

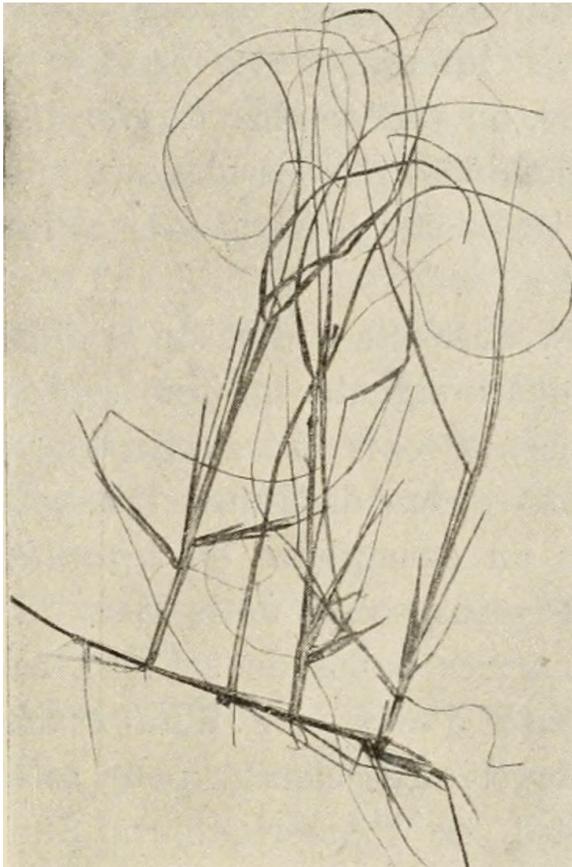
Writing E/scapes

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Abstract



scape.

¹ *a brief 'escape or means of escape'*

² *'a scenic view, whether of sea, land, or sky'*

³ *'in its various senses'*

⁴ *'a long flower-stalk rising directly from the root or rhizome'*

⁵ *a theoretical approach to writing*

Figure credit: Museo Nacional de Historia Natural de Buenos Aires (c. 1911–1923)

Keywords: writing, scapes, e/scap

Introduction

Scapes.

striated and smooth spaces
that create thoughts.

To **pause** and e/scape.

Temporary escapes

A cut between
escapes and scapes.

from structures
we know too well.

Offshoots from a rhizome
growing toward and outward from
multiple nodes
in different directions
at the same time.

Scapes surround.
Scapes proliferate.
Scapes suffocate.
Scapes open to
other possibilities.

This is how we write
live breath walk
visualize theorize
scape methodology.

Drawing from
natural and artificial surfaces
that shape our existence.

Fleeting reminders of

Taking form on
digital surfaces
where our writings compose themselves.

Taking form through
image music words
the tendrils of entangled texts.

Taking form as
walls
remnants of graffiti
paint layers
left to their elemental fate
(Photoscape 1).

Taking form with
flower-stalks
rising rhizomes
beneath the ground
dancing in the wind above
(Photoscape 2).

Scapes become the
moments
textures
surfaces
cuts
scapes
through which we pass.

Passing through becomes
acts actions intra-actions.
A different way of becoming.

Scape walking
Scape photographing
Scape methodology.

Writing e/scapes.

Photoscape 1



Photoscape 2



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Botanical e/scapes

We have been thinking scapes for several years. It was on a late May evening that we found quiet refuge on a university quad. Swathed in darkness, we had escaped the bustle of the patio. Finally, a moment to breathe. To ponder. To connect. We thought scapes as we kept walking. One imagined scapes, then two, then three together—like axons conducting impulses across a shared thought. Animated discussion ensued, arms motioning amidst a tangible moment of joy.

Scapes have since continued to find their way into our conversations, thoughts, and writings. We feel the constant pull to be scape artists, scaping, e/scaping. The seedling of an idea grows as ideas slowly unfold over time, changing, never quite complete. Like Kauffmann and Holbrook (2016), we play with multimodal fragments and wonder what else might be possible.

As this occurs, e/scaping perhaps is more of a mindset than a methodology. However much we may plead with our scapes to be still long enough to write them, they—not without irony—keep escaping. Scapes instead have become small ideas that grow into something larger, morph into something else, or turn into writing that we set aside. They move, extend, and always manage to remain just out of reach. Scapes stay in motion, resisting capture. If anything (or anyone) has been captured, it has been us.

Notably, the word ‘scapes’ has many uses in many fields. Because it was first taken up in botany, we initially began there. In botany, the meaning of ‘scape’ is loose, open, and negotiated in relation to place and space. The botanical scape mediates its relations with—and interconnections among—anything and everything and nothing at the same time. In this way, scapes constantly are practised and remade with each new entanglement: they are ontological and epistemological nodes. Scapes constantly reconfigure how we know and exist in the entangled worlds we research.

We found the ways in which scapes move, grow, and interact with their environments to be reminiscent of rhizomes. Not unlike Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) rhizomatic multi-directions, scapes grow from one part to another, connect the unconnectable, and allow us to methodologically think the unthinkable. Similarly, photographs are other forms of interconnection that worked their way in as chance encounters. These are unexpected lines of articulation (Mazzei, 2016) that happened to us and to writing. In this sense, we followed Deleuze and Guattari when they wrote, “Because you don’t know what you can make a rhizome with, you don’t know which subterranean stem is going to effectively make a rhizome, or enter a becoming... So experiment” (p. 251). We did.

Beyond rhizomes, we identified several other potentialities in which scapes might emerge. Some are real. Some imagined. Others re-imagined. Arts-based interventions appear throughout. As we briefly **stop** to suggest in the following creative conceptual review, scapes surround us in their many iterations.

-scapes: a conceptual review

DEFINITIONS:

landscape.

1. 'A view, prospect of something.'⁹
2. Though normally thought of as a two-dimensional static representation, landscapes are re-envisioned here to be dynamic multi-dimensional, and non-representational.
3. For Spirn (1998), a form of language that is 'spoken, written, read, and imagined'; 'makes thought tangible and imagination possible' (p. 15).

mindscape. 'The range of a person's thoughts and imagination.'⁶

playscape.

1. 'A landscape for play; ... a children's play area in which play equipment is arranged in an integrated design, often incorporating existing landscape features.'¹²
2. To experience, visit the Kids Row Playscape on Belle Isle State Park in Detroit, MI. It is located near the Giant Slide.

3. A playful approach to writing and research (Ulmer, 2017; Hughes et al., 2017).

photoscape.

1. Photos of scapes.
2. Photos that scape.
3. Photos that scape us.
4. Everyday images.

Note. For examples, see photographic cartographies (Ulmer 2016); see also Photoscapes 1, 2, and 3).

soundscape.

1. 'A musical composition consisting of a texture of sounds; the sounds which form an auditory environment.'⁷
2. An approach to curating the sounds of everyday life (Droumeva, 2015), especially those that use mobile technologies to curate local topographies and geographies of sound (Gallagher & Prior, 2014). Coined by Schafer (1977/1993).
3. For examples, see the #hearmyhome soundscapes

(Wargo & Brownell, 2016) and videos by Koro-Ljungberg et al. (2016).

Note. Sound is important in research because '[t]here is no distinction among ecology, affect, things, ways of being, ways of knowing, and sound' (Gershon, 2016, p. 83). We suggest that similar interrelations exist among different scapes: relationscapes, theoryscapes, photoscapes, mindscapes, landscapes, playscapes, etc.

relationscape.

1. In *Relationscapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy* (Manning, 2012).
2. Prearticulations of movement and language.
3. 'Propositions for future thinking' (p. 228).
4. How fields of 'relations play themselves out' (p. 158).

theoryscape.

1. The landscape of theory within and among different academic fields; in flux (see Wolgemuth et al., 2017).

2. For instance, the current postqualitative research theoryscape includes many philosophical writings. See, for example, Gilles Deleuze, Erin Manning, Brian Massumi, Gilbert Simondon, Isabelle Stengers, and Albert North Whitehead, among others.

SEE ALSO:

airscape.

cityscape.

cloudscape.

mindscape.

moonscape.

riverscape.

ruralscape.

seascape.

skyscape.

snowscape.

streetscape.

timescape.

townscape.

urbanscape.

wallscape.

waterscape.

xeriscape.

Everyday e/scapes

Because we, nonhumans and humans, are in this together, our experimentations are every day. Happening now. As the affects move through us, we experiment toward hope.

Scapes are everyday interconnections and experimental practices of hope. They are not something we plan in advance. Scapes remind us of the pasts, presents, and futures that operate simultaneously. Scapes motivate us to work toward a more just politics and ethics. Scapes connect us with others. Each cut and experiment reminds us of our interconnections, our being together, a together we cannot disentangle ourselves from. Each film and video becomes grasps of affects that move too quickly and whose power overwhelms us.

We gaze at them, stopping to marvel and taking out our camera phones to snap a photograph of the ephemeral dance. Still, the image never fully captures this this walking with the world, this dance between humans and nonhumans. Subsequently, these images contain what Manning (2012) describes as “an elasticity of the almost,” or an “intensive extension of movement, a moment when anything can happen, when our bodies are poised in a togetherness beginning to take shape” (p. 32). Each photograph and word is a dance that is simultaneously past and present and full of potential.

In these dance-step-movements, we see what might be different about methodology. We begin to realize our very interconnectedness in the world. Through a variety of e/scapes we realize our interconnectedness and what that interconnectedness does.

We “walk in/with the world” (Manning, 2012, p. 28) in our respective lands. This walking in/with the lands, graffiti, nature, and buildings pull our gazes toward them. They demand that we attend to them. It is as if we are constantly dancing with these nonhumans. As they call to us through forces, our feet slow and orient our bodies toward them. We cannot anticipate whom or what we will dance with on a certain day. The same walk generates different dances. In this way, we are always improvising with our non/human dance partners.

Much like the wind that blows between buildings, in the trees, in our hair, affects move us, make us grasp the lapels of our coats in between buildings, shove our hands in our pockets, admire the way the sun dances through leaves, tussles our hair. These affects disrupt our humanity, our centrality, our rationality. They disrupt the methodologies we thought we knew.

We see the “standardized methodological approach[es] begin to unravel” (Manning, 2016, p. 32) with the wind and affects. Each movement in the world that moves us makes us recognize and participate in

elastic moments. The elasticity invites us to create something else, something different. Methods e/scape in research-creations. They become incipient movements that generate research-creations. Manning (2016) wrote, “research-creation is hyphenation of research with creation proposes singular forms of knowledge which may not be intelligible within current understandings of what knowledge might look like” (p. 27). The knowledge generated by scapes, this active being-with, is different. It does not fit. It, too, e/scapes.

Knowledge thus e/scapes in research-creations. Each e/scape “generates new forms of experience” (Manning, 2016, p. 27) that move beyond the dialectics of mind/body space/non-space, in/out, knowing/unknowing. Each elastic moment made possible by each step and the possibility that step generates a new middle space in which to e/scape humanisms that bind us and put us into standardized compartments. Each step is a threshold that creates moments of (e)scape.

Scapes become articulations of post-qualitative (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; St. Pierre, 2011) curations and creations to come. Each scape

hesitantly acknowledges that normative modes of inquiry and containment often are incapable of assessing its value; it generates forms of knowledge that are extralinguistic; it creates operative strategies for a mobile positioning that take these new forms of knowledge into account; it proposes concrete assemblages for rethinking the very question what is at stake in pedagogy, in practice and in collective experimentation. (Manning, 2016, p. 27)

Scapes create a future of inquiry that does not adhere to traditional norms. Language, images, and sounds cannot contain them. They propose assemblages we cannot yet imagine. These assemblages create hope of different possibilities, possibilities that we desire, possibilities we cannot not want, possibilities that are happening in between. Scapes create, proliferate, and experiment futures to come.

They are not full musical compositions so much as they are tentative drops in the beat.

Photoscape 3



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What might you **record**?

#WritingE/scapes

Footnotes

- ¹⁻² Webster's, 1934, p. 2230.
³⁻⁴ OED online, 2015, (last updated 1910).
⁵ Per the scape artists in this article.
⁶ Photo credits: Ulmer, 2016, Detroit, MI.
⁷ OED online, 2015, (last updated 2002).
⁸ Photo credit: Nordstrom, 2016, Memphis, TN.

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