksmith and the artist
Reflect it in their art
They forge their creativity
Closer to the heart
Yes closer to the heart
Philosophers and queer theorists
Each must know their part
To sew a new mentality
Closer to the heart.

FIGURE 3.2 — Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell, *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave* (still), video, 24:32 minutes, color, English, 2016. VIDEO STILLS COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS.

Through this polymorphously perverse object of artistic research, with its strange and unpredictable alliances, the artists ask us to imagine, with them, "a vision of a queer world in an impossible time and place" (Muñoz 2009, 27) and deftly model a polydisciplinamo(humo)rous homage (equal parts love and laughter) to research-creation. Rather than allowing discipline to tell them which questions are worthwhile and which methods are appropriate (whom to love and how and when), they insist that it is *amory*—the *eros* that Haraway taught us about in chapter 1, here reconfigured through both poly lit and psychoanalytic thinking—that must determine our research questions as well as our methodological toolkits. Love, taken in this sense, is something driven and disruptive rather than a placatingly affirming relation. It is a site of resistance, undoing, and redoing. Love is not the unconditional *agape*; love is the *conditional erotics* to which we are beholden, luring us forward, usually despite ourselves. And it is to the question of this erotic lure that we now turn.

CHAPTER 4

Drive(s)

> The erotic is the nurturer or nursemaid of all our deepest knowledge. . . . For once we begin to feel deeply all the aspects of our lives, we begin to demand from ourselves and from our life-pursuits that they feel in accordance with that joy which we know ourselves to be capable of.
> —AUDRE LORDE, "The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," 56–57

> [The] unconscious is to be sought not at the bottom of ourselves, behind the back of our "consciousness," but in front of us, as articulations of our field. It is "unconscious" by the fact that it is not an object, but it is that through which objects are possible, it is the constellation wherein our future is read.
> —MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 180

I am not sure when it was that I was first inspired by the thought of a world organized by labors of love, one in which we each perform the quotidian labors that bring us the most pleasure. (I find joy in the repetitive calm of sweeping and feel resentful at the roar of a vacuum.) I am not sure when it was that I discovered the importance of finding pleasure in labor and first recognized the political and affective uses of the erotic in this context. But I *am* sure that when I first read Audre Lorde's 1978 lecture "The Uses of the

Erotic: The Erotic as Power" it felt like I was falling in love—recognizing myself through the relay of the other.

As well as arguing for the political value of cultivating the erotic (the cathected, the invested) as our guide in the labor of the everyday, Lorde argues for the importance of cultivating the erotic as our guide in our *knowledge-making practices*. Her lecture argues for the importance of nurturing the "erotic root and satisfactions" of our (pedagogical/political) labor, even at its most difficult ([1984] 2007, 55). To allow our labor to be organized by eros. Indeed, to let eros be our guide. At the heart of this call is a claim for the productive power of nurturing—and the radical need to nurture—*joy*: "So every level upon which I sense also opens to the erotically satisfying experience, whether that is dancing, building a bookcase, writing a poem, examining an idea . . . and that deep and irreplaceable knowledge of my *capacity for joy* comes to demand from all of my life that it be lived within the knowledge that such satisfaction is possible" (56–57, emphasis added). This demand, the demand of the erotic, is one that shakes complacency and demands care. It is a *cathected* demand. As Lorde emphasizes, the erotic forces us "to be responsible to ourselves in the deepest sense. . . . Recognizing the power of the erotic in our lives can give us the energy to pursue genuine change in our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama" (58–59). I take this to mean that when things get tough, it is even more urgent that we, in our pedagogical and institutional spaces, organize ourselves around micropolitical acts of care, fueled by *eros* as a powerful and *ethical* fulcrum.

Like many who have committed to the university-as-site, my love of learning—my driven curiosity—was dampened by the (for the most part) lackluster pedagogical mandates of the elementary and high schools I attended, by the rote learning (Freire's banking model) all too familiar to all too many of us. If Charm had been nearby, I would have followed her and gone off digging in a heartbeat (if she would have had me) (King 2003). For a little while, that is exactly what I did (wander off, following my curiosity), never planning to go to university, let alone stay in it. As is the case for many if not all of us, somewhere along the way, there were encounters that changed my pedagogical course, teachers whose passion and vision and creative generosity lured me toward a research-creational life and into joining the ranks of the professoriate. These teachers allowed

me to dig a hole and fall through the other side. While I recall vividly those teachers in elementary and high school who are responsible for my even entertaining the idea of college, and those teachers in college who made it possible for me to imagine graduate school, there are three in particular who configured my intellectual trajectory in a way that irrevocably marked my approach to pedagogy, pedagogical *desire*, and pedagogical *drive*.

The earliest of these—the one who supervised my MFA (2001–4)—saw where I needed to be walking and put me on the path to performance art theory and practice. It is from her that I learned to be inspired by Fluxus instruction pieces and durational performance actions as world-making artistic forms. The last of the three—the one who ended up supervising my doctorate (2004–10)—gave me permission to explore and experiment, and taught me how to think with compassion and care at the heart of my intellectual labor. Everything I learned about feminist *theorypractice* I learned from her. One of my MA committee members (2002–4), a scholar of queer psychoanalytic theory, provided a bridge between the two. I arrived in his classroom already in love with Lacan but self-taught—a young artist, who had stumbled into reading Lacan's 1949 essay on the "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" because of an earlier love affair with the work of Mary Kelly.

I had first encountered Kelly by reading her as a theorist, through her essay on "Re-Viewing Modernist Criticism" (1981), and followed that up by learning about her impressive multiyear conceptual art-and-life work *Post-Partum Document*, a project that combined Lacanian psychoanalytic reflection with the objects and exchanges of everyday maternal life. As I've already flagged, it was at this moment that I realized that in order to understand *Post-Partum Document* I needed first to understand Lacan. So, I picked up "The Mirror Stage." I remember exactly where I was. I was in a loft, in the Little Five Points area of Atlanta, GA, sitting on the floor, coffee in hand, a little adrift during the third of my "gap years" between undergraduate life and the graduate school marathon that I didn't yet know was to come. Indeed, one way I could tell the story of this encounter with Kelly's essay has it being the very thing that planted the seed that became the lure that drove me toward a university life.

In any case, it is from these teachers that I first learned—and *felt*—what

is at stake in the sujet supposé savoir: knowledge configured by cathexis, drive, and a distinct lack of *méconnaissance*.[1] These mentors, these sujets supposé savoir, modeled for me a commitment to nonmimetic mentorship; they each instructed me to nurture and attend to the erotics of my own drives rather than reproduce myself in their image. And they each (even if the language of psychoanalysis ended up being proper only to one of them), invited me to attend to what Lacan famously called the *objet petit a*, the Lacanian *object-cause of desire*, as pedagogical *lure*.

In what follows, I anatomize four lectures that Lacan gave in Paris in the spring of 1964 on what he called "the gaze as *objet petit a*," tracing the contours of the Lacanian lectures themselves, and draw a picture of the objet petit a as a research-creational thing-to-think-with. These lectures were given in the grip of friendship; the death of Lacan's friend and colleague Maurice Merleau-Ponty—at whose funeral Lacan openly wept—haunts its pages, as does Merleau-Ponty's thinking (Roudinesco 1999).[2] While preceding chapters have unpacked my perspectives on research-creation as *polydisciplinamorous* praxis (though only under this name in chapter 3), this chapter switches gears, pulling out the threads needed to understand what is at stake in the objet petit a as pedagogical lure, threads that I offer as a kind of "blind-contour" drawing that models the grain of my driven relation to the Lacanian text and continues to ask what the project of psychoanalysis can do to undo reproductive norms within university spaces.[3]

While the language of this chapter is more technically driven than previous chapters, what I discuss here is indeed at the heart of everything written earlier—it is the background for the way that I have been talking about research-creational orientations thus far. An understanding of the objet petit a and respect for the uncanny ways that it reconfigures our understanding of desire and drive are what undergirds my reading of Charm's curiosity and of Haraway's dog in chapter 1, of interdisciplinarity in chapter 2, and of polydisciplinamory in chapter 3.

Here, in chapter 4, I excavate Lacan's lectures on the objet petit a, hoping to demonstrate the productive value of psychoanalytic thinking without passing it off as dogma. For the non–psychoanalytically inclined reader, I attempt to open up the Lacanian text to provide points of connection with my more or less vernacular use of psychoanalysis in previous chapters, and, for the psychoanalytically inclined, I work to provide

enough detail to enjoy revisiting Lacan's well-trod lectures on the gaze.[4] Invariably, I will fail to find the right balance for many readers, but, as someone convinced of the value of psychoanalytic thinking for the project of contesting and remaking university spaces, in the pages that follow, I try, performing an idiosyncratic reading of Lacan's lectures on the gaze as objet petit a for a critical theory of research-creation.

The first words of Lacan's opening lecture on the gaze as objet petit a, as they appear in the published version of Seminar XI (February 19, 1964, "The Split between the Eye and the Gaze"), direct his listeners, or in our case his readers, to the etymological valence of the German word *Wiederholung*, which translates in English to something between "repetition," "recurrence," and "reiteration."

Wieder: again.

Holen: to haul.

To. Haul. Again.

With these words, almost before we can cognize it, Lacan grounds us in the *physicality* of the psychoanalytic drive as something that continues, repeats, recurs, and that must be hauled again and again, or, rather, that hauls *us*, repeatedly ([1978] 1998, 67). He then pairs this "repetition" with "compulsion," *Wiederholung* with *Zwang*.

Wiederholungzwang.

Repetition compulsion.

The compulsion to haul / be hauled again.

The pairing works to immediately situate, for his psychoanalytically savvy audience, Lacan's titular discussion of the gaze as objet petit a in a reading of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, specifically the *fort/da* game of his grandson, little Ernst—a game, it turns out, that has everything to do with the objet petit a.

In the second chapter of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud describes the game that he finds Ernst playing, in the absence of both his father (who is away, a soldier at war) and his mother, Anna (Freud's daughter). Freud senior comes across his grandson playing with a spool with string still tied to it, throwing the spool away while holding onto the string, letting it fall over the side of the bed, out of sight, and then pulling it back to where he can see it. As he throws the spool away, Ernst cries, "Fort!" (Gone!), and as he brings it back he exclaims, "Da!" (There!). In an at-

tempt at symbolic mastery over the (temporary) loss of his mother (here symbolic of maternal care, plenitude, and love—of Imaginary plenitude), the little boy turns the spool into a representative of her body and is thus able to control her departure as well as having the satisfaction of bringing her back, over and over again, symbolically speaking.

The game, for Freud, becomes exemplary of a compulsion to repeat, a drive to return to the scene of (primary maternal) loss as a way to metabolize, and somehow work through, that moment in which the *loss* of the mother in fact *creates* the mother as a site of desire and value. (A Tom Waits song runs through my head as I write this: "I never saw the sunshine 'til you turned out the light.")[5] It is the mother's body in this example, or, rather, the *loss* of the mother's body, in its Phantasmatic Imaginary Plenitude, that becomes the archetypal, irrecoverable loss that sets desire into play and is symbolized by what Lacan names the objet petit a.

This is one of many psychoanalytic origin stories. And like all stories, it makes worlds. Analogous to the relation to "Truth" described by the sujet supposé savoir in chapter 3, here the mother's body becomes a retroactively constituted font of plenitude, forever lost and inevitably sought after as that "something more" behind every object.[6]

It becomes the *lure*.

It becomes the *object-cause of desire*, setting our stories, and thereby our words and our worlds into play.

It becomes the *thing* that keeps us digging to the other side.

Articulating a compulsion to repeat, the objet petit a is that object that makes manifest the drive(s) in the form of desire. Importantly, however, within this economy, the objet petit a must, like the sujet supposé savoir, be "deposed"—understood to have no final term, to always be a lure on the horizon, engaged without méconnaissance but no less powerful for that fact. We are, in this psychoanalytic paradigm, each, in our own particular way(s), given by our *objets*, and it is in recognizing the degree to which we are *driven by* these relations, and our being willing to be accountable *for* and *to* these ways in which we are driven, that an ethics given by the insights of psychoanalysis emerges. This is the ethics, in a different idiom, of Haraway's *Companion Species*. This is an ethics structured by desire without méconnaissance: an ethics given by the objet petit a—the object-cause of desire repeatedly articulated by the pulsations of the drive.[7]

Lacan fleshes out this thinking on the objet petit a in his second lecture on the topic (February 26, 1964, "Anamorphosis"), through a reading of Hans Holbein's 1553 painting *The Ambassadors* and its anamorphic skull. Again he starts etymologically:

Ana: again.

Morphosis: to form.

Anamorphosis, Lacan tells us, is about *forming things again*, and the particular ways in which the thing (*das Ding*), with the objet petit a as its avatar, is destined to be formed again and again in an open, elliptical dance as it articulates the circuit of the drive. We see here how he is layering his concepts, the repetition of *anamorphosis* echoing the repetition of *Wiederholungzwang*, creating semiotic clouds of reference that are meant to poetically invoke each other. Unsurprisingly, then, Lacan's lecture begins with a reforming of his own—a rereading of a poem. He tells the room, "Because I am beginning on time today, I will start by reading a poem which, in actual fact, has no relation to what I am about to say, but which is related to what I said last year, in my seminar, about the mysterious object, the most concealed object, that of the scopic drive" ([1978] 1998, 17).[8] Returning to this poem, read seemingly by happenstance ("because I am beginning on time today"), Lacan goes on to remind his audience of the longing that he has to address some "unfinished business" from the previous year's seminar: a correspondence between that "most concealed object," the objet petit a, and *castration*. And while he states that the poem "has no relation to what I am about to say," because these lectures are spoken extempore, not written, scripted, thereby still actively and responsively in the land of *Thinking* rather than crafted into the stasis of *Thought* (Readings 1997), the very fact that he *thinks* of the poem and *speaks* it in the room does, in fact, render it relevant, like that chance thing spoken in the therapeutic exchange that seems to be off topic but ends up being key, or like that chance pedagogical encounter that, though forgotten, turns out to have been at work in the background all along.[9]

Lacan knows this and is playing with us. Playing with us by modeling the degree to which, as the unconscious teaches us, we always *speak more than we mean*, and highlighting the importance of recognizing that, in the pedagogical scene, the scene of knowledge, the scene within which he is speaking, one can never predict which concepts will stick, which will become relevant, which will make a difference, or *when* any of these things

might happen. In this context, the insufficiency of castration (that thing that Lacan wants to return to, and that links this lecture to the previous one) is relevant to our understanding of the objet petit a given what it demonstrates about the subject in relation to knowledge.

Psychoanalytically speaking, castration is that condition of being insufficient within the realm of knowledge as *certain* knowledge, and it is this condition, the cut of castration, that structures the entire "organization of the desires through the framework of the fundamental drives" (Lacan [1978] 1998, 89). The castration complex, marking that desire to make the invisible visible and reveal the hidden as *hidden* rather than *missing* (therefore as "same" rather than "different"—as fundamentally recuperable), marks the ways that the psychoanalytic subject is "split." The castration complex is that inaugural moment in psychoanalysis that founds the subject *as subject* in the very stroke that it is rendered insufficient, and therefore capable of desire.[10]

As Lacan tells us, "the interest the subject takes in his own split is bound with that which determines it" (83). The objet petit a, emerging from what psychoanalysis understands as primary repression, marks those constitutive repressions needed to form the subject as such. It is, as Teresa de Lauretis reminds us, "not simply an object . . . but an object set in a *mise-en-scène*, in the scenario of a narrative from which it acquires its psychic value as object of the drive" (2008, 36). It is, as Merleau-Ponty writes in the second epigraph to this chapter, "in front of us, as articulations of our field . . . it is the constellation wherein our future is read" (1969, 180).

In other words, the objet petit a articulates that relation set into motion by those moments that Lacan understands as the "splits" that create the subjective crevasses that distinguish each of us in our specific modalities of desire (little Ernst with the bobbin). These aren't those conscious modes of desire that can be taken or left, these are the desires that drive us, willy-nilly, despite ourselves. It is for this reason that the objet petit a is the object of our attention and guide in this quest to generate a theoretical frame that may be of use in understanding that mode of "love" and "curiosity" at stake in each of the chapters of this book.

The objet petit a, research-creationally speaking, is what we are in the grip of when we find ourselves pushing our projects into disciplinary and formal directions that we don't yet know how to justify. In the psychoanalytic frameworks that Lacan is describing, the objet petit a, as that object-

cause of desire toward which we are driven, articulates the drive in the mode of *aim* rather than *attainment*.[11] (I imagine the T-shirt: "Research Creationists: We Aim to Aim, Not to Attain!") The objet petit a gives us *orientations* and *lures*, rather than prescriptive models of practice. It is the thing that grabs our curiosity, but that we can't quite comprehend from where we are situated, and so off we go in pursuit . . .

To further unpack this action of the gaze as objet petit a, Lacan then famously introduces us to the visual structure of anamorphosis. In a paragraph dedicated to describing Hans Holbein's *The Ambassadors* (figure 4.1), Lacan brings our attention to the objects in this well-known Vanitas painting as objects of *learning*—objects representing the seven liberal arts of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*. Within the Vanitas logic, these objects are objects of material seduction that the viewer must be warned away from: objects of learning, yes, but of learning within the realm of the mundane rather than the sacred. Furthermore, within the logic of the painting, as objects representative of the domain of appearance, these stand in contrast to the *illegibility* of a dominant form that the viewer can see, but not read or understand, superimposed over the bottom center of the picture plane (figure 4.2).

It is here, in drawing our attention to the illegible object that lies just below the legible ones, that Lacan turns our attention to the way in which the Symbolist poet Jurgis Baltrusaitis (1983) describes the viewing of Holbein's *The Ambassadors* as a condition of *fascination frustrated*. Lacan's narrative is as follows: You stand before the image, fascinated by the illegible foreground form, but ultimately frustrated by the impossibility of reading it. To escape this frustrating fascination, you eventually walk out of the room. The fascination with which you were held, however, compels you to turn around at the last minute, where, from a now oblique angle, the illegible form suddenly emerges *as a perfectly legible skull* (figure 4.3).

Through this story, Lacan dramatizes the relatively mundane point that the image is, quite simply, organized by two distinct geometral points, and that, most importantly to the message formally encoded into the painting, *comprehension in the one precludes comprehension in the other.* There is no point from which all can be seen. There is only partiality. In Haraway's terms: no *God trick*, only *situatedness* (1988). This is the condition of knowledge, inhabited ethically, for both Haraway and Lacan.

The painting, structured by anamorphic dissonance, insists that the

FIGURE 4.1 — Hans Holbein, *The Ambassadors*, 1533. Credit: Hans Holbein the Younger; Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve ("The Ambassadors").

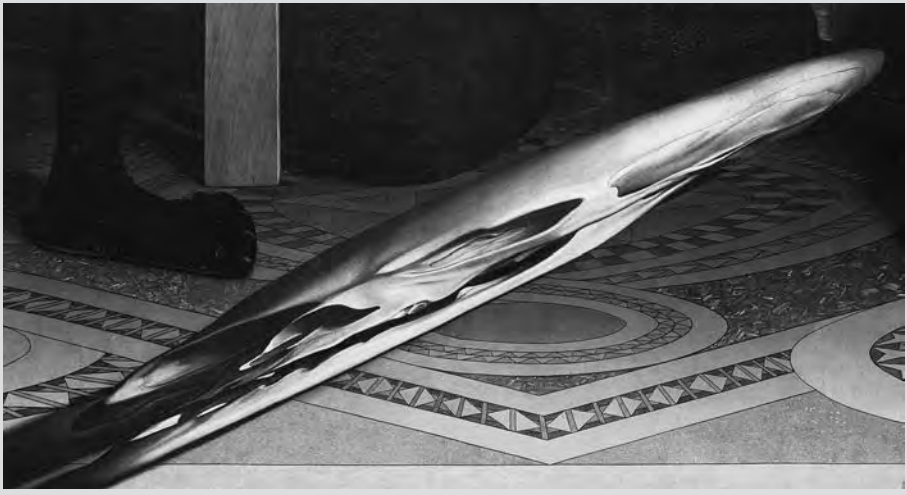

FIGURE 4.2 — Hans Holbein, *The Ambassadors* (*detail*), 1533. Credit: Hans Holbein the Younger; Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve ("The Ambassadors").

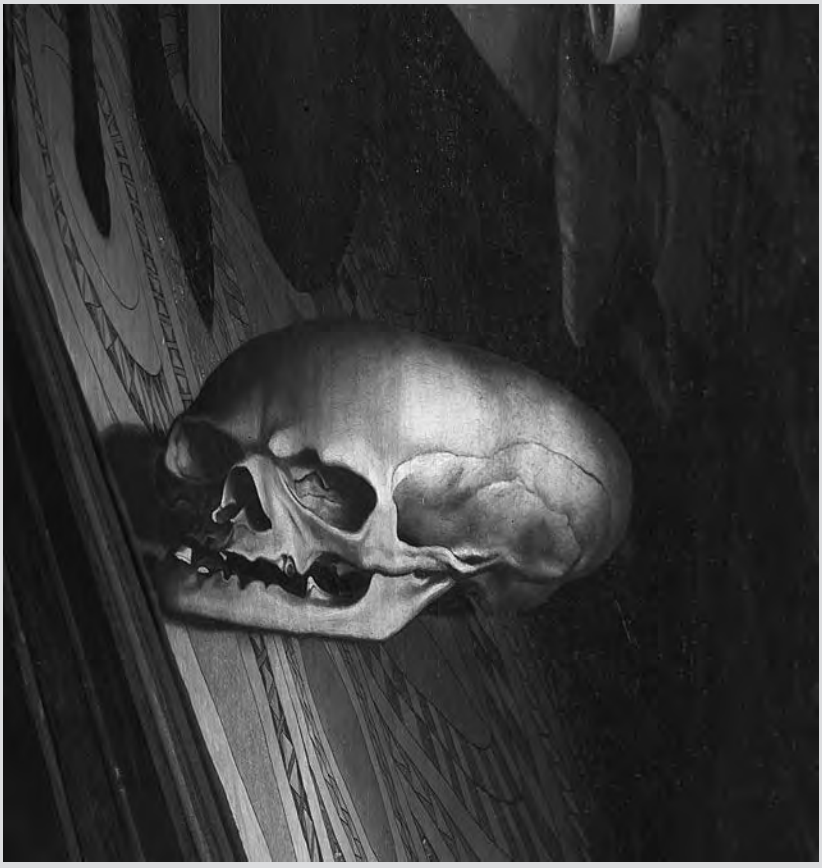

FIGURE 4.3 — Hans Holbein, *The Ambassadors* (*detail*), 1533. Credit: Hans Holbein the Younger; Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve ("The Ambassadors").

viewer negotiate a multiplicity of positions and recognize that there is no *actual* position from which the two legibilities can be seen at once. There is always, will always be, something illegible, no matter what position one stands in. And that the anamorphic form that constitutes one of the geometral points is, in fact, a skull, only heightens the poetry of this image as representative, for Lacan, of the death of the subject from a single perspectival position.

Figured by anamorphosis, the objet petit a articulates the subject as oppositional and emergent simultaneously, something—to bring Haraway back in through the figure of her cat's cradle knotwork (1994) —like a me-*not*-me / me-*knot*-me. The me-*not*-me would be the binary condition of the subject before the image: I see the Vanitas and see that I don't see the anamorphic skull. There is a clear distinction between what is legible and what is not. The me-*knot*-me relation would be one in which the distinction between *me* and *not-me* is not effaced, but rather emerges as a phenomenon in which I am knotted into the picture as a point of blindness, scotoma (what Lacan calls the *stain*): I can now see that from where I was I could not see, and what I am left with is not the fullness of knowledge but the precarious contingency of the legible. And it is here that, for Lacan, the scotoma, that constitutive blind spot in the field of vision (the area of the optic disc of every mammal where there are no photoreceptors, the very condition that *makes sight possible*), comes to figure both a *metaphorical* and a *biological* condition central to consciousness.

Consciousness, Lacan tells us, is "a principle of *méconnaissance*, as . . . *scotoma*" ([1978] 1998, 76). We cannot see from all perspectives, but that is precisely the condition that, to return to Felman and Weber's insights in chapter 3, ignites our desire, our *curiosity*, and that, biologically and metaphorically speaking, make sight, always already partial, possible in the first place: our field of vision is in fact constituted by those very blind spots that must be compensated for in order for us to see. Thus, given by this scotomic, anamorphic structure, for Lacan, everything that is inscribed in the register of the scopic drive is affected (and infected) by ambiguity. The scopic points to both a biological condition and a trope through which the specificity of human knowledge is organized.[12]

Continuing this excavation of the gaze as objet petit a in his third lecture in the series, "The Line and Light," Lacan begins by drawing two inverted (and, for now, separated) triangular structures on the board (fig-

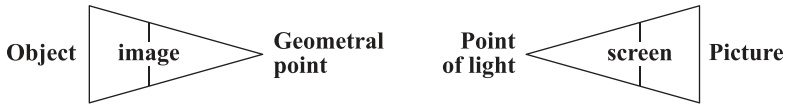

FIGURE 4.4 — Jacques Lacan, *First Triangular Schema*.

ure 4.4). One triangle designates the organization of the geometral subject as a point of Imaginary coherence, the point of the "I" at the heart of Cartesian perspective. This triangle, Lacan says, describes vision from a mathematical perspective, geometral vision, a subject organized *by line* and linked to a conception of autonomous subjectivity (a sovereign viewing "I"): *I* grasp *it*.[13] The second triangle, in chiasmic opposition to the first, designates the subject organized not by line, but by *light*. This second pole, determined by the realm of what Lacan will call the *properly scopic* (scotomic), is attentive to the behavior of light with matter rather than attentive to geometric line. This is the pole of *emergence* in which *it* grasps *me*. Unlike the subject organized by line, then, the subject organized by light is positioned *variably* in space, and is, most importantly, situated in an ambiguous relation to the eye as bodily *organ*. (I am reminded of Luce Irigaray here: "With regard to the movements of my eyes, they do not take place uniquely within the visible universe: they also happen in the living crypt of my body and my flesh" [1993, 165].)

An organ, Lacan tells us, is defined by its function (organ, from the Latin *organum*, means instrument or tool). However, to consider the eye (or any biological complex) as a singular organ or tool is to ignore and reduce the "large multiplicity of functions" (Lacan [1978] 1998, 101) that come together to produce the organ-complex of the eye. To emphasize his point, Lacan brings our attention to the fovea, that part of the organ-complex responsible for sharp focus and thus without which the entire function of depth of field upon which the visual depends would collapse. The variable function of depth of field allows for something to come into focus or not (two distances cannot be in focus at one time). It also requires binocular vision—two eyes differently positioned to see one scene as three-dimensional and not flat. The function of depth of field is thus to grasp and solicit the subject into a *simultaneous and variable set of legibilities*.

In this context, Lacan recounts a story of a summer in his youth spent

by the sea in a poor fishing village where, he tells us, he didn't fit in. In this story, Lacan describes himself as a young intellectual from the city who takes himself to the seaside to experience "something practical, something physical" ([1978] 1998, 95). One day, he is on a boat with a local fisherman (Petit-Jean). As they are out on the water, the fisherman sees the sun shining so brightly on a small sardine can that it is reduced to a point of light. Seeing this, the fisherman turns to Lacan and says the following: "*You see that can? Do you see it? Well, it doesn't see you!*" (95). Lacan tells us that Petit-Jean "found this incident highly amusing—I less so. I thought about it. Why did I find it less amusing than he? It's an interesting question" (95). Asking us to join him in considering why it might have been that the incident emerged to Lacan as *less* than amusing, he suggests that this glistening sardine can, a shiny point of light that the fisherman recognizes but that Lacan doesn't, rather than creating a rapport, reveals to Lacan the degree to which he is out of place in his environment. "*It can't see you!*" becomes the evidence that, at the level of the signifier, the relays of signification particular to the local culture in which he finds himself, it is *Lacan* who is illegible. Already looked at, but not necessarily *seen*.

Here, the gaze as objet petit a emerges as a point of light from the field of the Other. It emerges as a glint. And it is thus, Lacan tells us, that we discover something about the subject in relation to the point of light: at the level of the symbolic, the eye, as organ, is caught up in a similar dialectic to that of the phallus: a dialectic of insufficiency. It is always already on the cusp of *not* knowing, of being out of place, of being wrong. Repeating the point that he made earlier, but using a new story to do so, Lacan grounds our reading of the optical function of the organ-complex of the eye in a symbolic narrative regarding the social positioning of the subject: the subject as blind spot that emerges in relation to a point of light that is the condition of possibility for vision itself.

There is one final fold of this foray through Lacan that is relevant here—one last lecture—one that returns us to the question of artistic form. In his final seminar on the gaze as objet petit a, "What Is a Picture?," Lacan superimposes the two triangles that he has already introduced us to in order to underscore the degree to which the action of the subject within the Lacanian paradigm must be understood not from one side of the schema (line) or the other (light), but as *suspended* between these two overlapping functions.

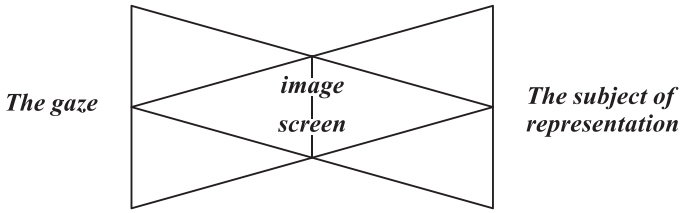

FIGURE 4.5 — Jacques Lacan, *Second Triangular Schema*.

At this point we are asked to hold together two narratives that revolve around what *makes sense* in both senses of the word: the geometrical structurality of anamorphosis (lecture 1) and the variable contingency of depth of field (lecture 3), and to understand the objet petit a as that which enmeshes the subject in a field from which it can never emerge as simply subject or object, but through which it is always already in a relation of becoming-with the world. Here, *becoming-with* the objet petit a inaugurates a dialogue in which the "I grasp it" always only emerges in a dance with the "it grasps me." This is the dance of desire and drive.

When the two triangles are superimposed, this schema (figure 4.5), borrowed from Merleau-Ponty, becomes animated as a fold, an intertwining, a *chiasm* (Merleau-Ponty 1969). Lacan puts it thus: "The schema of the two triangles which are inverted at the same time as they must be placed one upon the other . . . is the first example of this functioning of the interlacing, the intersection, chiasma, which I pointed out above, and which structures the whole of this domain" ([1978] 1998, 95). The two functions, like each "side" of the chiasmus articulating the scopic, are intertwined, interlaced, and describe the subject as imbricated. Superimposing the two triangles highlights, for Lacan, the following: that between the eye and the gaze there is no coincidence. Placing these two schema on top of each other does not render them a coincident singularity but a relational unit:[14] the "image" articulating the realm of the Imaginary (capture) interwoven with the "screen" of the Symbolic (the function of the veil). Within this relation, rather than coincidence there is *lure*. This lure emerges *before us* in the form of an encounter with the flesh of the objet petit a.

Prefiguring the kind of intertwining that Lacan will turn to almost ten years later when he develops his Borromean Knot, the Imaginary (image) and the Symbolic (screen) function relationally. However—and this is

the crucial point—the subject emerges between these as terms that function *antinomically*, that is, between two correct but contrary statements: the subject is subject of representation; the subject is subject of the gaze. Within this chiasm knowledge is *emergent*, not predictable from its constituent parts.

The subject that Lacan is attempting to describe oscillates between two points: the subject of representation and the gaze as that point from which, in the field of the Other, the objet petit a emerges as a glistening, enigmatic, alluring point of light. Accordingly, it is with the question of enigmatic desire—to see, to want, but to want and see what?[15]—that Lacan ends his four lectures on the gaze as objet petit a.

Under the superimposed triangles, Lacan writes the following:

{ ***in nature***

The* object a *in the field of the visible gaze.

{ ***as* = (-Φ)**

FIGURE 4.6 — Jacques Lacan, *Zeuxis and Parrhasios Schema*.

This cryptic set of statements refers to the Greek parable of the artists Zeuxis and Parrhasios: Zeuxis, in a duel for painterly perfection, produces a painting able to fool nature—he paints grapes such that birds fly from the sky to peck at them. Parrhasios, in turn, produces a painting of a veiled painting that fools Zeuxis into impatiently asking Parrhasios to unveil his work so as to see who is the better painter ([1978] 1998, 112). Whereas the fooling of the birds (in Lacan's admittedly anthropocentric retelling) describes a relation entirely caught up in Imaginary capture (what Lacan will call the *dompte-regard* or "taming of the gaze," a structure that tames curiosity by seeming to give all there is to see), the fooling of Zeuxis (by suggesting that there is something to see behind the veil) ignites desire through the technique of *trompe l'oeil*. In this story, one set of actors (the birds) respond to the sign *grape*, while the other set of actors (the painters) respond to the veiled promise, to the seductive promise of something behind the curtain (insert flashes of Dorothy and the Wizard), of something *more*. As Lacan puts it, "Parrhasios makes it clear that if one wishes to deceive a man, what one presents to him is the painting of a veil, that is to say, *something that incites him to ask what is behind it*" (112; emphasis added).

In a final twist on the road (let's make it a yellow-brick one), Lacan then tells us that while the subject of the *gaze* is aligned with light and Parrhasios's trompe l'oeil, the subject of *representation* is aligned with the geometral (line) and Zeuxis's dompte-regard. The dompte-regard is reserved, Lacan tells us, for a representational function that we can align with the *geometral*, a form of representation that sutures the subject into a relation of certainty with the image—I know what I see and it pleases me—and that thus invites the viewer to "lay down his gaze" (101). The action of laying down the gaze, of visual pacification, is contrasted with representational practices that conversely mobilize the gaze as a mode of scopic solicitation that does not work through pacification (he draws on surrealist painters such as André Breton to make this argument). Such representational practices work by *luring* the viewer into a relational schema that activates their desire—to explore, engage, question. It activates their curiosity. Like the de Manian reading of irony (de Man 1996) and like the Freudian uncanny, trompe l'oeil insists—in the realm of the visual—that one can never be sure. It is turtles all the way down. And it is here that Lacan's conception of the radical function of art emerges, a conception of art that this chapter claims for research-creation: the setting up of a dialogue, through the objet petit a, with a *Real* that erupts where and when it is least expected (Lacan [1978] 1998, 112). *Eros*, not *agape*. By the nose. Down the hole.

There is a debt that I owe in my thinking through of the original Lacanian lectures in this chapter, and that is to the artist and psychoanalyst Bracha Ettinger. In her 1995 *The Matrixial Gaze* and, later, in her 2006 *The Matrixial Borderspace*, Ettinger reworks Lacan's conception of the gaze as objet petit a, refiguring (what she sees as the phallocentrism of) the *objet* with what she calls a *Matrixial link a*. Grounded in an understanding of the *Matrixial* (literally "of the womb"), Ettinger's work draws us into a theoretical terrain informed by intrauterine life understood as the realm of the *protosymbolic*, a realm not of symbolic binaries, but of partial connection and emergent knowledges. For Ettinger, in a way that is informed by the grain of the Lacanian text here described, the condition of being simultaneously *one* and *two*, *placed* and *displaced*, *grasped* and *grasping*, is taken as a constitutive relation articulating the "self" as a site of multiple, emergent, and enmeshed attachments. Through this, the Matrixial high-

lights, in a different (although allied) way to the Lacanian text as I have read it above, a *crisis in autonomy*.

The Matrixial relation, Ettinger tells us, opens up a different form of connectivity with others. It renders incoherent those ways of doing and being organized by strict individuation. It is, according to feminist art historian Griselda Pollock, a call "to shift the field of debate beyond the phallus and to make time to consider the possibilities and implications of the matrixial borderspace" (Ettinger 2006, 29)—not a theory of essences and origins but, in Ettinger's idiom, of *potentialities* and *event-encounters*; it brings together, antinomically, a discourse of castration with one of the womb.

Ettinger thus tells a different, although allied, story to Lacan's. Rather than a story told from the Phallic-Maternal position—a being both self and Other—Ettinger offers a Matrixial substratum to the Symbolic that proposes an other site of emergence for subjectivity, a site that both *precedes* and *accompanies* the phallic cut of castration. Here, the maternal, significantly recoded under the sign of the matrix, can be used to challenge the hegemony of Phallic-Symbolic or Phallogocentric orders of difference. But, instead of offering a binary other, an *opposition* to those Western patriarchal orders, the Matrixial operates in, with, and alongside phallic structuration. It intervenes from within, always already partial. It offers itself as an undutiful para-site figuring a primary relationality that is never (just) the relation of two individualities but is a situated, ecological enmeshment that articulates itself *emergently*. Emergent, uncanny, unpredictable . . . the objet petit a as the uncanny boundary object animating our research-creational hearts finds an ally in the Matrixial *link a*.

The objet petit a becomes *link a*.

Or, perhaps a new conjunction—*link+/objet a*—makes more sense in this context, emerging anamorphically and unpredictably between and with gaze and eye, light and line, trompe l'oeil and dompte-regard.

I began this book by asserting the following provocation as central to research-creation: *the crafting of a research question is the crafting of a story that is also the crafting of an ethics*. I now reconfigure that opening gambit to propose our research questions as, in fact, our *driven given symptoms* (our *sinthomes*), setting up a dialogue with the world, and driven by the very real pulsations of our *links+/objets a*.[16] If we understand research-creation as productive of undutiful, uncanny, boundary objects, it is the

queer and queering, polydisciplinamorous *link+/objet a* that organizes such production. It does so by insisting we attend to those drives and desires that animate our stories—the stories that we find ourselves told by—and the ethics embedded in such modes of attention. The stories at stake here are not conscious. These aren't simply stories that we mobilize, that we control. These are stories that *grasp us* as much if not more than we *grasp them*. Stories with as much weight as those we started with in chapter 1. And, thus, it is to perhaps the most important story, for our contemporary moment, that I now turn. That *link+/objet a* hovering enigmatically before me, erupting into the grain of my everyday. That *thing* we are calling the Anthropocene.

CONCLUSION

Art at the End of the World

> Climate change tethers us to a perspective that oscillates between the impossible and the inevitable, already and not yet, everywhere but not here, not quite.
> —JODI DEAN, "The Anamorphic Politics of Climate Change," 1

> We cannot win this battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature—for we will not fight to save what we do not love.
> —STEPHEN JAY GOULD, *Eight Little Piggies*, 40

I remember the first time I saw Stanley Kubrick's 1964 film *Dr. Strangelove, Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. Filmed in black and white, with a slow, cynical pace and dark humor, *Dr. Strangelove* satirizes Cold War logics by showing a catastrophic chain of events that lead to a thermonuclear war between the US and the Soviet Union. Although still young during the Reagan-Mulroney-Thatcher-Gorbachev era, when the nuclear arms race dominated the Western popular imaginary of the end of the world, I was old enough to be affected by it, in the news, on TV, and in reruns of films like this, only partially comprehended by me at the time, but, in some ways, all the more powerful for that.

There are three scenes that have stayed with me since that first viewing. First, there is Dr. Strangelove's uncannily animate arm, rising with unruly, uncanny, insistence into its natural resting pose (the "Sieg Heil" gesture)—an alien agency that Strangelove works hard to resist. Second, there is that iconic image of the captain of the final rogue airplane, riding a deployed nuclear warhead bareback (it having been deployed while he was straddling it, trying to make repairs), cowboy hat in hand, whooping and hollering with the jouissance of wartime destruction as he heads toward his target and his death. Third, there is the orgiastic final scene of the film, as nuclear warheads are deployed on a massive scale—an apocalyptic ecstasy of mushroom clouds set to classical music. This final scene, aerially depicted and aestheticized, offers a seductive God's-eye view of the end of the world. It is an end of the world that we, as viewers, are somehow exempt from, being offered, by the work of the film, a front-row seat to its dompte-regard.

The title of the film made me curious then, and it still does today:

Dr. Strangelove,
Or:
How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb.

Is the only way to "stop worrying and love the bomb" to have a God's-eye view or some God-trick-like plan through which to, at least phantasmatically, escape the destruction? Am I to stop worrying by identifying with Dr. Strangelove and his plan to go to the mines,[1] thereby surviving to see both the End and the New Beginning, remaining hopeful for a technofix that, though partial, applies at least to me? Or is the film simply interpolating us, as viewers, into its Cold War logic, asking us to stop worrying by pointing out the absurdity of mutually assured destruction, inviting us to walk away, our denialism intact, feeling a little calmer in the knowledge that the film is merely articulating the hyperbolic anxious underbelly of the nuclear arms race and that nothing this crazy could ever *really* happen?

And if this set of confusions weren't enough, what is that strange equivalence between *Dr. Strangelove* and *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb,* put in place by the *Or* that relates them? Is *Dr. Strangelove* functioning as a metonym for his very own "final solution"? If so, is the "I" invoked by the title one of the chosen, that, like those stepping onto Noah's

ark, will survive after the planet is scourged in a nuclear flood, making our capacity to "stop worrying" equivalent to our capacity to identify with or count ourselves among those tasked with repopulating the planet?

Perhaps it is only the nuclear warhead–riding cowboy who can truly stop worrying and love the bomb by accepting the course that he is on and riding it orgiastically to his death.

That is, after all, the image that prefigures the film's final frames, offering an ejaculatory vision of the destruction of most life on the planet. Swift. Complete. Heroic in its own way. And absolutely gorgeous.

No one lingers on in a half-life of suffering in this image.

The language of the end of the world, and the denial, deferral, and despair of that language, seems to be everywhere these days. The end of democracy, the end of capitalism, the end of higher education, the end of the planet. Methane, plastic, ocean acidification, melting ice caps. No one knows what will hit next or how quickly things will accelerate.

That we are living in petrocapitalist end times is reflected not only in the news cycle and popular media, but in a plethora of academic book and project titles, from philosopher Timothy Morton's 2013 book *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*, anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (2015), and science and technology studies scholar Laura Watts's 2018 *Energy at the End of the World,* to Indigenous Studies scholar Kim TallBear's 2017 "Tipi Confessions: Sex at the End of the World," Deleuzian educational theorist Jessie Beier's doctoral thesis "Teaching at the End of the World," and feminist philosopher Chloë Taylor's special journal issue *Social Justice at the End of the World*.[2] Importantly, while mobilizing "end-of-the-world" language, each of the above notes (in one way or another) that: "We are not living at 'the end of the world,' despite the popularity of this phrase in Social Science and Humanities literature on the Anthropocene; we are, however, living at the end of *a* world" (Taylor 2018). In other words, we are looking not at the end of the world *writ large* but the end of the world as we know it under petrocultural colonial capitalism and anthropocentric humanism.[3]

Perspectives such as these reject anthropocentric reproductive futurity and work to reorient how we do what we do, our networks of accountability and care, in response to global warming. If the project isn't (only)

to ensure our own survival at the level of the individual or the species, if we give up on the pathological narcissism of me-at-all-costs,[4] then how might we, workers in the university, orient ourselves in our current project of everyday academic life under the sign of the Anthropocene and its others (the Plantationocene, the Chthulucene, etc.)? How might we *inhabit* human, nonhuman, never-been-human, and more-than-human social webs differently at all scales of existence?

What the future holds I cannot guess, nor do I want to. But what I *can, want to,* and *must* do is move forward, one classroom, degree, article, book, conference, conversation, and artistic research project at a time, looking to support multimodal ways of working in and with an arts and humanities attuned to more-than-human social justice, arguing for the importance of focusing on *how we do what we do* within university spaces as we face the end of the world (as we know it). (Again, a song plays through my head.)[5]

If the university is, indeed, to be "for the public good" and "uplifting the whole people" (the vision and values language of my home university),[6] then we desperately need new pedagogical and political strategies that force us to ask new questions—new ways of organizing that take Charm's curiosity, Lacan's *objet petit a*, and Haraway's dog seriously. As Cathy Davidson argues in her 2017 *The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to Prepare Students for a World in Flux* (though not in this idiom), we need a university in which new situated kinship ties (disciplinary, affective, social, political) are the name of the game within the bastions of knowledge that we inhabit. And, as excavated in these pages, research-creation is what helps orient me within these needs.

The question of "art at the end of the world," for me, emerges chiastically with the questions of how to *make* art at the end of the world, how to *teach* art at the end of the world, and even *why* teach art at the end of the world (or maybe, with Rush in our ears, "how to teach [he]art at the end of the world" is what I am after). Indeed, this last might do the best job linking art and artistic orientations with the kinds of love at stake in this book-like manifesto-from-the-heart. In art schools today we teach approaches that inherit Duchamp, the Situationist International, and Joseph Beuys; that take feminism, queer, crip, and critical race studies, decolonization, and ecology seriously. We teach media forms that work

to defamiliarize and call into question the way we do what we do in our little pods of human sociality so practiced at sedimenting the new into the naturalized that we need constant reminders that *the way things are need not be the case*.[7] And it is precisely because of the way that art (understood in the broadest sense) urges us to act upon, or at least sit with, the ways in which the way things are need not be the case that research-creation is so desperately needed everywhere in the academy.

In this context, I stake my lot with art that works at the micropolitical level of the here and now—art with an activist impulse. Such an art offers speculative frames through which to *defamiliarize* and *reorganize* the local. And perhaps most importantly, such an art is a form of research that gathers, experiences, embodies, and transmits in ways that offer an odd sort of ethics, one that takes its orientation *polydisciplinamorously* from our *links+/objets a*.

In my classes, these days, I ask my students to think with me about how debate on the Anthropocene might shift how we engage in meaningful arts practice and theory. I also ask them to think with me about how research-creation, as an epistemological and methodological intervention into traditional scholarly research practices, might contribute to these debates within and without the academy. Alongside readings that offer critical analyses of the contested terrain of Anthropocene discourse (including decolonial and multispecies challenges to anthropocentric, capitalist, and colonialist ideologies) we look to develop research-creational practices that nurture our capacities not only to reflect and analyze but to act and intervene, mobilizing research-creation as a way to develop work that is not simply *on* ecological topics but that takes ecological *form*—not just *on* but *as*.

I have written elsewhere on the artist Marilyn Arsem's use of ice as an object of durational contemplation in her ecologically themed performance interventions, and compared these modest gestures to the large-scale ice sculptures of Olafur Eliasson (Loveless 2014 and forthcoming). Both of these artists ask the same thing of us: to watch ice melt. Both ask us to watch ice melt as a way of inviting contemplation on anthropogenic climate change. One requires massive petrodollars to ship arctic ice to urban locations (e.g., Paris), and installs it sculpturally for aesthetic and

dramatic effect. The other modestly holds spheres of ice, while standing or sitting blindfolded, and asks passersby to sit *with her* as the ice melts. Here *scale* matters. And *form* matters.

As it has been mobilized in this book, this mattering is something that research-creation is especially positioned to help us think through. Research-creation mobilizes the artistic as a sensibility and approach attentive to how *form* makes *worlds*, and does so specifically within the university-as-site. Research-creation lends itself to formal reshaping practices within university knowledge-making spaces, and, at its best, for me, it does so micropolitically, bit by bit, from inside the belly of the beast: the classroom.

Haraway writes in *Staying with the Trouble*: "What is needed is action and thinking that does not fit within dominant capitalist cultures. . . . [We need] on the ground collectives capable of new practices of imagination, resistance, revolt, repair, and mourning and living and dying well" (2016, 51). Importantly, in developing such practices, she tells us, a "common livable world must be composed, *bit by bit, or not at all*" (40; emphasis added). These common livable worlds are what I see my students working to compose, allowing the micropolitical insistence on the "bit by bit" to help them in developing their research-creational projects in modest, sustainable ways.

One such project stands out for me from the first time I taught my Art and/in the Anthropocene seminar (the *seminar of my heart*, as it were). It was developed by a fourth-year undergraduate student, who, trying to navigate the affective complexity of our current ecological crisis, developed the following research question: "How could acts of self-care, intra-species or human-to-human care, and multispecies care, function as interventions or acts of re-worlding within the current geological age? What does it mean to enact an ethics of care in a time so marked by cultural and intra-species violence?" To explore these questions, she not only read (and wrote about) scholars like Haraway (2017), Myers (2017a, 2017b), and Puig de la Bellacasa (2017), she developed an artistic research methodology designed to recalibrate her experience of the everyday, composing a new affective terrain for her research . . . bit by bit.

Over the course of the semester, drawing on the performance form of "daily practice," she set herself the following task: to perform, every day,

three separate care actions—an act of self-care, an act of intraspecies care, and an act of multispecies care. This project pushed her to situate care both as an open question ("how to care") and as a conscious and active part of her day-to-day life, and, in her words, "challenged the passivity with which academic theory is too often lived" (Plouffe 2016). Her final project took the form of a scholarly essay paired with a sculptural video installation recording her documentation of these acts and reflecting on the thick web of accountability, care, and relation she was called into over the course of the semester.

In their introduction to the edited volume *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among Aesthetics, Politics, Environments and Epistemologies*, Heather Davis and Etienne Turpin suggest that "the conceptual terrain of art at the end of the twentieth century moved increasingly away from deconstruction and psychoanalysis toward an open field of naturecultures, infrastructure assemblages, and other newly contested territories" (2015, 15). While in alliance with the perspectives embraced in theirs and similar volumes, in these pages I have allowed my sustained love of psychoanalytic theory, as a toolkit richly able to help us think with the forces of affect, desire, and drive, to undutifully propagate with my interest in nonanthropocentric approaches in the arts and humanities. Each chapter has promiscuously intertwined theoretical insights from disparate fields, and in so doing woven an argument for the importance of situated, driven, research-creational approaches in the university today—approaches that I find pedagogically and affectively generative. Written from the heart, in these pages I've offered analysis, provocation, and hope for a *better-enough* way of doing things in the grain of the everyday, for myself and my peers. Indeed, for all who labor as teachers, as students, as artists, as academics, and as nomadic hybrids of all sorts in the university today.

As a midlevel scholar in an international university landscape where I hear of more and more colleagues choosing to leave the university if they can, either to have more liveable lives or, more distressingly, because they have decided that the critical theoretical and political work that they need to do can no longer find a way to thrive within university structures, I've decided that I need both the tools of feminist science studies *and* psychoanalysis. I need Haraway's *situated knowledging* and *response-ability* as much as Lacan's *sujet supposé savoir* and *objet petit a*. I need to keep care

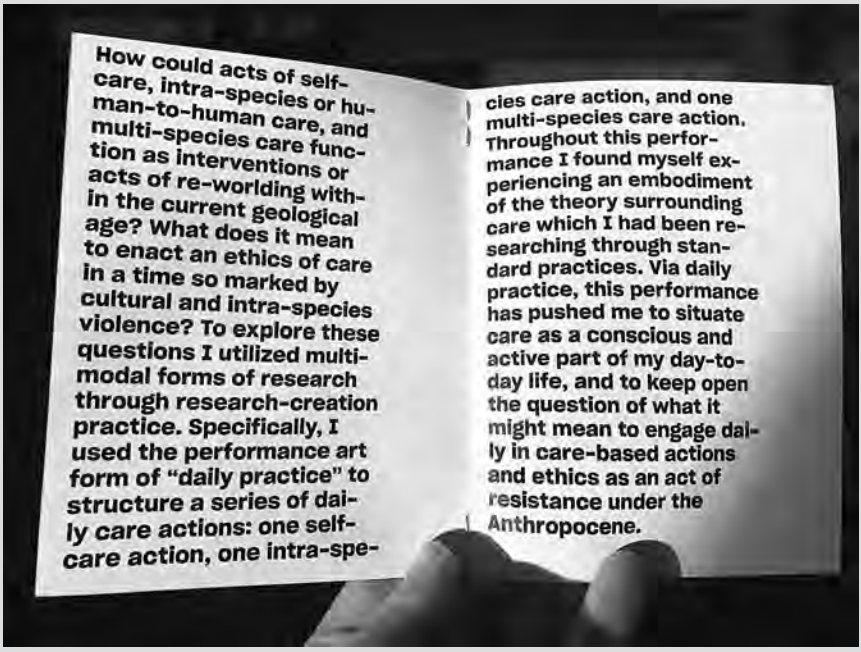

FIGURE C.1 — Leila Plouffe, *Self-Intra-Multispecies Care*, booklet accompanying video installation documenting three-week daily practice project, 2017.
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

and cathexis, driven situated curiosity, relational enmeshment, feminist collaborative praxis, and *love* center stage in the game of academic intervention and sustainability, and these are the tools that help me to do so.

Research-creation, thus figured, is a driven, erotic, uncanny orientation, one that holds queer theory's radical undoing together with the emergent attachments of polydisciplinamorous practice. It asks us to be accountable to our erotic, care-filled, passionately attached, troublesomely curious givens, and invites us to inhabit a web made up of our *links+/objets a* without méconnaissance or dompte-regard. Not taming the gaze; igniting desire*: Wo Es war, soll Ich werden.*[8]

Holding dissonant forms together in ways that are passionately attached and that resist naturalization, research-creation tells new stories and offers new sites of traction in the academy. It mobilizes forms that anamorphically shatter single-point perspective, failing to cohere fully into art or scholarship, instead nurturing driven curiosity as its lure and guide: the desires articulating the eruptions of the drive(s) that animate each of us in unpredictable, but nonetheless accountable, directions. It demands the production of new, unruly, driven stories within the university as not only a bastion of privilege, but a site of intense transformative pedagogical power.

And while these desire-driven perspectives, and, indeed, the question of how to make *art* at the/an end of the/a world (as we know it), might not seem compelling or urgent to those seriously working in the context of anthropogenic climate change today, it might be worth recalling, here, Haraway's question in *The Companion Species Manifesto* quoted in chapter 1: "Beyond the personal, simple fact of joy in time and work with my dogs, why do I care? Indeed, in a world full of so many urgent ecological and political crises, *how* can I care?" (2003, 61).

Being someone situated in the university, researching and teaching with most breaths on most days, *pedagogy* is how I care.

I understand *how I do* what I do in the university as a political act that situates me in the nuts and bolts of the classroom, of disciplinary logics, and of degree-granting structures. These, with a nod to Joseph Beuys, are my artistic raw materials. But the nuts and bolts of the university within which I operate cannot ignore the urgency with which our collective futures are in question. The students passing through our halls inherit the socio-ecological-economic mess that we, ourselves, have inherited.

The future seems bleak and how to move forward and *for whom*—Cui Bono—is an open question (Star 1995).

I side, in writing this book, with colleagues across the globe who teach social and ecological justice, who work to create brave spaces for students, and who are being put on antipedagogical conservative watch lists. In the face of such insidiously hostile conditions, it is important to gather together and listen to each other and lean on each other, precisely because this is a moment when we, the already overstretched and politically active, are being asked to start doing *more* of what we already do. Given that we are *already* hard at work fighting for social and economic and climate justice, each in our own corners and in our own ways, how do we, with each other and with our students, work to short-circuit the oscillation between denialism and despair that too often sets in with problems of such scope?

We are not, most of us, leaving our jobs to go to Burnaby or Standing Rock or Washington to engage in long-term protest. What we have is our research and our classrooms: our capacity to nurture critical and creative, passionate and complex *theorypractice*. And in these pedagogical spaces, just as important as the nurturing of participatory dissent and debate in the classroom, to my mind, and in some ways much more difficult, is the nurturing of *affective resilience*. Participatory dissent, here, names a practice of *thinking with* that allows for and honors dissent between people and *within our own selves and projects*;[9] affective resilience names the practice of nurturing spaces of *erotic, cathected, link +/objet petit a–driven* care, without méconnaissance, within our social, political, and pedagogical spaces.

This is what Audre Lorde frames as the need to cultivate the erotic drives at the heart of our knowledge-making and -shaping projects. This is what King invites us to think in challenging us to orient ourselves toward a different ethics: *You've heard it now.* This is what Haraway nurtures in attending seriously to the relations of becoming between herself, Roland, and Cayenne. Again: eros, not agape. And because of this—because of the friction and nonconsonance needed by eros—the two, participatory dissent and affective sustainability, must go hand in hand. We want our students informed and active, but also to develop modes of engagement that are sustainable and capacious. To recall Stengers in the first of the epigraphs to this book, "We need researchers able to participate in the

creation of the responses on which the possibility of a future that is not barbaric depends" (2015, 73).

This book-like-manifesto-of-the-heart has argued that research-creation is relevant here not only for its relation to those artistic modes understood as art-as-social-practice and those grouped under the pedagogical turn, but also for the wrench that it throws, if done right, into academic daily practice and pedagogy. The university, as Bill Readings aptly, presciently stated, is in neoliberal ruins. What once seemed insult heaped upon injury (see Royle's wonderful response to the Research Assessment Exercise in 2003) now feels analogous to the hyperobjectivity Morton assigns to climate change—a massively distributed, inevitable, and unlocalizable problem that has crept into every corner of the academic everyday. Cutting corners and rushing toward shiny metrics, at all scales of existence, is part of what has gotten us into this mess.

As a modest response, I turn to research-creation to encourage modes of *temporal* and *material* attunement within the academy that require slowing down in a way that does not fetishize the slow but in which slowness comes from the work of defamiliarization and the time it takes to *ask questions differently*. Research-creation, at its best, has the capacity to impact our social and material conditions, not by offering more facts, differently figured, but by finding ways, through aesthetic encounters and events, to persuade us to care and to care *differently*. By wedging open what gets to count as research, where, when, and how, research-creation, as I have mobilized it in these pages, works to render each of us a little more *capable*, a little more care-filled, opening us onto new webs of sensorial attunement and nurturance.[10]

I am not so naive as to assert that everything that travels under the sign of research-creation, these days, does this. But I *am* so stubborn as to suggest that this is what it ought to be doing.

Faced with the question of how to live, make, breathe, teach, and learn art at the end of the world, this is my response.

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NOTES

Introduction: Art in the Expanded Field

1. An "axiomatic structure," for Krauss, emerges between "architecture and not-architecture," and a "marked site" between "landscape and not-landscape." Over the years following her essay, the former will come to be called installation art and the latter earth or land art. For her full analysis and diagrams, see Krauss (1979).

2. The pedagogical (or educational) turn names contemporary social and political art interventions that take the university, the classroom, and other spaces of teaching and learning as not only their subject matter but also as the basis of their artistic form.

3. I discuss the unique pedagogical program at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in Loveless (forthcoming).

4. International debate surrounding these programs has most often focused on the need for individualized programs of study (based on MFA critique models) that make room for and, indeed, champion the intuition-based aspects of artistic praxis as a necessary site of resistance to increasingly standardized and globalizing models of postsecondary education that focus on uniform legibility at the expense of individuality and innovation (Borgdorff and Dombois 2014; Hannula 2009; Haseman 2006; Hetland et al. 2007; Slager 2009; Stévance and Lacasse 2013; M. Wilson 2009). Such models, adopted from international accords such as the European Bologna Declaration (1999) and its Australian counterpart, the Brisbane Initiative (2006), and national structures such as the UK's Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), turned Research

Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014, are increasingly at work in North America (Biggs 2006; Candy and Edmonds 2011; Derrida 2008; Kamuf 1997; Readings 1997; Royle 2003). There is a large body of literature on the topic. The SHARE network is one of many non–institutionally specific gathering spaces for this research in a European context. For SHARE's overview and bibliography of artistic research resources, see www.sharenetwork.eu/artistic-research-overview/bibliography. Other existing organizations include the Society for Artistic Research, the Swiss Artistic Research Network, and the European Art Research Network. There are also many journals worthy of note in this context, such as the *Journal for Artistic Research* and *Art and Research*. For an ongoing and updated list of doctoral programs in the arts and their starting dates, see Elkins (n.d.).

5. In 2016 Dr. Sophie Stévance was offered the first, and to date only, Canada Research Chair in Research-Creation (that is, with *research-creation* in the title of the appointment), in music, at the Université Laval (Québec). The Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP) was created by the Government of Canada in 2000 as "a national strategy to make Canada one of the world's top countries in research and development." For more information on this program, see CRC (n.d.).

6. While there are some continuities between the more established English-language (European and Australian) contexts for these debates and the Canadian one, and, in turn, some commonalities between how things are unfolding between Canada and the United States, it is important to note that Canada has robust national funding councils that are genuinely committed to research-creation. Generally speaking, in the United States research-creational (and other innovative) pedagogical experiments emerge as localized institutional acts. In Canada, however, the landscape of research-creation is figured as a national academic discourse: though many in the academy are confused by it, research-creation carries the legitimacy of being its very own social sciences and humanities funding category.

7. See SSHRC (2013) to follow the rhetoric and justification for their initial SSHRC research-creation pilot program.

8. Though this distinction no longer appears on their website, it is important to this book as a whole. References to *research/creation* were replaced by references to *research and creation* and *creative research* in 2017.

9. A statement like this is likely to cause anxiety on many fronts. To argue for research-creation as a funding category that is *not* earmarked for the fine arts (specifically art professors in the university who are unable to fund students through other means) ignores the degree to which research-creation was initially brought into SSHRC to address a problem: that while the university fine arts professoriate was increasing in numbers across Canada, it was significantly underrepresented in national research funding profiles (many Canadian universities don't count Canada Council for the Arts funding when tallying their professor-generated research dollars, and Canada Council money

generally can't be used to fund graduate students). To argue for an expanded understanding of research-creation has, then, to be done very carefully, as these are real, pragmatic needs. My aim is to find a way to address these pragmatic needs without closing down needed debate on research-creation as interdisciplinary praxis relevant across the university.

10. This is an argument that was made forcefully in 1971 by Linda Nochlin in her germinal essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?"

11. A similar argument is made by Erin Manning in her chapter "Against Method" in *The Minor Gesture* (2016). Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuk also speak to the need for research-creation to exceed the bounds of the fine arts in their article "Creation-as-Research: Critical Making in Complex Environments" (2015). Chris Salter's *Alien Agency: Experimental Encounters with Art in the Making* (2015) does a wonderful job bringing examples of such practices together, in their most unpredictable and emergent forms.

12. Hybrid practice-theory doctoral degrees in other, related, fields such as the digital humanities, design, communications studies, architecture, and performance studies have their own genealogical trajectories. Caitlin Fisher's "Building Feminist Theory: Hypertextual Heuristics" (York University, Toronto, 2000) was (to the best of my knowledge) the first "born-digital" research-creation doctoral thesis in Canada, and Owen Chapman's "Selected Sounds: A Collective Investigation into the Practice of Sample-Based Music" (Concordia University, Montreal, 2007), the first research-creation PhD to come out of a communication studies department in Canada. The Université de Québec a Montréal (UQUAM) was the first to offer a French-language doctorate in research-creation in Canada (it awarded its first PhD in 2000 to Louise Paillé with a thesis called "Archéologie d'une démarche de création en arts visuels: les livres-livres"). On these overlapping histories and practices in the Québec context see, among others, Le Coguiec and Gosselin (2006) and Béland and Paquin (2015), and the websites for Hexagram (https://hexagram.ca/index.php/eng/), Milieux (hts://milieux.concordia.ca), and Sense Lab (https://senselab.ca). Thank you to both Erin Manning and Chris Salter for robust discussion on these histories. Although in conversation with these other disciplinary trajectories, this book is focused specifically on the practice and pedagogy of research-creation in the visual arts in English, one of the primary domains in which I have been trained, teach, and work.

13. See, as but one of many (almost daily) examples of academics bemoaning the end of the university, Terry Eagleton's critique of the creative knowledge economy endemic to the widespread neoliberalizing of university spaces in the UK context in "The Slow Death of the University" (2015).

14. On slow scholarship, see Mountz et al. (2015); and Berg and Seeber (2016).

15. Historian of technology and pedagogical innovator Cathy Davidson acutely assesses these conditions in *The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to*

Prepare Students for a World in Flux (2017). The failure to adequately credit experimental academic labor emerges in a particularly strong way with collaborative practices which, despite collaborative work often requiring *more* time and labor than individual research projects, are often seen as less meritorious. On the ground, across the university, there are individuals doing fantastic, committed, innovative things, many of which are allied with the perspectives mobilized in this book under the sign of research-creation. Unfortunately, these innovations, while applauded in name, are too often unsupported in practice. The roadblock, here, is in the institutional and pedagogical conditions that render the doing of innovative, experimental, and collaborative work "extra-to-load" or simply illegible as equally weighted scholarship.

16. Joseph Beuys's "social sculptural" presentations of lectures as performances and blackboard remnants as art objects remain a central touchstone for many interested in the pedagogical turn. Coined by Beuys in the mid-1970s to describe his expanded conception of art, the idea of social sculpture informed all of Beuys's work, "from his understanding of drawing-as-thinking to his work with the invisible material of speech in Honey Pump and the Free International University" (http://www.social-sculpture.org/category/territory/influences/). For Beuys, *thinking itself* is a sculptural act—it is morphogenetic; consequently, it is important to be accountable for the nature and quality of one's own thinking. Beuys maintained that the question "What can we do?" should always be preceded by the question "How must we think?" His answer to this question was the idea of social sculpture (Sacks 2011). That said, Beuys was not operating in a vacuum. The pedagogical turn can also be seen to emerge from a wide range of modern and contemporary artistic experimentations such as those of the Dadaists and Russian Constructivists, the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College, the Situationist International and Fluxus, among others (Bishop 2012; Podesva 2007; Rogoff 2008). Information on the Copenhagen Free University is available at http://www.copenhagenfreeuniversity.dk (last accessed September 2018) and the School of Panamerican Unrest at http://pablohelguera.net/2003/03/the-school-of-panamerican-unrest-2/ (last accessed September 2018).

17. See Bourriaud (2002, 2016); Jackson (2011); Kester (2004, 2011); Kwon (2002); Lacy (1995, 2010); Lippard (1973). These are books that I use as reference and teaching texts to show which strains in contemporary art are those that I see as paving the way for research-creation to emerge as a university category; they do not fully map the expanding fields of pedagogically, socially, or relationally oriented contemporary art.

18. STEM is a well-known acronym developed by the US National Science Foundation to refer to a focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics across school curricula. To "add art" is to turn STEM into STEAM: science, technology, engineering, ART, and mathematics. (Though what might be even better here is STEAMS: add *social justice*.)

19. On this, see also Smith (2018).

20. This problem is also being addressed in important ways by work in the digital humanities on hypertextual formats for doctoral theses, in which organizations such as HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory) have long been involved.

21. As Henry Giroux (2013) writes in his persuasive op-ed piece in *Truthout*, "Not only does neoliberalism undermine both civic education and public values and confuse education with training, it also wages a war on what might be called the radical imagination."

22. There are many terms that have recently been developed as alternatives to the Anthropocene. The term *Capitalocene* (Haraway 2016; Moore 2015) is often used to point out the ways that the Anthropocene, with its generalizing anthropocentric focus, masks the uneven work of capitalism, colonialism, and other interlocking systems of domination. Other terms include *Plantationocene*, *Chthulucene* (Haraway 2016), *Gynocene* (Demos 2015), and *Planthroposcene* (Myers 2017b). See also Davis and Turpin (2015); Kirksey (2015); Purdy (2015); Scranton (2015); and Stengers (2015).

23. The Athabasca oil sands take up roughly eighty-seven thousand square miles of Northern Alberta, an area only slightly smaller than the state of Florida, with a surface mineable area six times as large as New York City and seventy-eight times as large as Manhattan Island. See Earth Observatory (n.d.).

24. These students include Leila Plouffe (who developed layered work on intra- and interspecies care for her 2017 BFA graduating exhibition), Kyle Terrence and Aaron Veldstra (who both worked to inhabit the contradictions of climate change in their 2015 and 2016 MFA exhibition shows), Michael Woolley (who completed the first research-creation master's degree housed specifically in the History of Art, Design, and Visual Culture department at the University of Alberta, on the intersections of queer embodiment, performance art, and its documentation), Ika Peraić (who is currently working on a research-creation PhD examining the ways that museums work with and variably hold space for histories of genocide, focusing specifically on her homeland, Croatia, and her current home, Canada), Brad Necyk (who is producing a research-creation PhD on neuroatypicality across the departments of Art and Design and Psychiatry), and Jessie Beier (who is in the process of writing a research-creation dissertation on pedagogy's "futurity" in the context of the Anthropocene). Leila Plouffe's work "Self-Intra-Multispecies Care" is available at the artist's website (2017). Kyle Terrence's documentary work *Pilgrimage* and its associated images and analysis are available at the artist's website (Terrence, n.d.) and in the University of Alberta's research archive (Terrence 2016). Aaron Veldstra's performance-based installation *Our Anaerobic Future* is discussed in Jans (2015). Michael Woolley's full thesis and documentation of the exhibition are available at the artist's website (2017). Brad Necyk's autoethnographic research *Alberta #3* can be found on the artist's website (Necyk 2018). Jessie Beier's

There's No I in Me (or, "I Don't Necessarily Agree with Everything I Say") can be viewed in its entirety in *The Occulture* (Occulture 2016).

25. The idea of a "wicked problem" comes from design studies. It refers to a problem that is so sticky (incomplete, contradictory, emergent in its requirements) that it requires multiple approaches, literacies, and forms to even begin to be addressed. It requires multimodality (Rittel and Webber 1973).

Chapter 1: Haraway's Dog

1. These high-profile lectures are cosponsored by CBC Radio, House of Anansi Press, and Massey College at the University of Toronto.

2. *Parrhesia*, taken from the ancient Greek, is a kind of free speech, a "truth to power" that is nonprescriptive, and as such can be taken as the basis of an ethics. Consult Foucault's six 1983 lectures at the University of California, Berkeley (Foucault [1983] 2009).

3. As Ruha Benjamin puts it in "Black AfterLives Matter: Cultivating Kinfulness as Reproductive Justice," "Systems of domination require powerful narratives to allow those who hoard resources to sleep at night" (2018, 58).

4. On touch and (multispecies) ethics, see Hayward 2010.

5. See Eben Kirksey's *The Multispecies Salon* (2014) for a wide-ranging edited volume that takes this multispecies provocation seriously in the context of artistic forms and practices.

6. In a similar vein, Melissa K. Nelson's "Getting Dirty: The Eco Eroticism of Women in Indigenous Oral Literatures" (2017) tells stories of Star woman (241) and Sky woman (254) digging, both refusing cautions, and both embodying the driven power of erotic, feminist curiosity.

7. Haraway's 1985 breakout essay, "Manifesto for Cyborgs," introduces the cyborg to her readers as a "world-changing fiction" ([1985] 1991, 149) that, in its hybridity, its confusion of boundaries, and its refusal to settle on one side of the binary, "is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence" (151). What Haraway invites us to consider, through the figure of the *naturecultural* cyborg, is the degree to which our ways of organizing and categorizing the world in fact *determine* how we move through it, shaping the stories we tell in the same breath as the stories we tell shape what we see of the world. Echoing King's contrasting of Native and Judeo-Christian stories, Haraway invites us to replace Oedipal narratives with cyborg ones ([1985] 1991). Whereas Oedipal (and Judeo-Christian) narratives carry with them the weight of the patriarchal order, cyborg ones are hybrid, impure, messy, and multiplicitous.

8. In this chapter, I make parallels between the drive to research-creationalize the university and the currently active Indigenization efforts (following the 2015 final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRC 2015]) that are under way within my own university and across the Canadian university system. These parallels are important. Both research-creationalizing and Indigenizing projects point to knowledges and ways of being that have been historically devalued and jettisoned from the frames of legitimate university discourse. These parallels, however, have limits. The research-creation problems I write about are a function of the colonial university landscape and make little sense from Indigenous perspectives (although many scholars, such as Kim TallBear, Canada Research Chair in the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta, work to bring them together in productive and allied ways). The lands from which I currently write carry with them a particular obligation for writers, like me, of settler descent. The university at which I teach has been a tool of settler-colonial expansion and part and parcel of the genocide of Indigenous knowledges and practices. All of this matters deeply. And while I teach King, in my classes, in the service of opening up our practices in the university, the specificity of the genocides (of people and knowledges) out of which he speaks must be acknowledged and recognized as a mattering of an entirely different magnitude.

9. *Desire lines* is a term from human geography that describes informal pathways caused by human or animal traffic. The path usually represents the shortest or most easily navigated route between point A and point B, one that differs from institutionally built pathways, manifesting the "desire" of the population that uses it to traverse the space.

10. This orientation, of course, is common to many interdisciplinary approaches in the arts and humanities. I remember it from my MFA training in conceptual art, where we were asked to specify the issue that we wanted to address first and only *then* ask which aesthetic form might serve the issue best: Performance? Intervention? Print? Public sculpture? It is also something that I remember from my doctoral training in the interdisciplinary humanities, where we were invited to bring together whichever disciplinary literacies were needed to address our research question, with the only caveat being that we chose those disciplinary tools that were really needed and took the time to learn to use them well (enough), mobilizing an appropriate supervisory committee able to assess the thesis in its disciplinary complexity. However, while such interdisciplinary approaches are far from new in the fine arts, liberal arts, or humanities, and research-creation does indeed stand on the shoulders of these approaches, it is not synonymous with them. My argument is that research-creation, while aligned with previous inter- and transdisciplinary approaches, is doing something different *to*, *with*, and *in* the university. Specifically, research-creation pushes at these interdisciplinary logics by asking that multiple *formal outputs* be treated with equal value. I say more on this in chapter 2.

11. See Chapman and Sawchuk (2012); Kirk (2014); Mafe and Brown (2006); and Smith and Dean (2011).

12. On emergence as an activist paradigm, see adrienne maree brown's 2017 *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*.

13. Haraway's use of *eros* is antithetical to the way that Freud develops the term in texts such as *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, where eros is tied to the life drives, binding not undoing. The Aristotelian framework Haraway is drawing on here maps onto the psychoanalytic only if we read Haraway's eros as aligned with the Freudian death drive and agape with the Freudian life drives.

14. In the mode of "affinity, not identity" (Haraway [1985] 1991, 155), we might think here as well of the psychoanalytic conception of *working-through* (Freud [1914] 1958).

15. In my case, I am hired as a contemporary art historian specializing in feminist and performance art. I hold a PhD in the interdisciplinary humanities, with a dual specialization in feminist theory and the history of art and visual culture. I also hold an MA in contemporary art history and theory and an MFA in interdisciplinary studio arts with a specialization in conceptual and performance art. These graduate degrees set me up with the credentials and skills to work as both an artist and an academic, but my having been hired by my university as an art historian means that my academic output is necessarily weighted more highly in my annual performance review. Other work is, of course, looked at, but not recognized as *equally significant* professional output worthy of reward in the form of advancement in status or salary. My colleagues in studio have suggested that their experience is different—that they are rewarded with extra merit if they produce academic work in addition to artistic. This remains anecdotal evidence, but it speaks to an ideological assumption that dogs the field: to make art as an academic is to dabble; to make academic work as an artist is to excel. This has everything to do with the weighted values of "art making" and "history/theory making" in the academy.

16. When I proposed Debates in Art and/as Research as my graduate art history seminar for the winter 2014 term, and proposed to teach it research-creationally (that is, with final projects that took both written and artistic form), I was, due to the vision and generosity of my department chair and colleagues, supported. That said, thanks to the current structure of my home department, one that is organized by a division between art (and design) practice and the history (and theory) of art and design, the seminar, administratively, had to be offered for art history credit only.

17. While my thinking on this distinction is historically bound up with my first encounter with *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis* (Jacques Lacan's seventh seminar; 1997), one need only look to standard definitions in philosophy that specify ethics as structural (as in "rules of conduct") and morals as localized (as in "judgments of right or wrong") to get the distinction I am after here. In Lacan's *Ethics*, the structural understanding of ethics in classical philosophy becomes rerouted through the structural function of desire

in psychoanalysis. In short, psychoanalysis gives us a framework through which the "personal" or "individual," recast through the lens of the *sinthome*, can be understood as a site of ethics. See Lacan's seminar XXIII in particular, although seminars VII, XI, and XX are also relevant here.

18. On artistic research as interdisciplinary praxis, see, among others, Hannula (2009); Newbury (2011); and Wilson (2009). On research-creation and multimodal modes of publication, see Dronsfield (2009); Kozel (2011); Macleod and Holdridge (2011); and Scrivener (2011).

19. See, among others Tuhiwai Smith (1999). In addition to noting the context of Indigenous erasure and dispossession, it is important to note that in academic adjudication cultures many forms of now well-established scholarship (feminist/antiracist) are still regularly underfunded. Even when research-creation is *not* involved, there is likely to be disagreement as to what constitutes a meritorious research project. The issues with research-creation are not unique in this respect.

20. Simpson's "oral companion" to her book is available through ARP Books: http://arpbooks.org/Books/I/Islands-Of-Decolonial-Love; accessed September 2018. While Lorde's book is not formally linked to audio or video recordings, many oral presentations of the speeches in the book can be found online.

21. As has been well documented and discussed in over three decades of writing on the project, in *Post-Partum Document* Kelly refuses "the mother," within the project, as a pregiven entity or biological given, instead insisting on "its social construction as a representation of sexual difference within specific discourses" (Kelly 1999, xxi). For more information on *Post-Partum Document* and bibliography, see Mary Kelly's website (Kelly n.d.). See also Loveless 2019.

22. The essay draws on Myers's *A Dance a Day*, https://adanceaday.wordpress.com/.

23. In conversation with the author, both Kelly and Myers resisted the terms of research-creation in response to these specific projects. For Kelly, this refusal (as I understand it) has to do with serious commitment to the field of contemporary art practice. For Myers, this refusal is based on an understanding of the requirements of interdisciplinary responsibility. Without, at the time of initial writing (2014), having taken the time to really *know* and *learn* and *inhabit* research-creational literacies, debates, and stakes, Myers was not willing to claim the work as research-creation (though we can see it as research-creationally inclined, in much the same way that we can see Kelly's work as research-creation avant la lettre). The critical insight here is that, as with any knowledge-making practice, especially when it is interdisciplinary, it matters that we *take care* when mobilizing other knowledge places and spaces, approaching with the humility of the visitor (see Stengers [2015] on visitation). Indeed, the humility of the visitor (the one who politely asks permission and understands themselves as a guest, which, in the case of disciplines would mean taking the time to get to know

what *matters* to the disciplinary spaces one is visiting) may be the best way to orient ourselves when working interdisciplinarily.

24. In the essay, Penny links this understanding of deep interdisciplinarity to his experience developing (with Bill Tomlinson and Beatriz da Costa) and directing the influential Arts Computation Engineering (ACE) program at the University of California, Irvine (established in 2003).

25. I am not, with this invocation of the relation of form to content, suggesting anything radically new. I am reminding us of the usefulness of applying insights that have come before, specifically those of the interdisciplinary humanities and the conceptual fine arts, to the research-creational practices we are engaging in now. To invoke Hayden White (1987), content emerges constitutively *in and with* form. To attend to form is to attend to the power relations and propositional worldings implicit in *how we do* what we do, in our research, our teaching, our publication, and our peer assessment.

26. I first learned about this work in a May 2016 presentation by Chapman, "Ephemeral Criteria: The Aura of the Art Form," delivered at Les états généraux de la recherche-création: Enjeux politiques et éthiques, a conference inaugurating the first Canada Research Chair in Research-Creation awarded to Dr. Sophie Stévance at the Université Laval (Quebec, Canada). This description was shared with me by Chapman in an email exchange in September 2016.

27. Da Costa was instrumental, from 2003 to 2007, in the development of the research-creational degree program ACE at the University of California, Irvine, where she was cross-appointed (equally) between the department of art and the department of engineering.

28. See da Costa's 2008 edited collection *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism, and Technoscience,* coedited with Kavita Philip. Da Costa also went on, after being awarded tenure at UC Irvine, to begin a PhD in the History of Consciousness at UC Santa Cruz, under the supervision of Donna Haraway. Her death, in 2012, was a blow to many.

29. See da Costa (2008). The rest of her work is available at http://nideffer.net/shaniweb/.

30. On being undutiful as feminist praxis, see Gunkel, Nigianni, and Söderbäck (2012).

31. On the nomadic as feminist method, see Braidotti (1994).

Chapter 2: Discipline(s)

1. On this, see also Dany Nobus and Malcolm Quinn's 2005 *Knowing Nothing, Staying Stupid: Elements for a Psychoanalytic Epistemology.*

2. Interdisciplinarity, traditionally conceived, "interlocks with the concerns of epistemology—the study of knowledge—and tends to be centered around problems and

issues that *cannot be addressed or solved within the existing disciplines*" (Moran 2002, 15; emphasis added). Describing the use of the term *discipline* from the first half of the fifteenth century onward, social and cultural historian Joe Moran writes: "'Discipline' in this context [began to suggest] a particular kind of moral training aimed at teaching proper conduct, order and self-control. In fact, the very notion of the term as a recognized mode of learning implies the establishment of hierarchy and the operation of power: it derives from the Latin, *disciplina*, which refers to the instruction of disciples by their elders, and it necessarily alludes to a specialized, valued knowledge which some people possess and others do not" (2002, 2). Also worth reading in this context is literary and cultural theorist Marjorie Garber's excellent *Academic Instincts* (2001) and *Patronizing the Arts* (2008).

3. Bill Readings (1997) does beautiful work with this "post-'68" version of things in chapter 9 of *The University in Ruins*. Making generative links to even earlier historical moments, educational theorist Julie Thompson Klein, in a case study of the founding of Harvard College, distinguishes two impulses at the heart of nineteenth- and twentieth-century discussions of interdisciplinarity: a unifying or totalizing impulse hearkening back to a well-worn fantasy of Renaissance knowledge production (what she calls a *generalist position*) and a historically situated, "problem-oriented" approach to addressing issues that necessarily cuts across disciplinary divides (2005, 4–5). It is this latter that is of the most use to research-creation, as I configure it in these pages.

4. Routine relationships between disciplines include those of proximity (for example, "science and feminism," a relation that maintains disciplinary division) and integration ("feminist science studies," a model that reforms and revolutionizes disciplinary boundaries). In these contexts, disciplinarity, for Readings, only becomes a problem to the degree that its hierarchies are naturalized as given within our institutional structures, masking the often interdisciplinary basis of many a modern-day disciplinary locus, and working to synonymize interdisciplinarity with superficiality and disciplinarity with scholarly seriousness.

5. I have been taught, in this, by many years of conversation with art historian and visual and performance studies scholar Catherine Soussloff. See Catherine Soussloff and Mark Franko's 2002 essay "Visual and Performance Studies: A New History of Interdisciplinarity." The article discusses the histories to which this chapter refers, focusing on the resistances to interdisciplinary innovation that the authors experienced in the late 1990s, trying to get an interdisciplinary Visual and Performance Studies PhD off the ground at their (then) home university (University of California, Santa Cruz).

6. As well as being doubled through video and photographic documents, while lecturing, Woolley wore a GoPro camera headset that was trained on the audience and a contact microphone on his chest. The former documented the direction in which his head was pointed (at us) and the latter was wired to an amplifier so that we could hear, as he spoke, his bodily fluctuations (e.g., elevated heartbeat, etc.). The full thesis and documentation of the exhibition are available at the artist's website (www.mjhw.ca).

7. Importantly, Woolley came to the department with a previous career as a professional photographer. The disciplinary knowledge to work at a high level in photography, over the course of his thesis, through study, also extended to video and performance. He was therefore well placed to make the request to research-creationalize his thesis.

8. I challenge this disempowering and mostly incorrect (although ideologically lasting) caricature of academic labor production in "Practice in the Flesh of Theory" (2012).

9. TallBear and Bear's ongoing Tipi Confessions project works to unsettle the stranglehold of what Scott Morgensen (2011) terms *settler sexuality* and highlight our understanding of the university as a settler-colonial, heteropatriarchal institution (in which the project of only letting certain forms and renderings of knowledge count shores up the genocidal logics of colonialism). Information on the project is available at TallBear (2017).

10. Peers's work, individually and with CRIPSiE, can be further explored on their website (www.daniellepeers.com).

11. *Poubellication* is a contraction of *garbage can* (*poubelle* in French) and *publication* that indicates the way that traditional written publications render, for Lacan, the "lived word" lifeless. Lacan infinitely preferred the spoken seminar, and understood this as the true site of knowledge-made-public: knowledge produced in situated, responsive contexts with others. As read through scholars such as Gregory Ulmer (1984), we might see Lacan as a thinker, in this way, for the dialogic turn and take him as a research-creational ally avant la lettre, setting him, as Ulmer does, alongside social sculptural artist and theorist Joseph Beuys. See also Malcolm Bowie's *Lacan* (1993).

12. The metrics I refer to include "customer service" student evaluations, evidence of "impact" in the form of bibliometrics, and evidence of popularity in the form of media invitations.

13. See Avery Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (2008) for a wonderful sociologically grounded exposition of the uncanny as a productive form of haunting.

14. Relevant here, in the context of conceptualizing what it might mean to *fail well*, is Jack Halberstam's 2011 *The Queer Art of Failure*, which argues against heteronormative, capitalist frameworks for understanding success. In ways very much aligned with my perspectives in this book, Halberstam makes a claim for "eccentric archives," "low" rather than "high" theory, and "failure" as a site of political resistance.

15. Psychoanalytically speaking, *ambivalence* is understood as the simultaneous existence of contradictory tendencies in relation to a single object (Freud [1912] 1958). What constitutes true ambivalence is that affirmation and negation are *simultaneous* and *inseparable*.

16. Freud's wonderful short essay "Wild Psychoanalysis" ([1910] 1955) comes to mind here.

17. In an interview published in *The Anxiety of Interdisciplinarity* ("Institutional Interdisciplinarity in Theory and Practice: An Interview with Alexia Defert"), the feminist philosopher Julia Kristeva highlights a tension between an interdisciplinarity considered along a "theory-theory" axis and one articulated between "practice and theory." While Kristeva argues that the latter (practice <> theory) carries with it an acute risk of incompetence possible when the skills of one discipline prove insufficient in another, she nonetheless maintains the political and pedagogical importance of taking such risks as a way of nurturing "the emergence of frictions and not their obliteration" (1998, 17).

18. Key edited volumes gathering these voices together are listed on SHARE's website (SHARE n.d.). See also Candy (2006); Le Coguiec and Gosselin (2006); Macleod and Holdridge (2006); Busch (2009); Buckley and Conomos (2009); Cools and Slager (2011); Kester (2013); Béland and Paquin (2015); Beier and Wallin (2017); Salter (2015); Stévance and Lacasse (2017); Smith (2018).

19. Although, as outlined in the introduction, other institutions, such as Western University (formerly the University of Western Ontario, Canada), have introduced programs in which a PhD in Art and Visual Culture loosely follows Frayling's three streams.

20. The Communication Studies Department at Concordia University (Montreal), where both Chapman and Sawchuk are located, supports media-based work that crosses practice/theory lines in the form of research-creation MAs and PhDs. Research-creation is, at the time of writing, not institutionally supported (i.e., through degree streams) in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia, but remains the purview of the Faculty of Social Sciences and of interdisciplinary units on campus. It is in this context that, in their essay, Chapman and Sawchuk argue against "art" as the privileged location for research-creation in favor of interdisciplinary programs of research, outside the fine arts proper, that adopt arts-based methods within academic research frameworks. My arguments here are strongly aligned with theirs. I, too, would like to see research-creation adopted as a methodology throughout the university, so that the ways that it might manifest in a communication studies and media department would be distinct from how it would be articulated in the fine arts, and different again from how it would be pursued in art history or anthropology or sociology. In this respect, we could imagine the impact of research-creation on the university as akin to the impact of feminist, queer, and critical race studies: something that (ideally) weaves its way through the curriculum of most departments across campus.

21. Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances is most strongly developed in his posthumously published book *Philosophical Investigations* ([1953] 2010).

22. On *Becoming Sensor*, see the project website (https://becomingsensor.com). See also Myers (2017a, 2017c).

23. Indeed, Chapman and Sawchuk's text suggests two quite radical things by offering us these different valences for research-creation. First, it suggests an approach to research-creation in which Frayling's last category (research-*through*-creation) could be reconfigured in order to grant doctoral degree status to the production of artwork not accompanied by a substantial written component without thereby having to grant, as Frayling is rightfully concerned with, the "entire history of art . . . a postgraduate research degree" (1993, 5). Second, Chapman and Sawchuk's categories work to make Frayling's *first* category—"historical, philosophical, and/or aesthetic research *into* an art or design object, period, process, or issue"—inhospitable, leaving no place within research-creational discourse for the traditional art historical dissertation, no room for the tried-and-true disciplinary divide (ventriloquized by Frayling [1993, 5] in his text) that would say, on the one side, art must speak for itself or, on the other, that art cannot speak for itself. (Of course, this latter is, itself, an ideological caricature, but a caricature with staying power, as my experiences with incoming graduate students in art history, studio art, and design practice attest.)

Chapter 3: Polydisciplinamory

1. Coined by Marianne Pieper and Robin Bauer in 2005, *mononormativity* refers to the institution of compulsory monogamy, not to monogamous practices.

2. Notable here is Angela Willey's 2016 *Undoing Monogamy: The Politics of Science and the Possibilities of Biology*. See also Barker and Langdridge (2009); and the 2006 special issue of the journal *Sexuality* (9, no. 5) on polyamory; and Kim TallBear's important work as The Critical Polyamorist (www.criticalpolyamorist.com). Philosophically informed essays on the topic include Emens (2004); Overall (1998); and Weaver and Woollard (2008).

3. As Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner remind us in "What Does Queer Theory Teach Us about X?": "Pedagogy has long involved the formation of identities and subjectivities, radical in the aspiration to live another way now, here. . . . There is an academic stage and . . . its protocols and properties have maintained an invisible heteronormativity, one that infiltrates our profession [and] our knowledge" (1995, 348–49). Similarly, David Halperin reminds us that before queer theory became the darling of many an academic stage, feminist and gay/lesbian studies "were motivated first and foremost by an impulse to transform what could count as knowledge, as well as by a determination to transform the practices by which knowledge functioned within the institution of the university" (2003, 343).

4. See Sullivan (2003) for a lucid and general introduction to queer theory; and both Britzman (1995) and Luhmann (1998) for incisive readings of the queer as pedagogical intervention. Also relevant here are analyses of bisexuality that have been applied to theoretical and pedagogical norms; see Hemmings (2002).

5. Given the liberatory language that often surrounds research-creation and the way that this rhymes with decades of writing within queer pedagogical circles on the denaturalization of normative, reproductive codes of pedagogy (what I outlined in the previous chapter as Freire's "banking model of education" in which the aim of the pedagogical scene is the transferring of information from one body [a teacher's] to another [a student's] in a way that is repeatable, verifiable, and that functions to secure a mode of academic-patrilineal reproduction), it seems surprising to me that there has been little writing on the queering of research-creation and its synonyms. One example that I have found is Dallas J. Baker's "Queering Practice-Led Research: Subjectivity, Performative Research and the Creative Arts" (2011); Baker applies a queer Foucauldian analysis to a practice-led research method. While I have been hard pressed to find theoretical analyses of the queerness of research-creation, I have come across many research-creational projects that take the queer as content. Examples include McLeod, Rault, and Cowan (2014); and Deirdre Logue and Allyson Mitchell's 2016 single-channel video *Hers Is Still a Dank Cave: Crawling Toward a Queer Horizon*, which I discuss below as an homage to research-creation.

6. See also, in this context, feminist critiques of the institution of marriage (such as Gayle Rubin's charge to "recognize the political dimensions of erotic life" [1992, 310]); the writings of noted anarchists such as Emma Goldman; the commune movement's critique of the family, monogamy, and private property (Klesse 2006a, 2006b; Portwood-Stacer 2010; Shannon and Willis 2010); as well as Bell and Binnie (2000) and Berlant (1998) on heterosexual structures of intimacy; and Lorde ([1984]) 2007) on the erotic as power.

7. On the diachronic/synchronic and metaphoric/metonymic in psychoanalysis, see Lacan (2002); and Gallop (1987).

8. On this, see especially Morgensen (2010, 2011). For more on allied Indigenous sexualities, see TallBear (2018); and Yamashiro (2015).

9. On this, see Anapol (1997); Easton and Hardy (1997); Lano (1995); Munson and Stelboum (1999); Nearing (1992); and in the second wave, Anderlini-D'Onofrio (2004); Ravenscroft (2004).

10. These relational and kinship ties can be variously articulated. For example, a triad is three people who are in an equal relationship with each other (see the 2016–present television show *You, Me, Her* for a mainstream dramatization of this form). One person with two partners who are not each other's lovers is a "V." A quad names four folks in an equal relationship. And a pod is the name for a group of people who identify as in

relationship with each other, but how these relationships are organized varies. Polyfidelity refers to a group commitment where the members (triad, quad, or pod) only engage in intimacy and sexual relations with each other (with new partners—primary or secondary—only brought in with group consensus). Often, because of the strict boundaries placed on the relationships thus described, polyfidelity becomes understood as a poly "good" that is held in contradistinction to sex for pleasure (promiscuity/swinging). Arguing against the binary of dishonest-poly-for-sex versus honest-poly-for-love—a binary that attempts to tame and render safe the poly project—cultural studies scholar Christian Klesse asserts that "a representational politics based upon a distinction between the 'good polyamorist' and the 'bad swinger' or the 'promiscuous queer' hampers the potential of polyamory discourses for the grounding of a truly pluralistic sexual ethics that may embrace the diversity of non-monogamous sexual and intimate practices" (2006a, 566).

11. See Loveless 2011 for an extended engagement with the structure of anecdote as it is developed by Gallop.

12. For a wonderful foray through philosophical and psychoanalytic understandings of love, as well as a deep investigation of Lacan's seminar VIII (On Transference), see Bruce Fink's 2015 *Lacan on Love*.

13. Some key quotations: "Whenever this function [the sujet supposé savoir] may be, for the subject, embodied in some individual, whether or not an analyst, the transference . . . is established" (Lacan [1978] 1998, 235); "If transference often manifests itself under the appearance of love, it is first and foremost the love of knowledge that is concerned" (Evans 1996, 214); "Transference is the attribution of knowledge to the other, the supposition that the other is a subject who knows" (Evans 1996, 214); "I cannot fail to underline the new resonance with which this notion of knowledge is endowed. The person in whom I presume knowledge to exist thereby acquires my love" (Lacan [1978] 1999, 64). Transference, in this context, is not just affect displaced anywhere, anyhow, but affect displaced onto a perceived location of authority—an authority bound up with the production of knowledge, with the ability to say "I know." Transference, here, functions as a conduit for the past to entangle itself in the present through that projection onto the sujet supposé savoir—the teacher, the analyst—that is needed for the pedagogical/analytic scene to *work*.

14. *Working-through* is a psychoanalytic concept that refers to the working-through of resistances. The practice of working-through, as Freud formulates it in "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" ([1914] 1958), allows the subject to accept repressed elements and loosen the grip of the repetition compulsion. In this essay, Freud outlines the fundamental aspects of psychoanalytic treatment as (1) working-through, (2) recollection of repressed memories, and (3) the repetition that occurs in the transference. Important here is that we understand that repression is not overcome once the resistance of the ego has been overcome. Instead, unconscious resistance, that which

emerges in the repetition compulsion, has to be addressed through a working that is a working *through* and *with*, not *against* or *beyond*.

15. Speaking to the power of neologism, Ani Ritchie and Meg Barker (2006) suggest that our current terrain of affective languages within romantic relationships is always already formulated within the confines of a mononormative worldview: "Constructing jealousy as a 'negative' emotion whilst describing it as a 'natural' response to infidelity, serves to maintain the dominance of monogamy, which in turn has been argued to maintain systems of patriarchy" (586). New words can open up new worlds. For example, within poly communities it is not uncommon to encounter the use of the word *wibbly* to speak to an experience of possessive anxiety and to request reassurance in a way that doesn't marshal the negative connotations of jealousy (594). Similarly, poly terms such as *compersion* create a realm of possibility for positive affects associated with seeing one's partner with one's metamour (one's partner's partner)—affects that are not left to be described only by their inverse, e.g., *not-jealous* (which doesn't speak to pleasure, but rather to lack of displeasure). "Rewriting the language of identity, relationships and emotion," Ritchie and Barker claim, "can enable alternative ways of being" (596).

16. As Heather Love, in the catalogue essay on Mitchell and Logue's work, writes, "If practice presents an alternative to 'traditional quantitative and qualitative scholarly research methods,' it always raises the question of what kind of knowledge intimacy can yield" (2015, 47–48).

17. In conversation, the artists stated that their filming pursued "a narrative of desire," each choice for what to shoot and how to shoot it coming from love. Specifically, they cite their love for the 1970s feminist arts-and-crafts aesthetic that dominates the work, and the way that they tried to situate the discourse of each text through its aesthetic—to literally crawl inside of each book (personal communication, May 2016).

Chapter 4: Drive(s)

1. *Méconnaissance* translates as "misrecognition," specifically, here, of the sujet's structural position within the analytic scene.

2. Early on in the lectures Lacan tells his listeners, "It is not mere chance . . . if this very week I have received a copy of the newly published, posthumous work of my friend Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible*" ([1978] 1998, 71). Lacan, having received *Le visible et l'invisible* in the week before delivering his first lecture on the gaze, outlines for his audience his approval of the work of Merleau-Ponty's student Claude Lefort in felicitously putting together this unfinished work, and notes a crucial shift in Merleau-Ponty's work marked by this posthumous text: Merleau-Ponty's conception of the *flesh*, as developed particularly in Merleau-Ponty's last chapter, "The Chiasm—

The Intertwining." Lacan's development of the *objet petit a* in these lectures is in direct conversation with Merleau-Ponty's conception of the *flesh*. Lacan is clear in his suggestion that in Merleau-Ponty's unfinished work, particularly in the notes that follow the last chapter of *The Visible and the Invisible*, there are "reference points" for the reader of the psychoanalytic unconscious. These reference points, for Lacan, suggest a profoundly original direction of thought being articulated in relation to the philosophical tradition, one that Lacan reads as consonant with the structure (the *objet petit a*) that he is at work unpacking (Lacan [1978] 1998, 82).

3. This is something that Lacan was, of course, famously concerned with in the wake of the May '68 protests. See Russell Grigg's 2007 translation of Lacan's *Seminar XVII: The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* and Justin Clemens and Russell Grigg's 2006 edited collection *Jacques Lacan and the Other Side of Psychoanalysis: Reflections on Seminar XVII*.

4. Lacan's lectures on the gaze as *objet petit a* have, of course, been glossed and read ad infinitum, within feminist film theory in particular, in the years since they were given. Some germinal texts in this lineage include Copjec (1989); Kaplan (1983); and Mulvey (1975). See also de Lauretis (1984); Neale (1983); among others (too many to count!).

5. Tom Waits, "San Diego Serenade," from the album *The Heart of Saturday Night* (1974).

6. Lacan links the *objet petit a* at the heart of this Wiederholungszwang to two figures, the *tuché* and the *automaton*, terminology borrowed from Aristotle. With this, Lacan perverts Aristotle's notion of tuché (as bound to agents of rational choice, like Haraway's agape) by aligning the power of the chance encounter to the encounter with the unmetabolizable signifier—a kernel of the Real that will soon, in his text, be named *objet petit a*. *Automaton* signifies the network of signifiers, the realm of the Symbolic, and the building blocks of human meaning-making, while *tuché* designates an encounter with the Real that can only ever be outside symbolization, like the m/Other's body in little Ernst's game of fort/da. Straddling the two—the tuché and the automaton—the *objet petit a*, "that object around which the drive moves" (Lacan [1978] 1998, 257), is symbolized by little Ernst's reel, being thrown away and brought back, compulsively, repetitively. Additionally, in choosing these two words, *tuché* and *automaton*, to ground his discussion of repetition compulsion, Lacan reminds us of the relationship between Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and his essay on "The Uncanny"—two texts that were written at the same time, although published years apart, and that benefit from being read together. For an excellent discussion of the repetition compulsion and the uncanny, see Hertz (1985). See also Royle (2003) for a speculative reading of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and "The Uncanny" as uncanny doubles of each other.

7. Within the Lacanian anatomy, desire and drive are distinguished on the basis of their respective relations to the Real, making the turn from an ethics of desire to an ethics of the drive or the Real a contested one. If desire was Lacan's central reference

point in his "Ethics of Psychoanalysis" of 1959–60, it is *jouissance* that comes to occupy center stage in his later seminars. It is on this basis that it is argued, variably, by Phillip Dravers (2011), Jacques-Alain Miller (2011), Slavoj Žižek ([1989] 2009), and Alenka Zupančič (2000), that while the earlier Lacan subscribes to an ethics of desire, the later Lacan can be said to subscribe to an ethics of the drive. As I understand it, the point here is that desire passes over into drive when it understands itself as having no final term, when it ceases to *aim to attain*. On this topic, see also de Lauretis (2008); and Edelman (2004).

8. The poem is surrealist poet Louis Aragon's "Contre-Chant," translated in the 1998 publication in English as: "In vain your image comes to meet me / And does not enter me where I am who only shows it / Turning towards me you can find / On the wall of my gaze only your dreamt-of shadow / I am that wretch comparable with mirrors / That can reflect but cannot see / Like them my eye is empty and like them inhabited / By your absence which makes them blind" (Lacan [1978] 1998, 17).

9. And here I must take a moment, "off topic" myself as it were, to cite Clare Hemmings's *Why Stories Matter: The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory* (2011), a book that I read the year after I completed my PhD, and then promptly put down to attend to the vicissitudes of early motherhood and the job market. In a beautiful moment of chance, just as I prepared to send the penultimate draft of this book to the publisher, a student asked to borrow something on a shelf I had not looked at in many a year. And there was Hemmings's book. My mouth opened. Wide. I grabbed it and took it home. It seems that I had had an interlocutor there, all along, one not realized consciously, but who must have been driving me under the surface. With Hemmings's call, in that text, for "the importance of telling stories differently," in ways that are both ethically accountable and politically transformative (2), it is hard not to think so. While Hemmings's field of address is at an angle to mine, when she asks us to experiment with "how we might tell stories differently rather than telling different stories" (16), I can't help but feel an unpayable debt to her and all the other feminist thinkers who have impacted and formed me over the years, in ways that I can't even begin to account for, but that, rather, erupt unexpectedly to remind me of those I've crossed paths with and momentarily forgotten, but that nonetheless have indelibly shaped me.

10. Lacan writes, "There is a causal element in this division [of the subject], and it is what I call *objet petit a*. . . . It is closely related to the structure of desire. At all events, this *objet petit a* is in the very place where that singular phallic absence is revealed, at the root of what I have tried here to put in the center because it is the center of the analytic experience, namely what I, like everyone else, call castration" (2008, 53).

11. See Lacan's *Seminar XI* ([1978] 1998, 168).

12. We might recall here the role of the eye in the Freudian uncanny, specifically the relation between the loss of one's eyes (as symbolic of the power to see, and scope out, the world around us) and the conceptual figure of castration, as symbolic of the insuf-

ficiency or lack of mastery that constitutes the psychoanalytic subject (the loss of the phallus as organizing principle of a phallogocentric social order). As Samuel Weber puts it in *The Legend of Freud*, "Eyes are the bodily organ to which the expectation of *bodily unity* is traditionally attached. What can be seen with one's 'own two eyes' can be identified" (1982, 14; emphasis added), and it is in this context that "if castration anxiety has a structural significance for psychoanalysis, it is to the extent that it returns to haunt the story the subject would like to tell itself in order to confirm its self-identity as an 'I'" (16).

13. Linked to the realm of knowledge-as-certain-knowledge, the image here, Lacan tells us, is determined by a *point-by-point* relation. Anamorphosis as illustrative of this function is organized by the correspondence of straight lines—it can be mapped in space in a mathematical relation that is not *visual as such*: Light is not central to geometral vision because it always amounts to the situating of two points along the imagined line of a single thread. For Lacan, then, what is at stake in the realm of the image, the realm of geometral perspective, is the mapping not of *sight* but of *space* ([1978] 1998, 86)—a mapping that can as easily be produced haptically as optically. On haptic visuality, see Marks 2000.

14. Here my thinking is informed by Judith Butler who writes of Merleau-Ponty's work on the chiasm as an attempt "in a certain way to offer an alternative to the erotics of simple mastery. It makes thinking passionate, because it overcomes, in its language and in its argument, the distinction between a subject who sees and one who is seen, a subject who touches and one who is touched. It does not, however, overcome the distinction by collapsing it" (2005, 194).

15. David Morris, discussing Merleau-Ponty's philosophy of perception, writes (ventriloquizing Merleau-Ponty): "We think we already know how to see, and that we seers are thus wholly active in our seeing. The painter knows this is not true. We must look in order to see, and the painter knows that she does not yet know how to *look* so as to see the thing as it shows itself. *So she lets things teach her how to look*" (2008, 137; emphasis added).

16. I am thinking here of Lacan's work on James Joyce as sinthome in his Seminar XXIII. For a beautiful exposition of Ettinger's theory in relation to her artwork, see Kinsella 2015.

Conclusion: Art at the End of the World

1. Dr. Strangelove, once it seems clear that the "tipping point" has passed, argues for the immediate evacuation (into the "mines") of a cross section of the human race, chosen for skills needed to rebuild civilization materially as well as procreatively: virility for men and sexual desirability for women, with a six-to-one female-to-male ratio (!) being suggested as ideal for repopulation.

2. "Tipi Confessions: Sex at the End of the World" was held on October 30, 2017, at the Needle Vinyl Tavern in Edmonton, AB; "Teaching at the End of the World: Weird Pedagogy and Speculative Futures" is the working title of Beier's PhD dissertation in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta; and Taylor's *Social Justice at the End of the World* is a special issue of the journal *Societies* and is forthcoming.

3. This is a perspective shared by many who mobilize end-of-the-world language. Challenging the settler-colonial underpinning of commonplace end-of-the-world narratives, TallBear forcefully reminds her listeners that "I come from a people who have already seen the end of the (their) world" (TallBear 2015). On the intersection of petro-capitalism and social justice, see Sheena Wilson's 2018 "Energy Imaginaries: Feminist and Decolonial Futures"; and her 2014 "Gendering Oil: Tracing Western Petro-Sexual Relations."

4. I am thinking here of perspectives such as those presented by James Lovelock in his 2015 *Newsweek* interview with James Fergusson under the provocative title "Saving the Planet Is a Foolish Romantic Extravagance."

5. "It's the End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine)" is a 1987 song by the rock band R.E.M.

6. See the University of Alberta's Marketing and Communications Toolkit, "What Is Our Promise," for an example of how these slogans are used by the university (University of Alberta, n.d.).

7. In this, as ever, I am taught by the thinking and writing of science fiction scholar Sha LaBare (2010).

8. "Where Id was, there shall Ego be" / "Where it was, there shall I be" (Freud [1932] 1964; Lacan [1955] 2001).

9. For the notion of participatory dissent, I am indebted to both Chantal Mouffe (2007) and Ewa Plonowska Ziarek (2001). I have also written on the term in "A Manifesto on Bitterness as a Foundation for the Social" (2009).

10. Here, the ethical question we must ask of all cultural production (to borrow Despret's [2008] idiom) is: *What are we being rendered capable of* (by this action, intervention, invitation, reading)? I am taught in this by feminist philosopher Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, who, in her *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds*, asks how caring practices might encourage and support different kinds of hope, modest forms of hope that resist being turned into that kind of denialism that allows us to keep doing things as we are doing them and simply add new technical innovation into the mix. She writes, "A politics of care engages much more than a moral stance, it involves affective, ethical and hands-on agencies of practical consequence" (2017, 7).

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