# Fielding Fractured Masculinities: Implications for Nonrepresentational Educational Research Methodology in the Philosophy of Erin Manning

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## Abstract

In this paper, I put Erin Manning's philosophical project into conversation with gender theory and consider possibilities regarding what it means to theorize masculinities in educational research methodology. To do this, I first speak to the urgency for reconceptualizing masculinities in education, outline how educational researchers have previously theorized the field, and problematize previous work that theorized masculinity as a relatively stable and monolithic identity marker. Following this, I consider what Manning's process philosophy might offer educational researchers in the field of masculinities. In thinking with masculinities, the ongoing and lived experiences of gender, and Manning, I offer "fractured masculinities," which theorizes masculinities as multiple, mobile, relational, contextual, intersectional, and fractured.

**Keywords:** Erin Manning, fractured masculinities, qualitative inquiry, qualitative methodology, monocratic masculinity, hegemonic masculinity, nonrepresentational methodology

## Introduction

I drafted this manuscript during and immediately following the 2020 United States presidential election. In the months preceding and through those that followed, outgoing president, Donald Trump, incited an insurrection during which his supporters invaded the US Capitol. While the insurrection was a direct attack on the foundation of democratic governance, a more enduring concern for me stemmed from the ways in which Trump continued to proliferate in his defeat.

Although misinformation remains foundational to his conspiracy campaign, his wielding of presidential power for personal gain and his refusal (or inability) to recognize reality concern me less than his continuing to benefit from massive popular support among rural constituencies in the United States. What concerns me most about Trump's unrelenting support centers on the popularity of his endless performances of "monocratic masculinity" (Sweet & Carlson, 2018). Briefly, I define monocratic masculinity as masculinities that are immobile, political, autocratic, absolutist, and tyrannical. Trump's constituency does not merely accept these masculine expressions; its members laud and emulate them even in the wake of the insurrection. People applaud him while (because?) he persists in performing monocratic masculinities that consistently show disdain for reality and anyone who opposes him. Many appreciate and emulate his tyrannical denial of reality, for media reports after the election consistently reveal many of his followers resolutely refusing the legal outcome. (See, for instance, Verma et al., 2020). These behaviors are consistent with monocratic masculinity as they remain aligned with notions of absolutist and immobile ways of being. To be clear, these extend beyond Trump's performances and proliferate into the fabric of culture and life in the United States.

The very real concern regarding Trump's popularity serves as a wake-up call regarding how masculinities are being produced and theorized in educational practices. Given the combination of the resurgence and acceptance of monocratic masculinity and its harmful and destructive potential, this paper speaks to the need for rethinking and redoing how researchers theorize masculinities in educational methodologies and, correspondingly, how systemic structures such as schools socialize young people to understand and perform masculinities.

Thus, in keeping with this special issue's theme, the purpose of this paper is to consider the ways in which Manning's process philosophy may enrich current scholarship in the field of masculinities. The recent proliferation and acceptance of monocratic masculinity may be a pivotal moment regarding how researchers are theorizing masculinities in educational research. As the opening anecdote indicates, there is much researchers do not understand about how masculinities proliferate. It is also clear that the ways educational researchers theorize masculinities prove insufficient for the complexity of lived experiences. That said, I do not believe that any one theory can articulate the complexity of these experiences or the proliferation of monocratic masculinity. It would be naïve to assume so. However, this paper hopes to challenge static representational methodologies that currently predominate in research regarding masculinities in education. In doing so, it considers nonrepresentational experiences of masculinities. To achieve these ends, I organize the paper in the following way: First, I offer a brief outline of the ways that some educational researchers have engaged masculinities and then discuss what feminisms might offer the field. Following this, I consider how Manning's philosophical project puts masculinities in motion and shifts the field of masculinities away from static representation toward masculinities always in the making. As will be detailed below, many scholars theorize masculinities as ongoing and becoming, but the field of masculinities in general continues to rely on relatively static representational methods that draw from Connell's (2005) highly influential "hegemonic masculinity." Ultimately, this paper leans on Manning to contribute to the theoretical discourse in

masculinities in education through offering a new direction in theorizing masculinities that I call, "fractured masculinities."

## Fielding Masculinities

In general, masculinities continues to be under-theorized in the field of educational research, which often considers it a monolithic structure over-seeing somewhat stable identity markers (Gurian & Stevens, 2005; Klindlon et al., 2000; Sax, 2007; Tyre, 2008). The field reins in masculinities so that educators can institute "best practices" and "evidence-based" instructional methods to improve (cisgender) boys' academic achievement. Reining in masculinities persists as the modus operandi among educators and researchers. Though some scholars challenge these under-theorizations as they do not take into account the complexity of the lived experience of masculinities (see, for instance, Butler, Haywood, Mac an Ghaill, McCready, Reeser), in what follows I situate how the field foregrounds Connell's (2005) work.

The vast majority of masculinities scholars in education ground their work in Connell's (2005) hegemonic masculinity. For instance, in the introduction to their edited book, *Queer Masculinities* (2012), Landreau and Rodriguez pointed out that the authors of nearly all seventeen chapters use hegemonic masculinity to frame their work. For Connell, masculinity is understood as a configuration of practices always in relation to performances of femininity (1989, 2005, 2007). She further argues that this relationship holds regardless of socio-historical contexts. However, she maintains that masculinity as defined in opposition to femininity presupposes cultural practices that conceive men and women as opposed character types, a notion that completely falls apart in the existence of cismen who display feminine qualities, or ciswomen who display masculine qualities, or non-binary, agender or two-spirit folks. But, for Connell, masculinity can only arise within a system of gender relations where hegemonic masculinity is mobile, relational, and contextual. It is "the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position that is always contestable" (Connell, 2005, p. 76). Hegemonic masculinity will reflect whatever customs the culture privileging it values. As such, hegemonic masculinity is both omnipresent, yet taken for granted and unnoticed. Landreau and Rodriguez (2012) asserted that hegemonic masculinity is "the visible/invisible authority within, against, or from which all significant identities and identifications are made" (p. 2). Hence, people only notice when individuals perform gender in non-hegemonic ways.

In addition to hegemonic masculinity, Connell (2005) outlined subordinate, complicit, and marginalized masculinities. Briefly, subordinate masculinities include those that "are expelled from the circle of legitimacy," and marked with "symbolic blurring with femininity" (Connell, 2005, p. 79). Complicit masculinities include masculinities constructed in such a way that they receive a "patriarchal dividend" (the advantages some people gain through the subordination of women) without conspicuously advocating for the patriarchy. Lastly, marginalized masculinities refer to the interplay between dominant and subordinated social classes or ethnic groups. Hence, Connell identifies marginalized masculinities by their lack of power or agency relative to the hegemonic group. Hegemonic masculinity and the three relational masculinities defined by their relationship

to it exist as both historically mobile and in the context of concurrent mores.

## Problematizing Hegemonic Masculinities

Hegemonic masculinity and its corresponding theoretical assumptions provide the foundation upon which many scholars build their studies, but this foundation proves problematic. On the one hand, Connell insists that an essentialized, stable gendered subject is an impossibility (2005, p. 95). On the other, she presupposes a gender binary, offers categories that fix archetypes, and confines people to relatively stable identity markers. She attempts to explain away this fundamental paradox by stating that hegemonic positions are mobile, that they are "not fixed stereotypes but configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships" (2005, p. 81). She acknowledges the dangers inherent in fixed stereotypes, yet many scholars theorize hegemonic masculinity as relatively stable.

While hegemonic masculinity remains a cornerstone in the field of masculinities, some scholars have investigated multiplicity and diversity of lived experiences. In their piece expanding understandings of "diverse masculinities" Mac an Ghaill and Haywood (2012) argued that straight boys' masculinities are not necessarily always everywhere founded in heterosexist and misogynistic notions of manhood. On the contrary, they wrote that hegemonic performances of masculinity proved incongruous with many boys' actual thoughts and feelings. To say it another way, boys often performed hegemonic masculinities even when they acknowledged that these behaviors were harmful to themselves and/or others. Thus, Mac an Ghaill and Haywood posited that what was previously considered "normal" heterosexual masculinity may be an impossibility. They argued that researchers should let go of masculinity as a category that can relegate gender as a defining contributor to behavior. In destabilizing gender-body configuration correlation they laid the groundwork for moving toward a "post-masculinity studies." They asserted that linking biological categories male/female to corresponding gender subjectivities limits understandings of sexuality and gender, and these limitations reinforce dangerous heteropatriarchal discourses that align behavior with body configuration.

## Fluid Masculinities

Unlike Connell who provided multiple, but relatively concrete masculine types, Reeser argued that masculinities are far from stable or fixed. In *Masculinities in Theory* (2010) he drew from feminisms to focus on the instability of masculine categories as he worked to unseat both masculine stereotypes and masculine "identity." Rather than a male gender identity, he argued that people reconceive assumptions related to identity and conceptualize lived experience as "gender subjectivities." He is also highly critical of Connell's theory regarding hegemonic masculinity arguing that it legitimizes heteropatriarchy, thus subordinating women. Like Butler's (1990, 1993, 2004) work in feminisms, which theorizes gender as an ongoing series of performative acts that is neither stable nor fixed, and in contrast to Connell, Reeser approaches masculinities as inextricably linked to poststructuralism because it is inherently unstable, situated, and fluid.

Reeser argued that Connell relies on structuralism and her conception of masculinities risks fixing archetypes rather than allowing for fluid, malleable, and porous subjectivities. In contrast, Reeser posited that even seemingly original models of masculinity are always a hybrid, always evolving, and thus proposed that masculinity be thought of as an ideology deeply embedded in race, class, and politics. Rather than a priori "Masculinity," he considered masculinities as ideologies that both create institutions, and are created by them. This framing provides a way of understanding masculinities as constructed through myths, discourses, images and practices where these entities interrelate in rhizomatic and always shifting interactions. Reeser further distanced himself from Connell theorizing that multiple masculine ideologies are in constant discourse in a relational and continual struggle for power rather than one privileged masculine type that shifts to maintain power. For Reeser, the ongoing dialogues among these various masculine ideologies produce new ideologies that likewise negotiate their position in masculinities' discourse. Therefore, masculinities are a series of possibilities that are constantly in flux and very much outside a binary structure. However, the tension between ideological manhood and the lived experience of actual male subjectivity, Reeser wrote, drives the general consensus regarding people's ideologies of masculinity. Specifically, he argued that "contradictory forms of masculinity are always in simultaneous circulation" (2010, p. 221). Reeser asserted that innumerable forms of masculinity always-already contradict one another, but he did not insist on one privileged form of masculinity. In this way, he provided a framework for how masculinities are in relation and in tension, which I put into conversation with Manning's work in the following section. However, I reiterate that a retheorization of masculinities in education proves profoundly important because the grounding ontology for much of the methodological approaches to boys in school insists on a stable monolithic structure premised in "traditional" masculine identity markers. As will be detailed below, Manning's process philosophy offers a shift from the ways that scholars have been thinking with masculinities in education.

## Diverse Masculinities

McCready (2010) problematized some of the popular trade books regarding boys' education, which tend to ignore diversities within masculinities. He wrote that these books essentialize boys' experiences and dismiss race, sexuality, and class as factors in boys' educations. In addition to his critique, the trade books also largely ignore the diversity within a single person's lived experiences of masculinities and how these experiences exist beyond anachronistic notions of both mind-body dualism and body configuration-gender alignment. That is to say, essentialist perspectives dominate trade books and attempt inclusion by bounding masculine experiences. Overall, these popular texts imply that all boys' problems are essentially the same; thus, all male-identifying students should be taught in the same ways. This kind of identity politics privileges one monolithic, yet marginalized, "identity." In this project, however, I problematize these essentializing and power-laden propositions. As will be detailed throughout, I ground fractured masculinities in Manning's philosophy to extend post-masculinities and include Reeser's philosophical project. This extension provides a critical rethinking of the ways educational researchers have been relying on representational methodologies that continue to prove insufficient when considering the

complexities regarding the lived experiences of gender. Instead of aligning masculinities with "traditional" masculine identity markers, I seek to consider masculinities as a bodying always in relation to its surrounding materiality that continually undergo rupture. In this way, gender is a relational process of embodying that is not contingent on body configuration. For, the body is not resigned to either/or, masculine/feminine, but always already both/and. Drawing from Manning, fractured masculinities reframes gender to account for the influences of materiality and the in-process relationality of bodies continually reaching toward.

## Asignifying Fracturing Embodiments

Judith Butler remains highly influential in gender theory, but her onto-epistemological approach greatly privileges discourse over embodied experiences; she insists that gender does not exist without language (Butler, 1993, 2001). In *The Politics of Touch* (2007), Manning offers a critique of Butler where Manning considers relational experiences of the body. Though both would agree that lives can only be understood in terms of relational experiences, Butler's favoring discourse privileges neck-up cognition over neck-down sensation, relationality, and affective experience. However, Manning is careful not to reject Butler's contribution and seeks to "broaden the problematic initiated by Butler in *Bodies that Matter*" (2007, p. 86). Manning does not discard the influence that language has on the politics of gender, but she is quick to point out, "What a body can do exceeds linguistic signification" (2007, p. 86). Thus, she theorizes that language proves incapable of containing the possibilities that occur through everyday embodiment of people experiencing life.

According to Manning, language provides a medium that stabilizes and calms the affective bodily experience of living, thereby limiting the diversity present in reiterated performances of gender. But, focusing on the embodied aspects of gender creates opportunities for reconsidering the ways that bodies are marked for intelligibility. She theorizes the body as malleable, in process, and always reaching toward becoming. This carries valuable possibilities for refiguring the ways bodies produce norms and for how I am theorizing fractured masculinities. She writes,

> *The presumption that the body is concrete is based, too often, on a fixed, territorialized, secure entity. If we approach the body's surfaces as asignifying we begin to be aware of the manner in which bodies are marked for their coherence through recognizable signs of race, sex, gender, ethnicity. (2007, p. 112)*

Beginning with the epistemological assumption that bodies on their own signify nothing regarding socio-historical identity markers opens understandings for how these cultural identity markers construct intelligibility. Manning implies that identity markers can only be understood in context and in relation, and preconceived understandings of identity markers such as race, sex, gender, and ethnicity mark bodies in particular ways. Further, she argues that relying on signification as the basis for experience may foreclose less rational, but still vital ways of knowing: "There may be nothing less rigorous or more apolitical than the acceptance of the signification as the basis for experience. This only reinstates the dichotomy between reason and sensing" (Manning, 2007, p.

114). She illustrates that the bodily experience of sensing offers ways of knowing that extend beyond Enlightenment reason. While Manning couches her discussion of signification in the political, I think that foregrounding an asignifying body is an onto-epistemological move that may provide previously untheorized and necessary ways for revisioning discussions of masculinities. While Reeser's and Butler's work relies heavily on discourse, Manning's philosophical project carries the potential to move the field of masculinities away from a signified, linguistic center and toward an embodied and affective relational experience.

## Relation

Allowing the explorations of masculinities to intersect with embodied experiences may provide significant insights into gender theory. Manning theorizes that bodies are always in relation, yet she challenges the notion that the human is at the center of these relational experiences (2013). That is to say, we are in relation with objects, architecture, and textures that surround us, and these materialities are likewise in relation with bodies. As Manning writes, "A body is not separate from its milieu" (2013, p. 26). Bodies are deeply embedded in their contexts, always in relation as they fold into and through the materiality of their existences. While this new material perspective resituates post-structural feminisms' onto-epistemological approach to gender, it also recognizes the body as in a state of constant becoming. For Manning, embodiment is a relational, collective, and ongoing process that occurs through a continual and never finished becoming. It is always in the making. "Bodying does not happen once and for all on a linear timeline," Manning writes, "New processes are continuously underway" (2013, p. 23). Thus, bodying is a non-linear always occurring process during which new possibilities for bodies' potentials are repeatedly beginning and playing out. As Manning explains, "The body is a verb" (2013, p. 21). The body is always-already active, bodying action, reaching toward.

Reaching toward, for Manning, is a communal practice where bodies consistently challenge the limits of the body, and it requires the body to exceed its own boundaries. In touching, bodies challenge dichotomous thinking of self and other as touch extends selves through others and allows for the intertextual fluidity, which are created through the relational interactions of reaching toward (Manning 2007, p. 52). In this way, reaching toward becomes an act of resistance because it rejects defining the body within certain parameters and simultaneously opens the potential for infinite possibilities. Spinoza reminds us: "We do not even know what a body can do" (Spinoza in Manning, 2007, p. 143). Manning offers a novel perspective on embodied gender which deviates from post-structural feminisms in that it foregrounds the body in place of signification. Similarly, this essay offers a contribution to the field of masculinities by theorizing the embodiment of relation within lived experiences.

## In the Act

Manning (2016) writes that previous humanist approaches to understanding difference place increased emphasis on the human agent in what she describes as the central tenet of neurotypicality. She continues to explain that this tenet involves the "wide-ranging belief that

there is an independence of thought and being attributable above all to the human, a better-than-ness accorded to our neurology" (p. 3). As she puts it, this tacit identity politics "frames our idea of which lives are worth fighting for, which lives are worth educating, which lives are worth living, and which lives are worth saving" (p. 3). She makes a clear argument that reliance on neurotypicality proves unjust for those who do not or cannot exist within its confines.

At the same time, neurotypical discourse continues to be dominated by major and grand gestures, while the nuanced minor gesture is typically cast aside and often goes undetected. Yet, Manning writes, the minor gesture is always everywhere and exists in a state of constant indeterminacy where it "creates sites of dissonance . . . that open experience to new modes of expression" (2016 p. 2). The minor gesture has more potential than the human-centered "I," which speaks to individualism and humanism. Manning asserts that "a minor gesture is already a collective expression, collective in the sense that it emboldens the art of participation" (2016, p. 75). The minor is a collective engagement that cannot be separated from *agencement* and both have important implications for methodologies involving masculinities.

## Agencement

Even though Manning's work presumes that stability is an impossibility, she makes room for moments of clarity and intelligibility. She writes that we live through brief moments where "the world concretely appears" (Massumi, 2002, p.98, as cited in Manning, 2007, p. 45). She develops this idea throughout her work but does not deviate from its essence. Hence, although everything exists in a relational process of becoming, there are brief moments where existence appears in a crystallized form, but these "apparitional moments" (Sweet, 2019a) are fleeting and quickly return to a state of constant formation. Though what I am calling apparitional moments of recognizable existence occasionally appear, Manning draws from Spinoza to make clear that subjects do not have volition with regards to the actions in which they partake. She writes that volition is not ahead of experience, but in experience, in the between of the conscious and the unconscious, actively composing the ecology of practices (2016, p. 149). With this in mind, I consider how the assemblage that comprises the space and emplaced subject work together to constitute lived subjectivities and fractured masculinities. For Manning, this collection of intensities constitutes *agencement.* She writes that *agencement* is the directed intensity of a compositional movement that layers the field of experience (2016, p. 134 & p. 137); *agencement* is movement comprised and in relation with the ecology of practices and materiality that occur with individuals' emplacement in space; "Ask not what the subject did, but what the event proposed – this is *agencement*" (p. 143). The subject's emplacement in an event allows for particular possibilities, and this moment of *agencement* blurs distinctions among materiality, movement, minor gestures and relationality. Educational research in the field of masculinities often focuses on individual volition, but *agencement* compels researchers to rethink how events and relationality produce masculinities. This provides an ontological shift that scholars should take into consideration for theorizing masculinities; rather than ask what an individual did, ask what the event proposed.

## Practices of Schooling

Manning attests that there exists a "mirage" of volition in education (2016, p. 140). In her discussion of *agencement*, she considers the ways in which the subject is socialized through a neurotypical discourse that does not just favor volition, but rather, she argues, the neurotypical experience is incapable of conceptualizing human behavior as something other than volitional.

> *Agencement, like its sister concept the minor gesture, comes from the field from the region of experience toward which and through which the event is unfolding. In neurotypical experience, this process of the shift from the as-yet-unparsed to perception is so backgrounded that the agencement necessary to bring things into focus seems to occur volitionally, in the subject, in the individual body. . . . This is a mirage supported by the identity politics of neurotypical able-bodiedness, fed to most of us from earliest childhood by our cultural surrounds and bolstered by our education. (2016, p. 140)*

Practices such as high-stakes testing, punitive disciplinary policies, and a focus on sanctioning student behavior imply that students are making agentive and volitional choices. I do not make this claim; the ecologies of school practices are so impenetrably overbearing that volition is not a possibility. However, the assemblage of school practices provides the context for the always-already presence of *agencement* to be noticed, for minor gestures to be enacted, and this creates opportunities to think with a body's more-than and how bodies in relation fracture masculinities. That is to say, the punitive and disciplining practices of school produce *agencement* and minor gestures. I argue that educational research methodologies should refocus toward *agencement* and the minor rather than what has previously been considered agentive or volitional.

*Agencement* is often translated to "assemblage," but, according to Manning, assemblage is too often read as a concrete and static structure. On the other hand, "*Agencement* . . . carries with it a sense of a mobilizing—its movement-toward has an undeniable effect on the conditions of experience in their unfolding" (2016, p. 134). That is, *agencement* is a mobilization of events that create the conditions through which experience unfolds. The experience unfolds in-action, but the action is not dictated by a subject; rather, it is a directionally bound movement-toward. It is within this movement-toward-experience that apparitional moments appear. These apparitional moments manifest when the world becomes recognizable. As stated above, Manning's philosophy presumes the impossibility of stability and concreteness, yet she allows for identifiable instances. Further, in her introduction to the concept of minor gesture, Manning draws from Whitehead when she writes, "Actual occasions are the coming into being of indeterminacy where potentiality passes into realization" (Manning, 2016, p. 2). Potentiality of the event exceeds the sum of its parts and passes into the more-than of realization in a fleeting, ephemeral, and always incomplete apparitional moment. The choreography of school both attempts to contain student movement, and presumes volitional choice. However, these practices may provide the conditions for *agencement* to be recognizable.

Regarding *agencement*, she asks: "How can we articulate in language the *agencements* at the

heart of the event's dance of attention in a way that doesn't simply take us back to the neurotypical account of experience and its alignment to subject-centered agency?" (2016, p. 120). In this question, she articulates an important difficulty that occurs when attempting to write about human interaction while using the philosophical frame she offers. On some level, using language to write about human-material interaction to draw out understandings from happenings and participant events appears antithetical to Manning's philosophy. In an attempt to consider the ineffable of human subjectivities, I offer figures 1–3 below to contextualize the apparitional moments that *agencement* can sometimes produce. These figures are products of a school assignment that three 14-year-old, male-identifying students completed as part of their English Language Arts curriculum. For this assignment, the instructor provided the following guidelines for students to create their six-word memoirs:

*Write something that sums you up as a person!*

*Think about major events that have shaped you*

*How would like us to remember you?*

*Write a complete idea or phrase; don't just write unrelated words.*
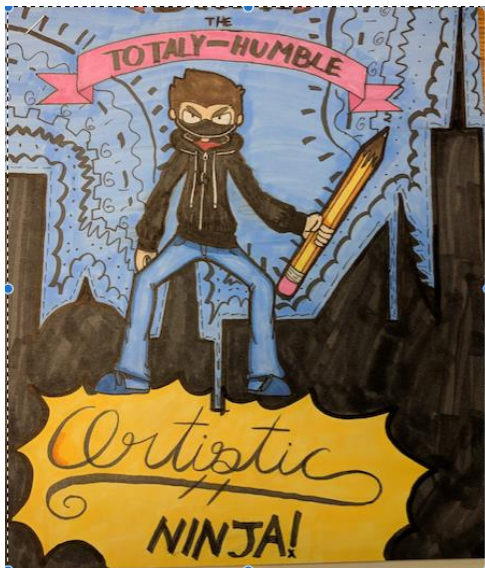
*Figure 1*
Andrew's Six-Word Memoir



*Figure 2*
Michael's Six-Word Memoir

*Figure 3*

Danny's Six-Word Memoir

The memoirs and the students have particular significances in particular times, which indicate what Manning calls a mode of existence. As she writes, "Modes of existence are precarious. They emerge as they are needed and then, like actual occasions, they perish" (2016, p. 90). The six-word memoirs function in modes of existence revealing students' subjectivities but then dissolve into something new as contexts move through time; they pixilate into an image and then dissipate. Further, Manning asserts that modes of existence are not defined by their stability, but rather by the ways in which they influence and affect all that they contact. Taken this way, the memoirs themselves become agentive and influence both how the teacher understands the

student, and how the students see themselves at a particular apparitional moment. The memoirs become in the process of creation, in the process of *agencement*; they are "not what the subject did, but what the event proposed" (2016, p. 140). Correspondingly, fractured masculinities in educational research considers how the events and materials influence the processual production of collective subjectivities.

As indicated above, *agencement* and the minor are closely tethered, and both prove ineffable. Given the ineffable nature of writing about *agencement* and the minor, this essay is an admittedly challenging attempt to explore possibilities that might emerge from the processes and practices of writing about these phenomena. However, the six-word memoirs present apparitional moments where three young people are in the process of understanding and performing masculine subjectivities. For instance, figure one reveals an apparitional moment during which the student artistically represents a fluid and shifting understanding of himself where the colors and photo negative effect indicate a complexity that language or other less nuanced methodologies may overlook. What strikes me most about figure two is the artist's perspective on being hyper visible and angelic. This apparitional moment renders a student whose experience with the world exists in a tension between hyper-visibility and the negative effects that this hyper-visibility can bring. All three of these pieces are apparitional moments and each likewise reveals a fracturing that shows how the students perceptions of masculinities are always becoming, always reaching toward, and always in the making.

## Technicity – Schooling Masculinities

"Technicity would be the experience of how the work opens itself to its potential, to its more-than. This quality of the more-than that is technicity is ineffable; it can be felt, but it is difficult to articulate in language" (Manning, 2016, p. 40). The more-than in the case of school choreography include the subtle interactions and movements students engage as they do school-typical activities. As Manning writes, language remains insufficient for considering the more-than of technicity. However, I attempt to discuss how the disciplining choreography of school may open possibilities for examining the more than of sensing, which offers much for how I theorize fractured masculinities and for how educational researchers and practitioners may consider gender subjectivities. Specifically, the regulation of student movement creates opportunities for differences that extend beyond the choreography. Over-determined choreography of student movement is the technique that makes possible the more-than of felt experience. It is the technique of movement that allows the technicity to become. In the highly structured environment that persists in school contexts and choreographs student bodies, the technicity manifested is a minor movement that may present in a variety of ways. Within many schools, students remain docile and endure constant and specific behavior adjustments. Amid this kind of sovereign and disciplinary power resistance is always already enacted through bodily relation and attunement where students attempt to use these opportunities to explore possibilities through technicity that allows them to break through the regimented structure of technique. These minor moves allow the bodies to matter differently, exceeding the choreography, becoming more-than,

and fracturing masculinities. That is, the choreography produces resistance where bodies and the process of technicity allow for the possibilities of difference. To be clear, I am not arguing that students have subject-centered volition in the more-than technicity can provide. Quite the contrary. The movement of the event produce technicity and the minor.

## Nonrepresentational Fracturing

Regarding representation, Manning (2009) writes, "Expression and representation are at two ends of the spectrum of perception. Representation is the coming-together after the fact of an event already constituted. Expression moves-with the very act of perception" (p. 94). Representation, then, is the portrayal of a past event happening during which relational exchanges occur among materials and individuals in time-space. On the other hand, expression "moves-with" perception. To say it another way, expression works with perception to co-create affective intensities so that the event allows expression, perception, and sensation to co-create felt perceptions. Similarly, fractured masculinities are always already manifesting among perception, sensation, and relational materiality and individuals. They are pieced together, fracturing, relational, embodied and multiple. Event-happenings and their perception cannot be neatly separated and are always conspirators in how subjects and readers feel representation and expression. Correspondingly, Manning writes, "Perception and representation are no longer a sustainable dichotomy: they are different rhythms of a singular event of relation" (2009, p. 111). To be clear, representations do not correlate with knowing, but they engage perception for how affect, sensing and meaning co-mingle through representation-perception. However, fractured masculinities emerges from non-representational gendering, emphasizing the importance of fracturing and diversity rather than the focusing on representation.

Many researchers have situated the human being as the center of knowledge production and some traditional educational research methodologies have privileged "discourse, mind and culture, over matter, body, and nature" (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2018, p. 469). Further, practices of schooling have emphasized stillness, discourse, and mind over body and movement. The highly disciplined practices of schooling include dictating the movement of student bodies and speech, but also include a significant emphasis on stillness. And, with the emphasis on stillness and disciplinary practices there exists, according to Manning, "the apparent coherence of the structure" (2016 p. 146). Fractured masculinities, however, is processual and anti-dualistic; it is astructured. It becomes through embodying movement. It exceeds representation but may appear apparitionally, in moments of relation where bodies' merge with movement, material, and affect. As stated above, much of the important work regarding masculinities in school leans heavily on Connell's hegemonic masculinity, and those working in post-structural gender theory often tend to privilege discourse over embodied, relational experiences. In contrast, fractured masculinities offers an alternative for thinking with the process of ongoing and evolving gender subjectivities.

## Fracturing Masculinities

Research methodology must consider the relational, material embodied, and processual

experiences of students' gender subjectivities. As I discuss throughout this essay and elsewhere, fractured masculinities are multiple, mobile, relational, contextual, intersectional, and fractured (Sweet, 2017, 2019a, 2019b). This is a call for rethinking how researchers can field highly complicated relational embodiments. Important to also consider with thinking fractured masculinities through Manning is that we do not know *how* or *where* or *what* gender becomes, but we do know that it is procedural, relational, and always becoming, always already on the move. Gender exists in multiplicities in the lived experiences of people and researchers cannot claim to know how particular subjectivities came to be. However, when thinking gender through process while considering what we do know about gender, it becomes possible that gender emerges in apparitional moments that are always in the making, always in process and cannot be represented as a particular type or fixed identity marker. Rather, fractured masculinities occur in the relational embodying of constant movement where bodies are asignifying and nonrepresentational entities that become with.

The anecdote that began this essay serves as an important reminder of the dangers of fixing masculinity to particular archetypes; it is also a clear indication that much work remains regarding how boys are being socialized to do masculinities. To address these concerns, educational researchers might consider how process and relationality influence the ways that we understand gender and the ways we continue to raise boys. Moreover, unlike much of the previous work regarding masculinities in education, this work speaks to the lived experiences of young people, for research must take into account the relational, processional, and embodied experiences of young people because these complexities reflect how they interact with their environments; students' lived experiences are relational and embodied. Researchers should think with how they recognize the fractured-ness of young people's daily lives and move away from destructive and insidious effects of stable identity markers. Fractured masculinities attunes to the process of fracturing, not the moment of fracture or pieces of fracture. It concedes that apparitional moments exist, which may also correspond with moments of fracture. However, fractured masculinities accounts for the process of continual fracture in an ongoing becoming.

To provide some clarity, I include below commissioned pieces of art from the same 14-year-old, male-identifying students who completed the six-word memoirs. Both of these of these groups of art (the memoirs and those below) reveal apparitional moments of fracture, but they are fleeting and ephemeral and quickly dissipate. Unlike the six-word memoirs (which were included in classroom instruction), I asked students (and paid them $10) to create a self-portrait that considers how they see themselves and their gender identities (see figures 4-6). Whereas the six-word-memoir prompt asked the students to "Write something that sums you up as a person!," the commissioned pieces asked them to consider how they see themselves and their gender identities. Unlike the six-word-memoirs, the pieces below do not include written language; I asked them explicitly to use visual representation and to foreground gender as they considered their identities. As such, the pieces do not rely on language, but rather spur the artist and viewer toward affective sensing. As stated above, Manning reminds us that "There may be nothing less rigorous or more apolitical than the acceptance of the signification as the basis for experience.

This only reinstates the dichotomy between reason and sensing" (Manning, 2007, p. 114). In thinking with Manning, I hope the artwork below moves away from signification as the basis for experience and toward affective procedural and relational becomings. The pieces might point toward how educational research can take up fractured masculinities as an ongoing and incomplete process of becoming. As such, I invite the reader to become-with rather than observe-know. I hope that these pieces continue to proliferate and fracture on their own rather than exist as a static representation. Rather than representation, I intend them to evoke sensation.

*Figure 4*
Andrew's Self-Portrait



*Figure 5*
Michael's Self-Portrait

*Figure 6*
Danny's Self-Portrait



These figures conjure some of the ways that these boys sense their masculinities. Like Manning's emphasis on embodying processes and relational/collective aspects of individuals, fractured masculinities asserts that masculinities undergo rupture, have the potential to experience pixilation, can exist outside of itself, will continue to become astructurally and are always in process and relation. Many scholars agree that gender cannot be held onto; there always exists slippage; genders leak because they come always in-formation, an always already incomplete process where new possibilities are always underway (Butler, 1990, 1993, 2004; Manning, 2012; McCready, 2010; Reeser, 2010). Fractured masculinities builds on this vital work. It does not hold fast to traditional ways of knowing or understanding. Unlike, previous literature in field of gender studies that relies on either a structural or post-structural onto-epistemology, fractured masculinities draws from Manning's process philosophy to claim a more than human understanding of gender. In this way, fractured masculinities is not only always in process, but also always understood as ongoing fracturing that only exists in relation with surrounding materiality.

Fractured masculinities offers a reconceptualization of what may be possible for doing educational research regarding the lived experiences of boys doing gender. We must produce work that matters in the lives of people, especially as young people are being socialized in a world where many people (including caregivers) applaud and emulate monocratic masculinity, and researchers often consider masculinity as relatively fixed and stable. Fractured masculinities opens space for relational bodying that pushes the field of masculinities in educational research away from static

representation and toward a never-ending process of becoming in the act.

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