

# Encountering Bodies, Prosthetics, and Bleeding: A Rhizomatic Arts-Based Inquiry

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## Abstract

*Once a resolute constructivist, new readings, new theories, new onto-epistemologies nudged me into an unfamiliar and frightening, yet familiar and generative, space during my first years on the tenure track. I found myself in an ambiguous and fluid space between the paradigms of interpretivist and deconstructionist posthuman and 'new' materialism theories, and turned to arts-based research to research-create and think-with new scholarship. This paper, artmaking, and video of my artmaking entangle and provide lines of flight through art-text encounters with what became three interconnected concepts that emerged in and, thus, guide this inquiry: bodies, prosthetics, and bleeding. These concepts emerged as generative entanglements of becoming different through artful doing. Inspired by the concept of rhizomatic assemblage, this work seeks to move through various openings, creating various slippages between bodies (of writing, of making, of images) to explore what artistic research-creation might become through post-qualitative inquiry.*

Key words: arts-based inquiry; post-qualitative inquiry; rhizome; body

## Link to video download:

<https://alabama.box.com/s/vc15h4s329gc60yl8b8d806z3hx8iutv>

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*Human artifacts and natural objects are generally just treated as the taken-for-granted material background and paraphernalia of our everyday lives. We rarely pause to consider the contingent processes through which our familiar, visible world comes into being...Art can...[encourage] us to observe the very 'fabric of brute meaning' as it takes shape (Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, p. 161).*

—Diana Coole (2010, p. 104)

Once a resolute constructivist, new readings, new theories, new onto-epistemologies nudged me into an unfamiliar and frightening, yet familiar and generative, space during my first years on the tenure track. The implications for what a paradigm shift would do to my thinking and my scholarship became a tension with which I struggled. In academia, one must establish a research trajectory, one must consider their work in relation to their other work—it all must fit, make sense in the eyes of the academy. *How would a paradigm shift work within the structure of tenure and promotion? Would the structure even render it visible? Did I have the confidence to become immersed into theories that required fluency in a new language, one that I struggled to understand? Why was I drawn to this work? What might help me make sense of this shift and its implications for teaching/scholarship/ methodology?*

These questions prompted a movement toward inquiry. As a former visual arts educator (and now qualitative methodologist), encounters with art as well as the process of making art become important spaces through which I come to inquire into and with the world. The pull toward artmaking during my second year on the tenure track invoked a force I could not ignore as I found myself in an ambiguous and fluid space between the paradigms of interpretivist and deconstructionist post-qualitative approaches to methodology (e.g., postmodern, poststructural, posthumanist [St. Pierre, 2013]) and, specifically, writing on the posthuman and what many call the ‘new’ materialisms<sup>1</sup> (St. Pierre, Jackson, & Mazzei, 2016). I began reading Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Karen Barad, Jane Bennett, and then Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, Rosi Braidotti, Charles Garoian, among others—all whose philosophical work challenged my previous ontological assumptions, my ways of being in and with the world. Shaken, disoriented, inspired—I created. I used art as a way to work through the movement of becoming different and to cultivate a space for the entanglement of body, theory, doing, and thinking.

The arts create opportunities to inquire differently, to rely upon different capacities that disrupt what we often encounter in academia by way of written scholarship. The arts are a visual language underpinned by qualities, affect, the ineffable (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Eisner, 2002) that affords a means of *creating* as inquiry just as I still value writing as inquiry (Richardson, 2000)—a both/and, not an either/or. Thus, arts-based research cultivated a space through which I could grapple with encountering complex theoretical concepts through the constraints and affordances of various materials (Eisner, 2002) while also attending to the materiality entangled in the encounters themselves. O’Donoghue (2015) described arts-based research as both actively intervening in and constructing the world and, inspired by the spaces of embodiment in artistic practice, Garoian (2013) wrote, “the research and practice of art does not merely reproduce spaces but creates them” (p. 6). These acts of intervening, constructing, and creating are coupled with a desire to interrogate how new theories nudged me away from my constructivist roots and effectively *un-rooted* my previous thinking, my previous ways of engaging in/with the world. This inquiry, then, became a process of disruption as much as it was a process of construction and, though writing was/is used, it was intricately entangled with artmaking.

In arts-based inquiry, there is a prevailing tension regarding the degree to which artists must explain their work (McNiff, 2008). *Do we include an explanatory statement? Do we let the work speak for itself? What is the role of discursive language when our work communicates, awakens, through nondiscursive qualities?* Emerging from a desire to be productively provoked by my circumstances, the idea was to create art as I engaged with different theories; however, the texts I read became generative to the art I created and the art created a lens through which I came to engage with the texts. The lines separating discursive and nondiscursive collapsed, productively, as I worked through what it meant to initiate

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<sup>1</sup> In invoking the term ‘new’ materialisms, it is important to acknowledge other philosophical traditions (not ‘new’ in a temporal sense) that have long traditions of non-anthropocentric ontologies and an attention to materiality.

movement toward new theories during the first years in a tenure-track position. Working with and through artmaking and writing, my inquiry became a rhizomatic assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), a multiplicity that unlike the linear root-system of a tree, “ceaselessly establishes connections” (p. 7) through complex, nonlinear, and decentered movements. Thus, connections were made between art materials, images, texts, and other bodies that will be discussed below, and for me, for *this*, it became important that text and image were both included for the reader just as they were both present for me.

Here, I map my inquiry not only through text and art, but through video. To be sure, the accompanying video/imagery are not a re-presentation of what is written here, nor is this writing a stable linguistic marker of what is visually depicted. They are an entanglement of thought, art, languages. They are fluid openings that do not explore what art *is* within this inquiry, rather they are lines of flight pursuing what art can *do* (O’Sullivan, 2008). They, then, are *doings*. In *doing*, video documentation was used as a visual mapping of the process of creation and as an accompaniment to this written work. Inspired by the videos used by Scott Shields (2016) that document her visual journal work, I began by using time-lapse recordings that speed up the process of creation in order to capture the event as a whole in a shorter time the duration of the actual event. In conjunction, I felt it was also important to stretch this duration, to play with time and slow the process down, altering the movement, momentum, and wanderings of the artistic moment. Thus, the video moves through fast and slow, with an aim of disrupting rhythm *productively* in order for the viewer-reader to experience the artmaking *differently*.

Through the *doings* of this visual-verbal inquiry process emerged an awareness of three interconnected concepts that entangled with readings of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Manning (2009), Manning and Massumi (2013), Bennett (2010) as well as those who take up similar ontologies. They are:

*bodies,*

*prosthetics,*

and *bleeding.*

While endeavoring to decenter the humanist subject through artmaking, while exploring what becomings emerged, I came to simultaneously inquire into and work with/through these three concepts in the art itself and, as explored below, in writing. In what follows, I re-present in some order what happened in untidy simultaneity. The writing, organized within the three concepts, is interspersed with narratives that illuminate how the concepts began to emerge within my arts-based inquiry. The method of analysis, then, is rhizomatic, flowing through artmaking (as captured by the video with still images below), writing (that narrativizes snippets of the creation process and also theorizes the *doing*), and the entanglements therein.

In this way, the reader is invited to engage with this work without linear expectation and, hopefully, with a playful disposition. Explore, then, the relationship between this text, the imagery, and the video in various sequences (text-imagery-video, video-imagery-text, text-video-text, etc.), immersing oneself into the changing cadence of the video, considering the individual artworks as well as the artworks in relation to one another, and, and, and... All this through an exploration of how bodies, prosthesis, and bleeding emerged into consciousness through a paradigm shifting, reading-creating-*doing* of an arts-based post-qualitative inquiry.

## Bodies

*In pressing and blotting bleeding tissue paper and removing it from the dimpled watercolor paper, fingertips absorb the colors despite repeated attempts at keeping them clean. Wafting into nostrils is the scent of matte medium and the oxygenated assemblage travels through the respiratory system and into the bloodstream. Medium also dries on hands, curling and peeling like dead skin. This skin-imprinted medium is scratched away with color-stained fingernails and, through this process, it becomes difficult to tell where body ends and medium begins. Over the small card's edges, viscous medium seeps onto the laminated wood desk where it is cleaned with a paper towel...*

*that is stained with bleeding tissue paper wiped from my fingers,*

*that is wet from blotting the brush used to apply the medium,*

*that is speckled with fingerprinted flakes.*

*Body upon body upon body encounter.*

What, then, does the body *do* in arts-based inquiry? Certainly, arts-based research is one space that takes seriously the implications of both thinking and expressing through various modalities and nondiscursive language (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008). A/r/tographers such as Barbara Bickel (2004) and Stephanie Springgay (2010a; 2010b) have explored living-inquiries through the visual arts in relation to their own bodies as women, as scholars, as artists and with Other's bodies. Bickel's (2004) gallery and public performance entitled *Who will read this body?* engages the artist and viewer in considering the human body's place in art, research, writing, performance, and education. Similarly, Springgay has explored her own body in a/r/tographic work and the "visceral experience of m/othering" (2008, p. 139) as well as the feminist pedagogy of touch in art/education (2010a; 2010b). Additionally, dancers, choreographers, and researchers Mary Beth Cancienne and Celeste Snowber (2003) proposed movement as a method of inquiry that prioritizes the body as a "site for knowledge" (p. 237). The tradition of valuing the body in arts-based research creates a generative space for post-qualitative work that decenters the normative practices of the academy—an academy that often values mind over body (Spry, 2001).

In an impassioned letter to the academy, Snowber (2011) wrote as a body marginalized by academe and explained: "The deeper truth is that you were all born with the knowledge that you are bodies, not that

you *have* bodies” (p. 191; emphasis in original). This interrogation of ownership is critical as we further consider the body in arts-based inquiry. “There is no *having* ideas,” Manning and Massumi (2014) wrote with strikingly similar emphasis, “*You* do not have ideas. The body itself, with its rhythmic milieu, *is* a motional-notion: a movement of thought...the thought-body” (p. 45; emphasis in original). These quotes speak out against a Cartesian duality where to *have* means there is something outside of our mind that it can acquire. In a Cartesian sense, there is a distinction as our minds *think* and our bodies *feel*. Further, through this (mis)conception, our minds think in spite of our bodies, not because of them. In contrast to Descartes’ philosophy, Snowber and Manning and Massumi’s words point to an onto-epistemology, the entanglement of the mind-body, an embodied thought-body, that values the impenetrable relation between the materiality of both body and mind. This entanglement that takes place on a DeleuzoGuattarian plane of immanence, “a virtual invisible plane that founds the perception of a continuum of movements...” in which “what moves as a body returns as the movement of thought” (Gil, 2002, p. 124). Here, thought enfolds and enfleshes body (and vice versa) where knowing, ideas, and meaning are always already immanent to our bodies.

It is important to note that Snowber, Gil, and Manning and Massumi are all writing about and through the movement of dance. Thus, the concept of the body becomes a vital force through which thought and meaning making occur in movement, in relation. However, such a philosophy of the body indeed extends beyond dance as every art form relies on the movement of bodies and, therefore, takes seriously the thought-body in all its ontogenetic potential. Gil (2002) wrote about a body consciousness through which the body’s entanglements in movement map new cartographies through which we come to understand an awareness of ourselves and our movements-of-the-world. It is not a consciousness of the mind that can come to know the body; rather, it is an immanent consciousness that comes “from within...movement” (p. 122). Creating through the visual arts, though the nature and intent of the movement often differs from dance, also carries the potential of cultivating such body consciousness—a consciousness from within the movement and rhythm of artmaking. As will be discussed next, our bodies in visual artmaking perform in relation to materials that are extensions of our always incomplete bodies. The materials enact, perform on us just as we perform through them. And the lines of ownership dissolve. And the immanence of consciousness (and knowledge) prevails.

Being bodies rather than having bodies, being ideas rather than having ideas. Becoming through the rhythms and motions that are encounters in/with the world. Undoubtedly, the body is important in arts-based research and, in creating the art, there is a new understanding between myself and the material bodies encountered, a new conception of bodily ‘ownership’ during artmaking—I do not *have* ideas that drive the art, the art *is* the idea. Different from my previous thinking-doing, I now become aware of the thought-body as a catalyst rather than a conduit. The catalyst as a relational enactment that is engaging before such performance is even realized yet always already occurring (a *preacceleration* [Manning, 2009]). To be sure, new ontologies saturate the paper just as the water applied with my brush *r e l a x e s* into its porous texture.

## Prosthetics

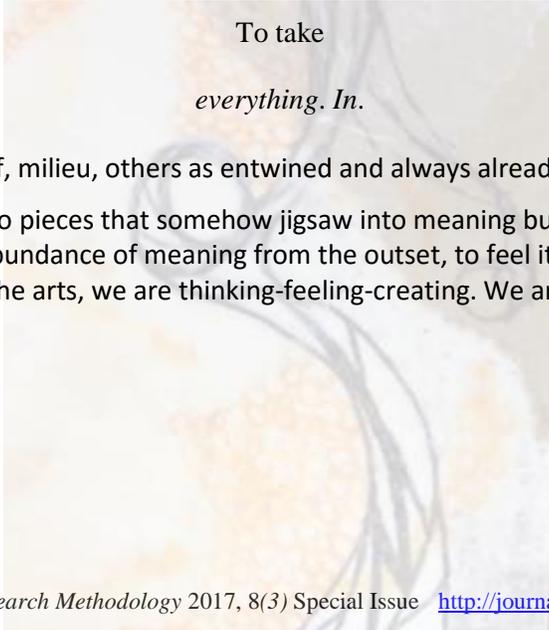
When we think with the body, it is easy to conceptualize the arts as also encompassing bodies-in-relation, where boundaries of the body become permeable, fluid, and productively complex and, as discussed above, bodies *encounter*. In referencing the relationality of dance, Manning (2009) explained that “there are always at least two bodies...even when [we] perceive one” (p. 13–14). The visual arts, then, might bring us to consider a multiplicity of bodies encompassing not just human form but the variety of nonhumans and even ideologies with which we engage. In other words, we are always already connected to relational bodies that nurture the potential for our encounters with, and performances in,

the world. “Connection,” Manning explained, “is not the locus of all beginnings, but the invisible-but-palpable link between bodies” (p. 14).

Through connections in and of the world, the body exceeds its perceived confinements in the boundary of skin and reaches toward possibilities of relationality, “toward that which is not yet” (Manning, 2009, p. 15). Such potential in arts-based research might be conceptualized through what Garoian (2013) called the prosthesis. Garoian explained, through artmaking, there is a prosthetic extension between the human body and the bodies of art materials where “bodies make artworks just as artworks make bodies” (p. 21). This prosthetic pedagogy is how Garoian (2013) explored a living-inquiry of art practice. Working visually with various art materials alongside theory nudges me into the very assemblage he works with and through in his book *The Prosthetic Pedagogy of Art*—plugging into personal narratives and the other multifarious social-cultural-aesthetic spaces we encounter.

Prostheses are often conceived as required by those who have lost body parts through accidents or surgery or those born with a need for such artificial assistance. Garoian (2013), however, is careful to note that prosthesis is not a metaphor of replacement, but is the extension of *all* bodies already fragmented and incomplete. He makes the point that arts research creates prosthetic spaces through this incessant incompleteness as operating through the connection of bodies via Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concepts of multiplicities, rhizomes, and assemblages. According to Garoian (2013), “artists create and open spaces into which existing knowledge can extend, interrelate, coexist, and where new ideas and relationships can emerge prosthetically” (p. 6). The prosthesis, then, is *of* the body, an extension that connects and enfleshes “the subject with the object of the body . . . through art research and practice” (p. 124). In considering this subject-object relation, Garoian cites Massumi’s (2002) proclamation that the object is not only a prosthetic extension of the body, but the body is also an extension of the prosthetic object. Thus, the primacy of the moving-body discussed above becomes disrupted when the sensations of subject-object with *doing* enmesh.

Accordingly, the bodies of subject and object merge through the visceral process of artmaking, opening the interstices between time, space, movement, and matter by providing a different language to both communicate *with* and connect *to* the world. As Manning and Massumi (2014) explored, the arts have the potential to cultivate a *dance of attention* that moves beyond an un-relational and numbingly *anaesthetic* (Dewey, 1934/1980) way of being and, instead, awakens and pays “attention to the full range of life’s texturing capacity” (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 4). In other words, it ponders how might we give our full attention to the layered experiences that present themselves to us each day.



To take  
*everything. In.*

To consider the bodies of self, milieu, others as entwined and always already dancing together.

Not to extract experience into pieces that somehow jigsaw into meaning but to allow ourselves to be overwhelmed with an overabundance of meaning from the outset, to feel it *all* in orchestral affect; in harmony and discord. With the arts, we are thinking-feeling-creating. We are attending-awakening-dancing. We-arts-become.

*The felt tip of the ink-pen presses into the paper leaving marks behind as a memento of the brief meeting. I feel the paper through the ink-pen and the paper likely senses me through the pressure-resistance we encounter. Our bodies entangle. My fingers and eyes follow in tandem the rhythmic swirling lines that paper and pen and thought create. They begin to look like organic bodies forming across the page, rhizomatic and connecting; curving, reaching, converging and separating. Are they ever truly separate? Lines cross over tan paper, over transparent paper subduing color underneath. Layering materials and imagery. Opacity, transparency. Circles and the color orange—the becoming-composition calls for more. Fingers and orange ink-pen circles generate staccato movements and, on the paper, circular beads accumulate pressing longingly against the dancing-body-forms. Pausing. Taking in the lingering memory of my body's movement with the movement in the becoming-composition with the movement of the forms with an awareness of the materials used. All part of the dance.*

*The bodies that come together in artistic creation sense other differently and suddenly, as Massumi (2002) wrote, "it is not clear who is used by whom" (p. 96). Are the materials a prosthesis of me, or am I a prosthesis of them?*

## Bleeding

*The bleeding tissue paper and I pause momentarily to consider the prosthetic connection of our bleeding bodies. Blood courses through human veins, pumped rhythmically and vigorously by a central muscle; it is integral to the health and life of our bodies. The skin of my fingers innocently accepts the tissue paper's blood and I think of my own blood underneath, merely separated by thin layers of dermis. Blood continues to surge within the containments of skin and vessels, perhaps unaware of what is observed on the surface. Expectedly, blood also emerges into consciousness when tiny triangles are cut with the x-acto knife. The knife's sharp point becomes an extension of my right hand and I become intensely aware of the potential severance of skin that would allow blood to pulse through existing boundaries. The meeting of bleeding skin and bloodied skin—a Deleuzoguattarian (1987) multiplicity—a rhizome expanding through the materiality of artmaking. Colored pencils, watercolor pencils, matte*

*medium, oil pastels, ink pens, eraser, drawing pencils, scissors, brushes, laminated wood desk, fabric covered chair, and, and, and... are all vibrant prosthetic bodies in this inquiry. Connecting, expanding, affecting, and sometimes bloodied and bleeding.*

When it comes to connective forces and the power of *things*, Bennett's (2010) work on the vitality of matter, a vital materialism, attends to the power of various bodies that are always already acting upon each other through a complex ethical-social-political ecology. Flattening the hierarchies between living and nonliving, subject and object, human and nonhuman, Bennett takes seriously the implications of relational (*thing-*) power between such entities. For the vital materialists, blood may pulse through the bodies of humans but we need not look to blood as a/the factor that determines whether or not something has the power to act upon us. Blood is not the only force of life in our world just as Braidotti (2006) reminds us of the power of/in *zoe*, "the generative vitality of non- or pre-human or animal life" (p. 37). Thus, other "things" pulse with vitality. Bleeding tissue paper, then, does not bleed in the human sense—there is no severance which prompts what is inside to seep outside. Instead, it *acts* like blood as the tissue becomes wet and leaches color, permeating surfaces, even staining skin. The material's very name, bleeding tissue paper, extends from a human-centered perception of the world as we always consider things through what we know and through *our* language.

The seeming passivity of materials takes on new meaning when our anthropocentric perspective shifts. This shift brings us back to the notion of ownership. The agency is in this togetherness—we do not simply enact power on the art materials used in our creation, they are actants that also perform upon us. Harkening back to the body and the prosthetic (as these are all interrelated), Garoian (2013) explained,

Hence, the prosthetic embodiment of art practice occurs at the chiasm, the intersection where the materiality of the sensate body of the artist and the corporeal materiality of clay, paint, stone, ink, paper, canvas diverge yet encroach upon each other, where each is seen through the other, and are mutually constituted in manifold ways. (p. 131)

Thus, the feeling body is certainly present but is not the only body of value in the artistic assemblage. What happens, then, when we make our bodies another material in creation, making its familiarity strange? What happens when we view our bodies as inextricably intertwined with the other bodies it encounters? In considering these questions, we see how a relational ontology creates a (re)newed vision for arts-based inquiries.

*My email dings and I pause from editing the video (accompanying this article) to click and read a review from a different manuscript: "Both reviewers still had some concerns with the way you employed D[eleuze] & G[uattari]'s concepts." The words pierce my skin and sting like an open physical wound exposed to the enemy of air. New bodies enter the relational artistic assemblage already in-process, the reviewer, the editor, the article resubmitted and long forgotten, the desktop computer, the impatient*

*“ding” that signals my attention. Bloodied, I look to the growing stack of poststructural and posthuman texts on my desk and sigh as they, too, enter into consciousness. Even as my work moves toward and with new philosophical orientations, the email reminds me how difficult this shift has been. It reminds me of my insecurities in ‘claiming’ my work as post- even as I prepare my arts-based work for this special issue, and it jolts me into a space where I became acutely aware of my becoming through my raw wounds.*

*Two years ago, I remember introducing myself at a session during the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. One of the presenters, Brooke Hofsess, sat beside me as I talked and I noticed her hand etching the word “post-ing” into an open book she held in her lap. The blood warmed my face as I spoke, tentatively, about my emerging theoretical anxieties and insecurities. Now, the word post-ing, what she later explained to me as a “living-theorizing as becoming” (Hofsess, personal communication) still lingers and affects as I consider my place in the present email-art-memory assemblage. Vagle and Hofsess (2016) have discussed posting in relation to phenomenology, drawing upon DeleuzoGuattarin philosophy. They explained, “meanings run through relations and are constantly being constructed, deconstructed, blurred, and disrupted” and to “treat phenomena as entangled ramblings constantly in states of becoming” (p. 342). As productive as becoming might be (and it is, I see this in my shift, in my artmaking...), it can also feel like a wearisome process, calling upon immense vulnerabilities through an incessant openness to the not-yet. To always be open to shifts, sometimes violent, and unexpected intensities can be tiring and can even batter bodies.*

*Paper, email, art, memories.*

*Becoming post. Post-ing.*

*Wounded.*

*Bloodied, I stagger back to the art materials laid out like a chef's mis en place<sup>2</sup> on the worktable and exhale forcefully before resuming. The bleeding tissue paper and I use each other sparingly.*

*There is already too much blood.*

### **Coda: *Post-ing*: Becoming Post-Qualitative with/through the Arts**

*The formation of a body, whether human, animal, or artistic, is a mysterious synthesis in a world where anything can happen and already is.*

–Stephen Zagala (2002, p. 39)

From the outset, the form this inquiry would take was unclear. I proceeded with wild abandon from my constructivist ways and looked for openings in which post-qualitative approaches could infiltrate my arts-based *doing*. Inspired by the concept of rhizomatic assemblage, this work sought to move through various openings, creating “slippage[s] between the body and its verbal [and visual] supplement” (Garoian, 2013, p. 88) that allowed both myself and the reader/viewer to follow various lines of flight. What guided me was a desire to research-create through an arts-based practice and to theorize-play in the ambiguous interstices of my paradigm shift—a moving toward post-qualitative thinking. Various and entangling bodies brought forth a new awareness of the Self-in-relation (Barad, 2007), heightening my sensitivity to the *doings* of what this shift was doing with me as new theories infiltrated my artistic inquiry. Thus, bodies, prosthetics, and bleeding nudged me into the most generative spaces for considering the entanglements of becoming-post-qualitative with artmaking.

*Becoming* is a concept used often in poststructural and posthuman scholarship. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain lines of becoming as not situated or defined by points but as between, always already in the middle, with no beginning or end. Becoming-post-qualitative did not begin as I started reading such scholarship, nor did it begin as I started the tenure track. Rather, this inquiry is always and only a middle. In normative inquiry, work is often more linear, or arborescent in the words of Deleuze and Guattari. Becoming, however, is a “break away from arborescence” (p. 294) toward multiple rhizomatic movements that rupture, offshoot, shatter, yet “always tie back to one another” (p. 9). In this inquiry, artfully becoming-post sought to embody this rhizomatic movement. Despite the necessity for clarity in

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<sup>2</sup> *Mis en place* is a French term that describes the preparation and laying out a chef's ingredients prior to cooking.

this written document, to make it accessible as a prosthesis so that it might become an extension with other work (the cited theorists, my own, the reader's...), the movement between image and text should be perceived as rhizomatic. Further, as an arts-based inquiry, it was important to break from the normativity of only-writing I wanted to make visible research-creation in all its messiness and layers of meaning.

The notion of normativity brings me to a final methodological consideration of the very nature of arts-based inquiry, of this inquiry. Through this inquiry, I come back to O'Sullivan's (2006) statement, "art encourages us to feel and reason in new ways" (p. 68). Such new ways break through the habits and the territories of writing as re-presentation and provide different lines of flight to escape normative research practices. In the process of creating the art *and* reading *and* writing *and* documenting (and, notably, all of these processes also creating me), I had to resist the impulse to simply write about creation. To write about what was done; to write about the content of what is produced, the compositions, and the aesthetic decisions. This is often how artists are taught to dialogue about their work. Instead, the focus shifts to what the process of making art is doing, what it is doing with/of me. Zagala (2002) explained,

To write 'about' art would be actually to pass into an aesthetic territory such that subject and object positions do not precede the habitat, but are extracted from it. In fact, it is no longer a matter of writing *about* art, but of writing *with* art... (p. 39)

Writing *with* art rather than writing *about* art takes on a different meaning much like the notions of bodily ownership discussed above (*being* rather than *having*). To irrupt normative writing practices, it became important for the writing, the art, and the video to function in highly relational ways that were not re-presentations of one another but carried the potential for something new. How artmaking might invoke inquiries *with* the materials and bring forth the encountering, entangling, the assemblage of bodies, prosthesis, and bleeding. The art with the writing, then, are not re-presentations of experience, they *are* experience. They create it. It is an extension of Richardson's (2002) *writing as inquiry to research-writing-creating as inquiry*, where each process can only be realized in all their potential through one another.

Thus, I (re)turn to creation.

*The small paintbrushes used to apply matte medium and watercolor paint shed loose bristles on the paper and the bristles stick in the viscous adhesive. These remnants dry, become part of the becoming-compositions, adding texture, adding color, adding another body to the ongoing assemblage. Fingers still stained with bleeding tissue paper and now slippery with flecks of oil pastels, scrubbing wet paper towel on laminated desk to remove errant marks and careless drips. It is clear how much the various bodies have entangled in one another during our doing. Each part of our becoming with/in post-qualitative inquiry.*

*We-arts-become.*

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