

Editorial

This special issue of *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodologies: Writing Organizations: Management, Leadership and Appraisal* presents to readers seven articles with particular focus on 'writing' as a methodological tool. As guest editors, what encounters were we opening to/up when we invited contributions on writing as a methodological tool and writing about being/becoming in assemblages of leadership, management and appraisal? We hoped for a shift, an unsettling of what was thought of as 'writing'. Semetsky and Stables draw on the concept of edusemiotics to challenge the traditional notion of writing; "While more often than not signs are taken as solely linguistic and in compliance with analytic philosophy of language, edusemiotics includes images, pictures and, indeed, anything that potentially signifies ..." (2014, p. 1)¹. We called contributors to consider 'writing' as various edusemiotic, nomadic, embodied and embedded, artistic and scholarly gestures, experimentations, playful interventions, exchanges, encounters, ruminations, rhizomatic entanglements and practical philosophical discussions.

We also called for a focus on learning organizations as territories in which leadership, management and appraisal, as various assemblages, are enacted. We wondered if and how, in such territories, 'writing' could be presented as experimenting and doing with texts; as ways to foster patterns of becomings that are multiple and never fixed. We hoped for a shift/challenge in the often inflated and normative body of theories which dominate workings, structures and lived experience of learning organizations. We called for consideration of how post constructivist, post human and/or new materialist approaches may contribute to creating new ontologies of- and between members of -learning organizations. We encouraged consideration of approaches focused on experimenting with bodily affects and sensing movements which acknowledge the openness required for a condition of constant becomings and the value of uncertainty and questioning in processes of research and being researcher.

Our hopes and expectations have been surpassed in the articles presented in this issue. Across each of the works writing is used as a methodological tool and transgressive practice. It is presented not as a means of making claims to what can be known but as space/tool/territory and/or pedagogy through which to open up possibilities of the unknowability of that which is constantly to come and in the making.

This issue presents works that aim to propel the self (the writing, researching, leading self) out of its isolation, dispersing it into myriad data/text imprints/signifiers, with opportunities to induce a multiplicity of alternate practices that move from reflection to word/artifact/experience exploding/exploring diffractions - and that engage sustainable yet constant becoming communi/ty/cation in organizations. Through the various works/thoughts/wonderings presented in this issue we encounter multiple perhaps/es, sustaining the fun/ction of research as an uncertain line of flight, a constant becoming. What we encounter through these articles are multiple entangled assemblages (never linear and never fixed) of writer/researcher; participant writer/researcher; writer/s/editors/reviewers constructing - a never finished constant becoming of data/analysis/writing/re-writing/thinking/unthinking/rethinking/new-writing.

The articles vary in scope, themes and fields. They move us from Higher Education Institutions to Early Childhood. Four of them are written in English and two in Norwegian. We have decided to present them in a language/mixed way.

¹ Semetsky, I. & Stables, A., (2014). Preamble In I. Semetsky & A. Stables (Eds). *Pedagogy and edusemiotics: Theoretical challenges/practical opportunities*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

In their article *The production of the academic writing machine*. Linda Henderson, Eileen Honan and Sarah Loch explore and interrogate, from a personal perspective, their investment in and repression by the expectations of 'a heaving, monstrous academic writing machine', and they also acknowledge their desire to be produced within such a machine. They eloquently write of the vulnerability and sensuality of writing and at the same time suggest that the drive to 'achieve' results, i.e. measurable outputs, within a neo-liberal university structure risks their writing being 'flattened out' and the joy of the writing process being lost. This interrogation of their own experiences of the university publication output expectation is far from the often heard complaint of the neo-liberal repressive and constrictive structure - it is an exploration of the possibilities their interrogation has created as it "propels us out and away from our individual scholarly commitments to the machine, and into a myriad of imaginative, creative and joyous collective experiences. We take back the joy of writing, and make visible our shared attempt to open/break the machine through writing which experiments with 'the openness required for the condition of constant becoming and the value of uncertainty and questioning'."

Barnehaugen som skrivende organisasjon/ECECs as writing organizations. In this article, Helene Berntsen Brennås gives us a picture of how writing as method can simultaneously highlight and deconstruct dominant discourses in an ECEC institution. Three aspects of a writing organization are discussed: The importance of deconstruction, affective chaos- oriented understandings and ontological in-between spaces for movement of behavioral patterns. Helene further discusses writing organizations as opening up towards thinking kindergarten as a learning organization with writing as method and as competence strategy for professionalization. The article is based on data from Helene's master thesis from 2015.

Malou Juelskjær and Dorte Staunæs, in their article *Designing leadership chairs: Experiments with affirmative critique of leadership and environmentality*, invite us to push beyond approaches to leadership presented in many traditional management studies courses. They investigate a way to approach dilemmas and problems of leadership in contemporary organizational processes through a concept of 'posthuman sensorium'. In their writing up/with a project which involved master's course educational leaders designing 'leadership chairs', these authors engage with affirmative critiques and diffractive readings to evoke bodily-affective and conceptual understandings of leadership and environmentality. They work with their methodological approach to dissolve settled binaries and boundaries, and transgress phenomena such as: body as well as language; matter as well as signs; humans as well as non-humans; content as well as form; drama as well as everyday life; ontology as well as epistemology.

The article *Early childhood education teachers and leaders becoming the leadership(s)*, Virpi Mettiäinen challenges the reader to think beyond the notion of effective leadership as an individual and linear practice. She works her methodology to consider leadership(s) as becoming during and with/in the research process, where leadership can be positioned as not residing in an individual but rather as a conceptualization of bodies without organs/assemblages/desiring machines. The author invites her audience to think and ask what it could mean for educational leadership scholars to acknowledge themselves as part of the becoming of leadership?

The article *Po/etisk pedagogisk ledelse for kvalitet gjennom skriving; mot immanente vurderingspraksiser og tvilens og kroppens vitenskap og metoder/Po/ethic pedagogical leadership for quality through writing; towards immanent assessment practices and the methods of the body and the doubt* by Anne B. Reinertsen and Nina Rossholt is about po/ethic pedagogical leadership and quality assessment practices. Embodied knowledge and knowing. It offers an expansion of the concept of critique and discusses a move from hermeneutic to immanent theories of assessment and leadership. Poetry is seen as strengthening every aspect of the analytical process and an ethics. The authors are in the speculative turn and constantly troubled thus data/activists moving from function to difference to fiction.

The last article *Writing matters in leadership practice* by Louise Thomas and Anne B. Reinertsen is an attempt to rethink, ultimately forethink, leadership as a collaborative process of writing and what they think leadership might look like in the 21st century. Through discussing messiness as a resource in academic

efforts and aspirations, they move beyond leadership taking into account complex relations that shape emergent processes of organizing and change: Writing becoming simultaneously aim and tool. It is a move away from ideas of individual agency and control. Traditional concepts of hierarchy, selective application, linearity and rationality are no longer appropriate. The authors offer different shades and elaborations indirectly discussing if and how concepts are willing to work together with matters? Or matters willing to work together with concepts? It is a thinking about learning, thinking, knowing and leading in making; concepts coming to life.

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Louise Thomas

Editors