

April 2020

Writing Excess: Theoretical Waste, Responsibility, and the Post Qualitative Inquiry

Susan Ophelia Cannon
Mercer University, cannon_so@mercer.edu

Stephanie Behm Cross
Georgia State University, scross@gsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/taboo>

Recommended Citation

Cannon, S. O., & Cross, S. B. (2020). Writing Excess: Theoretical Waste, Responsibility, and the Post Qualitative Inquiry. *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, 19 (3). Retrieved from <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/taboo/vol19/iss3/7>

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Article in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Article has been accepted for inclusion in Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.

Writing Excess

Theoretical Waste, Responsibility, and the Post Qualitative Inquiry

Susan Ophelia Cannon & Stephanie Behm Cross

Abstract

Collaboration in this age of measurement and counting is touted as a way to be more productive, to make us learn more, and get more done faster. Yet, in our collaborative researching and writing, we found it slowed us down. We began to wonder if collaboration might be a waste of time. Theory we carried with us or picked up along the way caught us up; it began to influence what started as conventional research. It tangled us in ethical questions and forced us to doubt what it means to be responsible researchers. We produced too much text that was not enough about any one thing. Every time we thought we knew what the paper was about it seemed it must be about something else. We present a messy textual artifact. We hope it highlights the messy bits of writing, those that are generally lifted from the published manuscript. In this way, we trouble which academic writing counts, and what counts as waste.

Keywords: authorship; collaboration; post qualitative; something else; writing

Introduction

The call for this special issue granted us permission to value waste and excess from a flailing humanist research project. We dug back into the folder where another

Susan Ophelia Cannon is an assistant professor in the Tift College of Education at Mercer University, Atlanta, Georgia. Stephanie Behm Cross is an associate professor in the Department of Middle and Secondary Education in the College of Education and Human Development at Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia. Email addresses: cannon_so@mercer.edu & scross@gsu.edu

© 2020 by Caddo Gap Press.

version of this paper had been put aside hoping that we could make something of value in relation to this call. With the call and its questions, the editors opened a space for the rejected to resurface and to be put into the light. With this paper, we draw attention to the waste and excesses of a shelved collaborative research project—wasted time, wasted paper, articles read but not cited, the waste of comments never taken up—still unincorporated and lying by the side of the document. We also consider theoretical and methodological waste—how we waste approaches, data, and methods when an author brings in new or different theories or concepts. In particular, given that we started this project with a conventional humanist methodology and subsequently brought our reading of poststructural theory, we fear we wasted our time and the participant's time. What we were doing could not be postqualitative research (St. Pierre, 2019) because of how we began; therefore, it did not seem to be of value.

The *Waste* call gave us the chance to begin again from the excesses, to start somewhere else. In this paper, we consider how sometimes, it is possible to begin again without even meaning to, from an excess or overspill, an aside. And, how sometimes one piece of data—that one line a participant said can change a whole project—can lay waste to clearly laid out plans. This paper exposes how theory reframes conventional research and pushes aside how we expected our conventional humanist project to go. It is about how one theoretical quote or concept can trash the words that have been piling up in a google doc and make them lose their value. In this project, we were tempted to quiet those theories and data pieces, to throw them out, or at least clean them up to allow smooth progress. We wanted inquiry that was not messy and did not waste our time.

However, in this article, we return to two pieces of data that refused to be set aside. Two lines of text brought us to this unexpected here/now of messiness and waste. The messiness became possible through and because of our collaboration. Those unexpected data pieces sullied our collaborative project at two distinct moments 4 years apart. In this paper we pull these data pieces together to explore what their closeness across space and time does and how our attention to what might have been tossed aside provide value for what counts as postqualitative research.

We also question when collaborative writing and thinking is of value in terms of time, energy, production, relations. The second author began this project nine years ago as a narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). She accumulated hours and hours of transcribed interviews which she conducted with a teacher during his first three years of middle school teaching. She brought in the first author five years ago, and we set out to write a narrative that would represent the participant's induction into the field. Perhaps, had the first author never been brought in, the paper may have been published years ago. But, that is not what happened. Instead, this collaboration has moved us toward unexpected heres/nows and ins/outs of theoretical and methodological spaces.

We began this paper over and over trying to settle on what it was about.

This paper is about collaboration.

This paper is about data.

This paper is about theory.

Together, we worked through the messiness and the waste as we grappled with how to get the paper to settle into one aboutness—one story succinctly stated and told. However, the more we wrote and talked, the more the paper seemed to multiply and expand. Each time we settled on an aboutness, we had to sacrifice something else. Our conversations and texts felt like they mattered and that they should not be tossed aside. So, we held on to them, the piles of text, documents, data, notes and commentary. We worked to clean them up, to make them make sense. And yet, we found that in attempting to clean them up, to make them about one particular thing, the proliferation lost another *aboutness* that had value. In attempting to settle the paper into one aboutness, the textual space lost its vibrancy. And so, we found, that the waste—the excesses—mattered, as they multiplied, expanded and refused to settle down.

Therefore, the texts that we bring below are non-linear and messy but full of joyful perplexity and frustrating convolution. Yet these texts and the story of this project resonates with current conversations about what counts as data and what counts as post qualitative inquiry. The texts document the disciplining of academic subjectivities within collaborations in the neoliberal knowledge economy (Davis & Bansel, 2010; Morley, 2016). Given the current pressure to produce more knowledge, and the ever-increasing number of publications needed for tenure at large universities, researchers may be tempted to collaborate as a means to more lines on the CV and higher impact factors, to produce knowledge more efficiently. Though we might like to believe that we are not incentivized by these systems, we acknowledge and put on display in this paper our disciplining toward efficient production. At the same time, we enter and remain in research and writing collaborations because they are slow, because we become perplexed when thinking with others, and because a lot of the times collaborations are equal parts joyful and frustrating.

In what follows, first, we outline the project and our collaboration, the how and when and where, tracing backwards through messiness and waste to a beginning. We chart backwards to wonder how our collaboration and the project became messy, how we generated so much waste. Specifically, we trace how the representation of the humanist subject of Andrew, the pseudonym of a newly minted teacher beginning his foray into the field of education, became disrupted by theory and writing and collaboration. Next, we present a textual wasteland, the mess, the excesses of our thinking-together-with and through the data, with Andrew, with theory with each other, with Caputo (2012). Finally, we return to the field of qualitative inquiry to contemplate how and in what spaces this waste matters.

When Data Lays Waste to Your Theory, Post Qualitative Inquiry Begins

We started this collaborative project doing narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). We uploaded hours of interview transcripts to coding software as we prepared to analyze it, distill it into themes and write a narrative of Andrew's entry into the field of education. Within the constructivist narrative inquiry methodology (Atkinson & Delamont, 2006), researchers share the narrative text back with the narrator, so they have an opportunity to provide feedback. Checking in with participants after the first drafting is standard protocol for ethical practice in narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013). On one line in the narrative Andrew wrote, "I sound like a valley girl." We got stuck on this comment in the google document. We emailed him, and he didn't respond. Was he too busy? Was he...mad? He didn't like the way he sounded. We wondered what it meant to be responsible to him, how he was represented, and the methodology that asked him to look at himself through the texts we created.

In that here/now, Susan was a second-year doctoral student and enrolled in a poststructural inquiry course that was making her question and rethink everything; meanwhile Andrew questioned his representation in the narrative we initially created. That line, *I sound like a valley girl*, thought with the poststructural theory Susan was reading as part of her socialization into the field put the narrative inquiry theories to waste. They no longer held. *Meanwhile*, we had been "cultivating a tolerance for discontinuity, of incompleteness, of different expressive languages, of being-together, and of process" (Guyotte, Flint, Gilbert, Potts, Irwin, & Bennett, 2019, p. 2). For us, the narrative inquiry methodology fell apart due to its reliance on stable humanist representations of subjects. Stephanie could have rejected both Andrew's questioning of the narrative and Susan's interest in thinking this data, this story, this participant with different theories. Yet, she chose to allow these perspectives to have value in the collaboration even though they slowed everything down. If she had aligned with the value system of efficiency and productivity, she might have rejected Andrew's line and Susan's theories, but she did not. The waste(s) mattered. Instead of being asides to the current methodology, they were allowed to count. In counting, the value system shifted, priorities realigned.

Within conventional methods of narrative inquiry texts often "focus on direct speech and dialogue" (Creswell, 2013, p. 224). In that paradigm, we could have used Andrew's words as evidence to support a particular point of view about collaboration or examined Andrew's experience as a teacher entering a school. In narrative inquiry, the stories and words offer representational impressions of the participant and their experiences. Poststructuralism put this idea to waste. "The robust critique of representation in poststructuralism is crucial in postqualitative inquiry" (St. Pierre, 2019, p. 4). So, we discarded the original aim (to represent Andrew) and instead decided to think differently about how we might arrange the data.

The questions of what counts as data, how it is used, and how theories inter-

act with data are not new in qualitative inquiry. MacLure (2013b) describes data that glows, Benozzo, Bell, and Koro-Ljungberg (2013) describe data as splinters. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) think data with multiple theories, and St. Pierre (2013) and Koro-Ljungberg, MacLure, and Ulmer (2018) have deconstructed static conceptions of data while affirming other ways of thinking and doing data. In our project the data interrupted, and in concert with poststructural readings, produced methodological and conceptual waste (the loss of narrative inquiry methodology and the stable humanist subject).

The data, *I sound like a valley girl*, along with Caputo's (2012) concept of event, a happening which cannot be planned for or be created but comes uninvited, prompted us to reject and *do* conference presentation differently. This rejection affirmed other ways of being in the academy and disrupted the preconceived notions of how to do conference presentations (present a PowerPoint with a linear progression from research questions to findings). What might a conference presentation that whispers an invitation to the event look, sound, and feel like? How might we make space for the event to come? We began by resisting giving a clear *aboutness* to our audience to allow other meanings to surface in the space where our aboutness would have been. We made a space for excess and overflow.

The alternative text presented at the conference begins in the left-hand column beginning on page 98. In writing it, we experimented with the idea of what writing for the event might look, feel, sound like? And, how we might invite the reader into a textual landscape that allows for or whispers for the event to come? In this text, we put quotes from across Andrew's interviews (bolded) in conversation with quotes from John Caputo's (2012) *Teaching the event: Deconstruction, hauntology, and the scene of pedagogy* (in italics), along with some of our interactions with these words. We did not directly situate or explain or introduce the quotes from Andrew or Caputo. Instead, we produced an experimental text—a blending and meshing of the words of the authors, the participant and one theorist with the transition words and traditional framings and explanations of quotes and data left out. In the presentation, we played the audio from Andrew's interview and put Caputo's words in black text on a white screen, flashing between print and sound. This type of text/presentation does not predetermine what meanings and interpretations have value for the audience and instead asks the audience to bring value to the data (the participant's words in this case) alongside the theory (Caputo's words). We hoped then, for the members of the audience to make sense of these texts with us. We meant for them to provoke and to clash and to perhaps allow for unexpected interpretations and readings or listenings. Looking back, we created an experimental event in what might be considered postqualitative inquiry; it "overturn[ed] and displac[ed] a structure to make room for something different" (St. Pierre, 2019, p. 3). We troubled whose words get the most weight—author, participant, or theorist and who gets to determine the value of those words. We wondered how this particular rejection of structure mattered.

Orientations to the Text

In the next section, we present the textual artifact. We first created it as the previously described conference presentation in 2016. The script from that presentation begins in the left-hand column. As we tried to make that text into a paper, we considered again and again how to frame it so that it might make sense. We tried to find an aboutness. We arranged these alternate framings also in the left-hand column. The original text in the left-hand column became a provocative field for conversation and interaction about what academic writing should look like. As we engaged with it in a google document to ready it for publication, another text emerged in interaction with the first and with us and our subsequent readings and happenings—a text composed of comments and comments on comments. It is evidence of the side conversations and words that academics normally scrape off as they clean manuscripts to ready them for publication. The text in the right-hand column consists of the comments from the google document that we repositioned into a word document to clean them up for publishing. The footnotes show our comments on our previous comments.

These texts reveal the tension between our conflicting desires for allowing the indeterminate and the unexpected and efficient, productivity-driven writing and working. We found ourselves caught up in the waste, not wanting to trim away something that might be of value, thinking that it got in the way because maybe it didn't make sense. In the excesses of the text that follows, we document a hidden aspect of our own collaborative writing process and our inquiry that we felt had value, but that we could not quite explain—or thought that by explaining the value we might diminish it. Exposing the waste, what gets thrown away or what we do not think conventional methodologies allows us to ask or say, shines light on the often unspoken yet strictly adhered-to norms of academic writing and publishing.

Below, we expose the writings that the conventions of academic publishing ordinarily discards, and we invite readers to think with them and the following questions:

How did what got left *in* this paper that would have normally gone to *waste* function for our writing and your reading?

What might be of *value* that gets trimmed out of academic writing and research due to our taken for granted assumptions of what *should count*?

How do we discipline our own writings and readings in the academy, and how does that disciplining function on our academic subjectivities?

How do we hold on to and value what might be seen as a waste of time in the neoliberal academy?

These texts show us lost in the audit culture research paradigm wondering why we produce research and for whom, not only what is wasted, but wondering if the process of academic writing itself is waste. These texts gesture toward our

disciplining and regulation of academic production as well as our sense of responsibility in research. They gesture toward the bodies and materials beyond the paper. In particular, a third author who came and left the project lurks in these notes. She matters. They all matter. None is finished and they blend into each other as we gave up on one to try another.

We encourage you to try to get lost in it—to wade through, to search for aboutness or to resist the urge to do so and just see what clings to you. We ask you to be open to other possibilities, to consider whether this paper might be or could be about *something else*. We invite you to think with us in proliferation and messiness and waste. We invite you to take a different stance in reading, to read to expand out into other aboutnesses. We invite you to dig through the waste with us, getting your fingers stained with ink, your eyes bleary from searching for the connections, the linkages of aboutnesses. We invite you to wonder along with us what might have happened if the inquiry could have taken a different turn. To wonder, if Andrew had not said what he said about collaboration and if we had not already been wondering when collaboration is worth it and when it is just a waste of time. More on that after you get through the wasteland.

Dichotomies don't hold, distinctions are porous¹ don't hold anymore.

There is no such thing as pure inquiry.

Boundaries fail.

Something that runs under the binary² that doesn't fit.

The unconditional that runs deep below these dichotomies that disrupts.

That seizes you.

The unconditional that disrupts the dichotomy is the gift.

Gift exceeds duties.³

You can't reciprocate, because then you go into the economy.⁴

We live in the distance between the unconditional and the conditional in this concrete space.

We have to be willing to let things be shattered.

¹ Is our writing porous? Can readers and writers come in and out? What would that look like? How have we held up or broken dichotomies with this writing?

² What is running "under" this paper?

Is there any way to expose it, a reason to expose it? Can we even SHOW it to someone? If we wanted to or do they have to bring what is necessary to the paper to see it "themselves"?^f

³ How do we let go of duty? What would it look like for a paper to be a gift to the reader and the writer? We are writing this out of obligation to the academy, to the participant, to my CV, to my fellowship, to your future tenuring. How many papers is enough? What is our obligation as researchers? What do we owe this journal to make it easy for the editors to see that our

^f I just corrected a bunch of spelling errors and it occurred to me that I don't usually do that. My writing partner does that. Almost always. But it felt important to do.

^g I am only one page in, but I again find myself more drawn to the right column. I'm trying to make myself go back and forth between the left and right... and it's interesting, but will take a LONG time to read, and I've read this before. I wonder about that for our readers...

Allow radical unforeseeability—that which shatters the horizon of expectation⁵ what you didn't see coming. (Social Justice Institute UBC, 2018)

Data is pooling and collected... how does it hang together, how I arrange it, sort it,⁶ impacts how it is read what gets lost and what is pulled to the front.

“the quotation seems to me now, meeting it again in a different place and time (indeed a different assemblage) to be ‘about’ sense.”⁷ (MacLure, 2013, p. 661)

Instead of perhaps,
It's perhaps stricken⁸
Each statement is justified in its own right⁹
Yet there are multiple statements.
Yet there's an ask of the reader to take what you will—as the author(s) did.
Going in and out of collaborative authorship^a—
(co) authored but it is singly curated.

What gets to be in the text and what doesn't^h get to be in the text?
Who has the authority to author?
About collaboration?
Who is the collaborator?
Am I authoring?
Am I endnoting?
Make the paper as event?
Paper as event?¹⁰

How does writing take us somewhere we didn't think we would be? How does reading? How does collaboration?

The first attempt at framing An invitation, a gift¹¹...

You do not hear my voice, or his voice, there is no voice.¹² There are words. Static on a page, or a screen. Being read or downloaded or skimmed. So, if you were to skim this what might you come away with?¹³ What might the point of reading this?¹⁴ What was the point of

work aligns, that it fits? Can you ever write without obligation? Is writing ever a gift?^g

⁴ We are always already in the economy.

⁵ Love this idea and wonder how it could come in. How though do you plan to do the unexpected?

⁶ Author 2 talked about moving things around up or down. Is she allowed to sort/change?

⁷ Love the idea of meeting a quotation. I feel that way sometimes. Having one show up unexpected. Authors citing particular authors I like makes me like them and want to read more. “Hey, I like MacLure.”
“Dude, I like her, too.”
“She's so rad”
“Let's be friends.”

⁸ I am drawn to the easiness of perhaps. It lets me off the hook. There is a hesitancy in it that allows me not to know.

⁹ What rights does a statement have?

¹⁰ Can making a paper be an event, can reading a paper be an event? Is it an event for all the authors if it is... or could it be even for me and not for others? As readers, I know it would not always be event. What would the reader have to bring for it to be an event, could we give them advice for how they read^h it for it to be more likely to be an event?

¹¹ A gift. Packaged in the form of an article. Hmmm. Who is it for? Me? It will fit nicely on my CV. I have a spot open for it. But don't we need to know who it is for? Besides my cv?

¹² This sounds like I am trying to hypnotize the reader. Am I swinging a gold watch in front of their eyes?

¹³ I am thinking about this act of skimming. Do you have to skim with a goal in mind—like a, “This is what I am skimming for?”

my writing it? Why write?¹⁵ Why read? To think differently? To think with “me” or “us” to be changed, to evolve, to be angered, or frustrated or challenged? Why read? Why write? Why write? Why write?

Do I have good reason to bring these words to the page? What do I expect that they will represent for you?¹⁶ What meaning might they evoke?¹⁷ Where might they take you? That is impossible to tell as it will depend on what you have brought to this moment,¹⁸ to the reading of this text in this time and space.¹⁹ The writing challenges me to concrete a thought in time and space.²⁰ To put thoughts on paper, to resist the constant avoidance and betweenness, that the more uncertain I become the less I tend to write, the more I am in the perpetual motion of thinking moving through my own reading fancifully flying amongst ideas and text.

As we wrote this piece together the words bumped against each other, the participant’s words as he was invited into authorship, “Andrew’s words from interviews presented as some sort of truth or evidence or data... How do we use these words to legitimize our ideas to make this “research” and Caputo’s words.^{21,22} Are we just using them to give us authority to legitimize in another way through the citation? Are we all hiding behind these citations and transcript quotes.²³

I am “first” author, I have been told I should take the lead, direct us, keep us moving, yet I am really last author last^{24, 25} on the scene, it was Author 3 first, then “the participant” come on, then I met “the participant”, then “the participant” became Andrew and I arranged Andrew’s words

or maybe a “Let me skim for a second and see if this is actually going to do anything for me.” Or maybe it would have to be, “Is this going to do what the abstract, the title, the keywords promised it might do?” or even, “Let’s see what Author X is up to this time?”

¹⁴ I can’t skim with the lowercase letters.ⁱ I am reminded of that Derrida book, or actually it is Bennington’s book about Derrida if I remember correctly. He writes about Derrida or maybe it is through Derrida. There are no punctuations. If you stop reading, it is impossible to get back in. I have to start again and even read aloud sometimes. I have to get the flow going. If not, the whole thing falls apart. Of course, it does, it is about Derrida.

¹⁵ I write because I need 16 pubs before tenure. And to see what matters. How does it all come on the page? How do these things—words and people and lives and other shit I can’t think of that isn’t really all that easily separable—fall on the page. Or do I commit to write them ahead of time. Both at the same time. Isn’t that what Caputo was saying in that lecture? Wasn’t he saying that something seizes me, interrupts, breaks? And I affirm it. It is what I put myself in harm’s way for...in this case the harm is not saying anything that matters.

¹⁶ Who is this?

¹⁷ Evoke always creeps me out, and I have no idea why. Maybe that is just it...The word evoke, evokes something in me when I hear it or read it. But there is something creating something that claims to evoke. Evoke doesn’t evoke shit for me sometimes. I bet.

^h Here is the apparatus for knowing...edu-crafting...interesting to think this with Carol Taylor (2016)...we decided on her papers and now it is a commitment to think with...

ⁱ I took out the lowercase letters because they upset readers. Not just you guys, but the journal readers. If this gets to a journal.

with mine and Caputo's. I assembled them. Stitched them together and tore them back apart,²⁶ each stitching and unstitching leaving marks on the material and in my thoughts as I read and reread the words, as they washed over me.^{27, 28 c}

I write because I want you to see me. I tell stories of my daughter and marshmallows. I want you to know that I am not an author. I am a mother, a teacher, a friend, a student, a writer and I am none of those things completely and I resist all those things²⁹ even as I invite them in even as I name myself as them.³⁰ I am always between and never between, perhaps overlapped pieces pressed together bound through.³¹

Take³² what you will...

I'm not sure exactly how I can contribute here or what I should say in response to a lot of this, you like to make my head hurt ;-)³³

...Andrew handled it well, but it can wear on a person- to negotiate- to compromise³⁴- to give up something that's important³⁵ to you.³⁶

The original paper^d: Presented in October, 2016, read aloud with recorded audio from participant played

^c I am really drawn to this particular stanza, so I want to make sure to read all the footnotes, even though they are on other pages and it frustrates me. Maybe that's how this will be read. Find parts on the left that resonate...and then that's when you want to read the footnotes...

^j I am reading through— jumping back and forth between the text and the footnotes... I am hesitant to do or comment about anything because I keep wondering if we will then need to include this comment in our final paper...

^k I see Author 1 "doing" things to the text and not commenting... Maybe I can do that too. Perhaps I need to stop making new comments over here.

^l I come in on the 15th and wonder, what are you thinking about today, Author 1? I wanted to ask, "Is your mind freed up?" but I don't even know what that means. As if it could be this empty sponge that approaches a text that can be later synthesized and perhaps added to the literature on collaboration.

¹⁸ This creates or implies a binary or the person separate from the "stuff" in their "mind" that they bring. Like each "reader" arrives with a suitcase of experiences and readings and past texts. Makes me think of baggage in relationships. I had an affair with Derrida once, I read him for years... I can't not bring him with me into new relationships with me.... Just saw "evoke shit" above and laughed out loud!!! HA love writing/thinking with other people.^{kl}

¹⁹ It has to take some sort of time to read this. Time from my work day or my work time. Where will this fit in my day? What can it be categorized as if I don't know why, why, why? You are supposed to let me know how I am spending my time. You are supposed to tell me if this paper will be usable in the future. You are supposed to give me some nuggets to think with later. Something portable. A quote. A ritornello. Something. Come on. Do your job.

²⁰ Caputo (Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage, 2016) was saying that nothing would happen if nothing was normalized. But there are structures, norms, and rules that can favor reinvention vs. stagnation. But there aren't any rules for those structures. There can't be or they'd be normalized. He also said democracy is one such structure, he thinks. But he said that before our current political moment

Something is “coming” (venire) to get us but we do not know what. What is that if not a ghost? (26)

What is truly destructive is the opposite of the event, which is the absolute exorcism of the event by the “program,” absolute foreseeability, deducibility, rule governed activity³⁷. ... The only possible program is to program the unprogrammable, the unforeseeable.³⁸ Otherwise the ghost or spirit of the event will have fled the premises. (29)³⁹

I should know. It⁴⁰ drove me out of teaching after 14 years. The thinning out of my opportunities for personal creation and responsibility.⁴¹ In my own classroom,⁴² I can consider the mood of the students, their questions, their interest, their engagement as I move through a lesson or a unit. I can make micro and macro decisions as I go that I hope are the most responsible ones to them and to me. I don't have to wait until there is time to have a discussion or to check in.⁴³ I know that there is the perception that more teachers in a classroom is better—always. But sometimes, it's just like asking Paul Simon to play a duet with Nickelback.

Wait, that's Andrew's line.

Collaboration is—I went to see Paul Simon speak at the Ellmann Lectures earlier this year at Emory. The topic was—no, wait, “the solo artist in an increasingly collaborative culture.” He did a lot of technology bashing. Because everything

was happening. Before, as Butler said, we have voted in someone by democracy who may dismantle democracy. She says that is a question for political scientists or someone who isn't me. So, I won't think about that right now.

²¹ I have no idea what this sentence means. I am stopping myself from going on. Do I need to go back to it to do a close reading or is this a moment where I let it wash over me and see if anything sticks? I just reread it. Still nothing.

²² I think this sentence would be inaccessible without insider info. I know that the participant is really Andrew. I know that you are talking about the gift while thinking about and rereading Caputo's text on the gift of teaching. I know that there are other versions where Caputo's words are quoted as Caputo's words. I know that Andrew—participant wrote into the text before—as a reader and a participant and maybe an author. I know that it started as “narrative inquiry” and morphed into something else. I can make something of that sentence with that sort of info.^m

²³ Or are we hiding by not saying anything about them at all? Just putting quotes out there for readers to take up as they will? That's one thing I like about this way of writing... it's not my interpretation as the most important, it's not my interpretation that reviewers can question... We interpret in our writing, in our decisions about what gets into this manuscript and what is left out. Is it okay to stop there? I feel like it's lazy, the easy way out... But is that because

^d All italics are direct quotes from Caputo (2012). The participant's (Andrew is a pseudonym) words are bolded.

^m i get tired reading. not sure if it is my body or is it that there is so much going on. Again, i think about the fatigue of having to stay with something without knowing why. i think about my daughter sitting in her classroom yesterday and being asked to create some rhyming words without knowing why or what for. she just was told to do it. Are we doing that? here. Create a reading. just do it.

becomes collaborative is the way that he put it. Everything is out there.⁴⁴

What I took away from it most was that you've got people who are gifted, right? He's a gifted guy. You wouldn't ask Paul Simon to do a duet with the guy from Nickelback. Now, that's not to say that I am—maybe I'm the guy from Nickelback. I don't know. It's not to say that I'm Paul Simon or the guy from Nickelback. It's just to say you also wouldn't ask Mozart to collaborate with Beethoven because they have their own—they're both fantastic and they have their own way of doing things, and it would likely be disastrous. (11/21/13-11:50 approx)⁴⁵

*I am trying to give a gift, to give something away, something that leaves my possession and thereafter leads another life I cannot control.*⁴⁶ (p. 24)^{47,48}

The scary parts revealed at the end around the campfire with marshmallow on our noses, chins and fingers, or like the story I tell Tessa⁴⁹ when she wakes up from a nightmare where I pull the threads of bad dreams out of her forehead and toss them to her dreamcatcher.⁵⁰ Am I here to reassure you, to scare you, to make you listen, to teach you a lesson?⁵¹

I guess to Andrew, I .. well I don't know what he thought of me.^{52, 53}

I don't recall being particularly annoyed or reluctant, though I know my demeanor can sometimes be perceived that way; for the first three, I suppose I just thought that's the way it would go, especially for someone in year 1 of the grant, for whom the plan was not originally to move into a lead spot. The fourth interview was questionable, but I think a few faculty members around me were more bothered by it than I was.⁵⁴

I'm so used to making interpretations of every quote I put into a paper? I remember my dissertation advisor telling me that a paragraph should never end with a quote. I questioned that then.

²⁷ I want everything to wash over me. But then it comes back out of nowhere and I can never really know what it is for. I just see where I read it or heard it and feel what the weather was like that day. What will wash over me today? When will it come back to haunt me.

²⁸ Here I am using Bettie St. Pierre without citing her. Did I do that on purpose or has it just become normal to me, have I taken it up as mine.

²⁹ Do I really resist them? What does that even mean? think when you write....

³⁰ I wonder if every researcher has this thought at some point. I wrote something recently and one of the reviewers said something like, "Am I wrong to say that this is a familiar notion for most researchers?" I read that as, "Dumbass, you aren't saying anything new." But I could have read it differently. So, if it is nothing new, does it become new if I read it in this text? If I am reading it in this coffee shop, with the cold air breezing by me and with my pants too tight b/c I scarfed down a sandwich too quickly?

³² I am struggling with the shift here from this upper part of the paper, to this next part of the paper that starts with "Take what you will..." I like the flow of both sections, but they are very different.... What does that do to the reader? That seems unfair. Just as they got into one way of reading and moving, we switch on them. Is that purposeful? And if so, why?

³³ Makes me think of Massumi/St. Pierre gift of the headache—See I have given you a gift.

like a ghost whispering in our ear, making promises (27)

Who talks about fear in math class? Yes, of course, being afraid of math—we hear that all the time—or hating it. But fear? What does that have to do with anything?

The students started to appear in my room in groups of two or three wanting to survey my class. What are you most afraid of? Which are you more scared of sharks or lightening? These 6th graders, miniature, past versions of the 8th graders scrunched into the desks in my room.

possibilities hitherto unimagined, slip in like a fog and make everything tremble with a future we cannot see coming (33)

**When I read those words above—
“That’s the unit that made us want to hire him”—I can’t help but wonder how much the fact that I was only teaching/leading one content area—or more accurately, during the time designated for one content area—and that I was not really collaborating with anyone when I designed the unit were considered.**

From an outside perspective, I do think your way of operating that was completely against the norm was appealing to those on the committee. I know, for sure, that it was appealing to me. It made me want to see more...⁵⁵

**Simon wondered “if solitary artists are about to become irrelevant in a speed-obsessed world. “
The more he thought about it, “the more intriguing and elusive it became,” Simon admitted.**

The teacher has to play the delicate role of conjurer, of indirectly calling up an elusive

³⁴ I am trying to forget that at one point this was supposed to be about collaboration. But I can’t forget. This alludes to it. To the research that was “done” at one point in time. That continues to do now as it isn’t done.

³⁵ Time is important to me. I give up time reading when I don’t know what will come. I give it to you. So, you better help me out here. You better not waste my time. Tell me what the hell this is about. Tell me why I might want to keep reading. Is it enough for me to be reading just to be reading? Is it? What if nothing comes. What if nothing takes?

³⁶ who gets the final say? do the words ever become ours?

³⁷ We know we are going to get “a paper” out of this. Otherwise why are we here. We need a paper. What else might come?

³⁸ Does coauthorship and collaboration allow the event to more readily appear? Is that why we coauthor?

³⁹ I just read that quote three times and I wasn’t in your paper anymore. I was thinking about another paper, another project, another collaboration. And I don’t even have any idea of what I am thinking.

⁴⁰ What the hell is it? Am I supposed to read that in relation to the quote above. The ghost or spirit of the event? Hmmm. What does that even mean? I feel like that probably drove me out of teaching too.

⁴¹When is it too much?

⁴² yes, yes, if I know you are talking about a US school. Makes sense.

⁴³ What happens when I want to know more that you aren’t giving me? I need a check in. I need a discussion. How am I considering the mood, your questions, your engagement as I move through the text?

spirit, of letting the event be, and that is because to learn is to be struck by the event. (32)

The very attempt to bring about the event^c would prevent the event. It breaks in upon us unforeseen, uninvited. (28)

Am I afraid of collaboration now, of integration, or is it the forcing, the rules around these things? How might it work?

Deep-rooted insecurity.⁵⁶ That's what's there. I recognize it. Part of it, too, is if I know somebody's coming, this might sound terrible, but I'm gonna want to put in lots of extra thought and effort into the day because, again, insecurity drives it. I'm gonna make sure if they're coming to watch, I need this to be—and I shouldn't be that way.

The gift must be given, yet it is not a gift if it is compelled, coerced, demanded. If you give me your help out of a sense of duty, it is not a gift and I might just as soon do without it. (25)

I do not believe that anyone would give me a gift without expecting something in return. Is that why collaboration is hard for me? I cannot accept the gifts that inevitably come. I score keep. I count. I feel the balance getting heavy on my side. I am guilt ridden and angry that they did this to me. . . .⁵⁷ Or maybe sometimes I can take the gift and accept it hands trembling or not and know that is what it is and that is when collaboration feels good. Is that why Caputo is here? In collaboration—the “good” collaboration is where the gift is accepted with no expectation. Can that happen within the structure of schools and institutions where collaboration is so often forced? Where we are asked to freely

⁴⁴ Jumping everywhere. Yet, rational logical thinking in a text is invented. Caputo was talking about that when he talked about the enlightenment....a way of thinking that wasn't always that way. This separation of Athena, the Greek God, from Athens was unthinkable before. And of course, in that book I read on thinking (I can't remember), indigenous thinking does not pretend to be rational like we do. Collaboration is...leads me to want a paragraph about collaboration. But there is jumping everywhere.

⁴⁵ This functions to show the reader that this is “data” and “Evidence” someone actually said this.

⁴⁶ Can we give academic writing away? No—cause we need it? It keeps coming back on our CVs in our review packages? Is it always there haunting us, good or bad? How many publications do you have again?

⁴⁷ But Caputo said that if there is not inheritance, not tradition, no normalization, everything would be chaos. The gift is impossible b/c it would be chaos. But the impossible is what we hope for, what we dream of, what keeps us going. The justice-to-come in the Derridian sense. It is an impossible gift of an article that I read (and write with you here but separate from your text)? It will enter the economy of exchange—I cannot not want paragraphs that tell me what to think and how this reading matters to me. I cannot not want a line on my CV. I cannot not want this text to matter to someone/something/somewhat. It must leave the economy of our university. It must leave its possession and lead another life I cannot control.

⁴⁸ I just realized that as I read this, I mostly skip over or skim the Caputo quotes... I wonder what that means? Author 2 just

^c Do we mention “the event” in the abstract?

give these gifts of ourselves, when it is not free?⁵⁸ When it pulls and tugs against our very skin like a stitch⁵⁹ that was left in too long, covered over, no longer a foreign object? So maybe it wasn't ours to begin with, but it's been holding us together and that tug, however gentle breaks us back open—asks us to question our identity again—is it that? Perhaps, the idea of identity carefully crafted over years of teaching—with all those expectations and demands and people to please—that when if you find a person that you can be in that space that works—that doesn't hurt all the time... then they ask you to collaborate and each time it tugs at that carefully constructed self that keeps you safe—tugging each stitch through new skin and bringing blood. We are trying to protect ourselves with the armor that we have built through years of battles and then we are asked to set that down and start anew....⁶⁰

We could collaborate... (Is this collaboration or conversation and relations? What is the difference—can I be in relation with someone and not collaborate? Relationships matter for collaboration—trust and connection and shared imaginings? We would not have said when we sat down for those beers that we were collaborating—we were being together in relation with each other about teaching—to collaborate implies a product and if you begin with the product then the gift or the event can never come...) outside the classroom, over beer, as we talked about all that was wrong with education. But what about coming together inside schools? Why did I need and want to be there anyway? Could I offer more there? Who am I to think that would have been useful for either of us? Maybe I really wanted to learn from him... to collaborate and learn about how to teach math differently.⁶¹

came over and grabbed her notebooks full of notes from the Caputo (Central Avenue Church, 2016) recording she listened to in the car on the way here. She's reading the quotes and likely adding more. Would I read these quotes if it was an author I was used to reading? One of the people I cited often?

⁴⁹ I know this is your daughter's name, but it is also the name of my aunt's dog that ran away—the dog that my child asked about for almost a year and was convinced we'd see running down the street one day.

⁵⁰ My kids don't ask me to do this anymore. When I wrote this I did it every night, I think I might have forgotten about it entirely if it wasn't in this paper.

⁵¹ Or to make me think about a dog that I hadn't thought about in a year?

⁵² I know that Andrew collaboratively taught with Author 1 in a classroom. Andrew-participant, I mean. And I know that Author 3 was a researcher doing Narrative Inquiry. I think. I mean, I don't know if that is true. I also know that this was cut and pasted from somewhere else. A different collaboratively written text. So, I cannot be sure who any I is or any me. So, there is this web. But to others, maybe Andrew is some dog they lost 1 year ago that their daughter won't stop looking for. Perhaps you are giving them the gift of remembering that dog? And they won't thank you for it so it probably won't be considered a gift in the first place. How does this matter?

⁵³ I've commented on this before. I think it mattered to me, for sure, what "the participant" thought of me. He made me question my role as a mentor, teacher educator, supervisor, etc. etc.... and I liked that. I love working with you both because you make me consider new things, write in very different ways. It matters to me what

The present is made an unstable, uneasy place, shaken and disturbed by invisible forces, and this is because it contains something with which it cannot come to grips, something uncontainable. (27)

For me, collaboration doesn't just feel good or feel scary. For me, it feels necessary for survival.⁶² It's why I stay. Or maybe it's why I am able to and asked to stay? But survival in what ways and by whom? Why am I so tied to this idea of collaboration when I so badly want to push back against it? I like that "the participant" and Author 1⁶³ push back against this thing that so many others say is the way forward for teachers and the teaching profession: "When teachers collaborate, they get better. Their schools get better..." I used to hear this and nod my head vigorously to show others I agreed...

To deconstruct is to unsettle and de-sediment, to disturb and haunt, but it is not to smash to smithereens. (28)

The⁶⁴ creator is the only one who really understands the goals of the unit, the only one who can make sense of the daily plans in a true and authentic way. I said this in my dissertation research focused on new teachers' uses of scripted mathematics curriculum materials, but another young scholar in the field said I was being unrealistic to think that teachers could create everything from scratch...

When you're teaching something that someone else has done there are so many things that likely aren't written down that the creator has in mind. You have a very clear view if you created something of what the goals—not even of the entire unit, but what the goal of each day is. You can think through how you're gonna get there. When you pick up some-

you think of me. It matters to me what the readers will think of us. It matters to me what "the participant" will say when he reads this. If it is too conventional—if it doesn't push boundaries in some ways (and not just about boundaries related to "collaboration for teachers") then I worry that none of these audiences will like it. So, is the boundary pushing what I am drawn to in here?

⁵⁴ I keep thinking about cutting. What makes it to the cutting board? Is it this b/c it is too much information when dropped in here, in this way—the grant, the demeanor, the interviews, the faculty members, the person being bothered. I want it to move me. I want to connect it to other parts of the paper. but maybe I should just let it wash over me and keep going.

⁵⁵ I am giving up. I am giving up on the possibility of taking away anything. Who are these people? What is happening? What is the context? Must I know in order to be able to take away? I want something to take me away. I give up on your gift. It cannot be a gift if I stop reading it. If I decide that I cannot risk any more time here. Caputo says...

I scrolled to the bottom of the page and said, how much more is there? I check the clock. I immediately feel guilty b/c I have rejected your gift. But who else will? What gifts do I reject in other articles? Perhaps those carefully crafted phrases that I skim right over b/c they aren't in the section with the word I want to explore.

⁵⁶ This line from "the participant" always surprised me. Was it insecurity? Was it wanting to impress? To be the one that does something in the classroom that is different, provocative? This makes me think to... when you collaborate, you have to share the credit. Two reviewers of two different papers (one was rejected and one was a revise and resubmit) hit

thing that you didn't create, even if you read the whole thing you're not gonna be as attached or invested—⁶⁵

Identity. I got my own baggage with that, because I felt like I was so stripped of it all the way up into my mid-20s, which is ridiculous. I feel like that's the most important thing. Until you know that, until you know yourself, how am I to know what's important? How am I to know what I'm interested in?

Let us begin by saying that the event, like any ghost worthy of the name, is not what visibly happens but what is going on invisibly in what visibly happens. It is not what is palpably present, but a restlessness with the present, an uneasiness within the present.⁶⁶ Something disturbs the present but we do not know what it is — that is the event. Something is “coming” (venire) to get us but we do not know what. What is that if not a ghost? (26)

I feel pressure from the other teachers that I have to collaborate with, and the other teacher in my room that I'm working with, to do things in a particular way, and whether that's a real pressure or whether it's just perceived or totally made up, I feel it.⁶⁷ And, that makes it difficult for me to plan the things like I planned last year [the fear unit] with total confidence. Yeah, that's what—doing those things and feeling confident about them has become very difficult.⁶⁸

me with comments about how I sounded fearful. Both thought that was a bad thing. Fear=bad. Is insecurity like fear? They seem connected

If we help the reader to understand this paper out of a sense of obligation, can it ever be a gift to them?

⁵⁸ For my annual review, I had to write in the time I spent last year working with doctoral students. Advising, teaching, reading, mentoring, thinking, writing, texting, talking about their children, crying perhaps. Collaborating.^{n °} I have to do it better next year because it didn't produce enough.

⁵⁹ I must have written this after the surgery. This paper is tracking my life. Haunting me.... am i becoming this paper? Is this paper becoming me?

⁶⁰ I began reading this and thought to myself—Did I write this? Was this in the first paper? Then I knew it was “me,” “my” voice.

⁶¹ As I read, I don't feel like thinking about schools. I don't want to visit the context you are telling me to visit. I am forcing a new concept on it. Layering it, perhaps like a palimpsest,^p but doesn't Davies talk about how problematic that image can be b/c it assumes that there is a ground to be layered over. There is a bottom. I don't remember exactly what it said, but I was walking down the lower corner of my neighborhood, walking up a big hill, about 10 years ago when I read it for the first time. That doesn't matter though. But that

ⁿ I'm jumping around now. I really want to fix all of these spelling mistakes. I fixed it, and then changed it back to the misspelling... We didn't decide if we should fix them or not. But I want to fix them.... But what if my co-authors did not?

[°] about how they might function—are they a nod to authenticity in some way. like the small letters. What does that get us? I don't know. Again, I go back to purpose and the reader. Who might be reading this and what do we anticipate they might do, see, feel? I don't know.

^p Teri and I are using this in our other paper. Don't use this here.

Perhaps, the ghost that scares us the most is the soft voice of “perhaps.” (33)

Did I like collaboration across content areas because I felt weak in math? Do I feel weak in my writing and teaching? Andrew decided on the place for the beer... Author 1 decided what I'd order for lunch... Wasn't it Author 1's idea to write this paper in this way? Do I dare type this right now. Delete, delete, delete. Hit the delete button... Don't just stare at it...hit DELETE.

The present is made an unstable, uneasy place, shaken and disturbed by invisible forces, and this is because it contains something with which it cannot come to grips, something uncontainable. (27)

An addendum to the original paper written in March 2017.

There are limits to my emotional capacity in a day, a moment, a year.⁶⁹

How can I take care of my husband, my kids,

my school kids, my school partner?

Who gets shorted?

Who gets the leftovers?

There are no leftovers.

I am empty.^{70,71}

of me?

So, I jump into the circle—the vivacious, uncontrollable, dangerous? circle—and wonder in my

page comes back to me often when I am least expecting it. Unforeseeable.

⁶² I could never write this paper, in this way, without Author 1 and Author 2. If I wrote it by myself it would look very, very different. If Author 1 wrote it by herself, it would not look so different, I don't think. Not sure about what would happen if Author 2 wrote it on her own. Now, I'm wondering, what does it mean for our readers to read this on their own? Is it better to read and talk with others about it? What if they read it and then talked to us about it? Do we need to consider the lone reader, sitting on her couch, reading this article?

⁶³ This is jarring b/c I know it is Author 3 writing. And I was picturing Author 1. Does it matter though? Maybe I should read slower, or read again now that it is her. I don't know Author 3 as well as Author 1. I don't want her to think I am ungenerous. Although of course I am. I cannot give the gift of generosity as a reader b/c I have to call my daughter in a second. I have to go get dinner. I have to finish revisions on my other paper. But I want to reread it. I might.

⁶⁴ I have to leave the paper. For a bit. Perhaps I will return. Maybe I will see what comes of it or if something comes of it.

⁶⁵ I am scanning back through this middle? section of the paper. I love these quotes from participant, and I wonder what gets lost in this paper when it's about so many other things. But maybe this “stuff” is another paper? But then what are we trying to do here? In what ways does the other stuff—the other ideas about collaborating on writing this paper, for example—take away from this stuff? Or maybe it doesn't.... maybe it's just a different way of opening up spaces for a reader to experience these quotes?

dreams if I am being chased by
leprechauns or lions. I wonder if there is
ever a straight path to

walk as I dream about collaboration
alongside the lamb I used to sleep with as
a girl... Probably

not.

Are you happy now?⁷²

⁶⁶ How might reading our paper make a
reader uneasy, when is it too much?

⁶⁷ And yet I keep reading...perhaps b/c I
told the group I would read to the bottom.
I keep thinking, so what? What does
reading do for me? What could it do?
What might it do? It will all be different
when I read again. But it won't be the kind
of difference like when you read an article
during your third year of your Phd that
you had tried to read during the first year
but it was all gobligook. It isn't that sort
of clear trajectory of "Look how much
smarter I got." or "I know that word now."
This would be different. I would re-read
and it would be different. And now, I want
to think about how. I want some more to
think with when I return to explore the
difference. If I return.

⁶⁸ This could be me talking- is that why i
like working with this participant, he says
what i want to say what i could have said?
would have said? And his voice is "data"
and "evidence." What is mine?

⁶⁹ This line was worth every second of the
read. It makes me feel connected. Maybe it
is like a phenomenological nod.

⁷⁰ So sad to read and resonates.

⁷¹ This feels hopeful, but I have no idea
why.

⁷² Is this an accusation—like are you happy
now look what you've done to me? what
you have made me? or is it like good cus-
tomer service, have you been happy with
your meal? do you feel sated? anything
else we can do for you? maybe it's both/
and?

Aside from the value of these texts within the conversations about data and post qualitative inquiry, we assert that the texts value, document and put forward the behind-the-scenes disciplining toward a norm of academic writing and subjectivity that can take place in collaborations. We think collaboration and collaborative writing with Caputo's event. Collaborative writing in and of itself cannot produce the event or call the event into being, but it can allow for the event. However, in productivity and efficiency driven versions of collaborative writing or research the event will never come, because there is not room for the indeterminate- no space for wasted time or words. In this project, the collaborative writing and thinking took years and still might not have settled into a paper if it were not for this particular call which gives value to that which might be wasted.

We build from Koro-Ljungberg, Carlson, Tesar, and Anderson's (2015) brut and raw versions of collective writing and the desire to "face this uncertainty, rawness, and creative chaos by doing, engaging, collaborating, and reflecting without constant and continuous purification and 'cleaning' efforts" (p. 614) and the allowance of "visions on top of other visions, visions continuing other visions" (p. 614). Yet... how much do we clean up even in post qualitative inquiry, especially in post qualitative inquiry to make it fit in its particular category, and what does that cleaning do?

Since the beginning of this project, we wondered when collaboration may risk being a waste of time. In one interview, Andrew spoke about his experiences in a teacher residency project in which collaboration was a central tenant. He was in his second year and was being asked to collaborate daily in teaching and planning and in an interview with one of the authors, he explained:

Collaboration is—I went to see Paul Simon speak at the Ellmann Lectures earlier this year at Emory. The topic was—no, wait, "the solo artist in an increasingly collaborative culture." He did a lot of technology bashing. Because everything becomes collaborative is the way that he put it. Everything is out there.

What I took away from it most was that you've got people who are gifted, right? He's a gifted guy. You wouldn't ask Paul Simon to do a duet with the guy from Nickelback. Now, that's not to say that I am—maybe I'm the guy from Nickelback. I don't know. It's not to say that I'm Paul Simon or the guy from Nickelback. It's just to say you also wouldn't ask Mozart to collaborate with Beethoven because they have their own—they're both fantastic and they have their own way of doing things, and it would likely be disastrous. (11/21/13)

Sometimes collaboration is disastrous. And sometimes it's not disastrous... Sometimes it works, it's *wonderful*, it clicks, it feels so good to work/think/write *with* someone. We thought that Andrew would be all for collaboration. We saw him in the field developing strong relationships with his mentor and co-teachers. Yet, there also exists a risk in collaboration, risk of a loss of some kind.

In academic writing, collaboration moves thinking and many have shown great productivity and generativity through collaborations (Collective, 2017; Davies, Flemmen, Gannon, Laws, & Watson, 2002; Gale & Wyatt, 2009; Manning &

Massumi, 2014; Wyatt et al., 2014). We have found great usefulness, benefit, generativity, and joy from working, thinking, researching, writing in collaborations as well. And in conversation with this reason to collaborate, there is the often-offered advice that many new academics get to collaborate to produce *more* articles, *more* impact, *more* currency in the academic knowledge economy. Collaboration is both a space that can bring wonder, unexpected turns, and ... and there is the promise that we could get more done.

And with those promises came risks—the risk of promise unfulfilled of wasted time and excess that must be trimmed away. This particular collaborative writing has not been efficient. Yes, we wrote lots and lots of words on the page, but they refused to come together into a clean aboutness. Rather, they generated multiple aboutnesses. The original writing from the conference presentation provoked questions and took us off in all directions, too many directions. We were new collaborators with each other and we found a resistance to erase each other's words, a hesitancy about roles, and persistent questions of authorship. We wondered whose writing was whose and what we were allowed to do with each other's texts, even as we understood that texts are never made by one person or owned. We made comments on each other's writing that disciplined it towards academic conventions. Our paper expanded out in concentric circles, commentary on top of commentary.

Caputo (2012) describes the event as unforeseeable, as a ghost that can't be seen or described, but is felt. Perhaps, collaboration that works is like the event, it sneaks up on us when we least expect it. Collaboration that works, that feels good, cannot come through programmed interactions focused on efficiency and productivity. Perhaps in focusing on getting the paper done and trying to pin down its aboutness we foreclosed the event. However, something like the event appeared again when we let go of those ambitions and entered into the textual field without expectation, without filter. As Caputo points out, we can invite the event or make space for its arrival: "I am trying to give a gift, to give something away, something that leaves my possession and thereafter leads another life I cannot control" (p. 24). We cannot force the event or force a collaboration to work. Sometimes it comes, and sometimes we are left waiting and wanting more.

Something Else, (Post)qualitative

Much like Manning and Massumi's (2014) *SenseLab* we position the page as a site for activating "a collective thinking process" that "can give rise to new thoughts through the interaction on site" (p. 90)—a site for the event to occur. An event (Caputo, 2012) is what remains open, malleable, unfinished, unknowable, unexpected, and even unrecognizable within any established norms, rules, methods, and so on. We kept coming back and re-turning this paper knowing but not quite believing that, as Manning and Massumi (2014) caution, what "might occur [can] not be pre-reduced to the delivery of already-arrived-at conclusions" (p. 90).

Given these ways of thinking about our project, we expect that it could be called post qualitative inquiry. And, since it began as a conventional qualitative project, we posit that this example has value for the qualitative inquiry community's continued thinking about what counts as post qualitative inquiry and what has to be something else. This paper helps us experiment with how and why we might activate post qualitative inquiry in the ruins of a qualitative project and how that might be worth our time. St. Pierre (2014, 2017b, 2017a) asserted that a traditional qualitative project cannot be made into post qualitative inquiry, "that post qualitative inquiry does not begin with or use *any* preexisting social science research methodology" (St. Pierre, 2019, p. 3). Does this mean that in order to do post qualitative inquiry we have to reject, throw out, and trash all qualitative methodologies? We are not ready to do that. We still find value in these ways of inquiring, even if they are just a place to begin. Sometimes we will begin with or take up with conventional qualitative methodologies and sometimes we might begin somewhere else.

Sweet, Nurminen, and Koro-Ljungberg (2019) have proposed that post qualitative inquiry emphasizes "working within spaces of uncertainty, calling for constant reflection on the various relations that are taking form, and advocating an antiprescriptive ethos" (p. 2). They resist the rejection of conventional qualitative methodologies at large and argue that qualitative inquirers might instead "continuously question the roles, functions, and emerging extensions of all inquiry practices including methodologies and stay open to diverse and unseen possibilities" (p. 2). This stance holds inquiry as ongoing and in relation both to past (and passed over) methodologies and to ongoing theoretical and artful explorations. We wonder given that poststructural philosophies refuse stable categories and clean separations whether it is even possible to do inquiry that does not in some way connect or make lines back to our becomings as researchers within more conventional qualitative inquiry paradigms.

Do conventional methods and methodologies have to go to waste to do post qualitative inquiry or are we doing something else if we start with methods? In trying to be responsible to the project we started, the participants we interviewed, the theories we took up we continued on... knowing since we began with methods that we might be wasting time. St. Pierre (2017) asserted that sometimes it is "too late to salvage those studies" (p. 2) that were started within humanist qualitative paradigms and that "a study that begins as a qualitative study cannot be made post-qualitative after the fact" (St. Pierre, 2019, p. 3). And, we agree that we have not salvaged this study to make it of value in a traditional paradigm. And, we are glad that we did not leave it, that we continued to work and write in the excess of methods, to work in the wastes. In trying to be responsible to the project we started, the participant we interviewed, the theories we took up—we continued to write through knowing we might be wasting time and sure that we are frustrated and the project became what we would have called post qualitative inquiry. But, perhaps, we can call it "*something else*."

Lastly, we almost discarded this paper due to the pressures of productivity in the neoliberal academy. Authors have left. Participants have become uninterested

or theoretically sidelined. Methodologies have fallen into ruin. Both the project's once-claimed topic, collaboration in classroom teaching, and the participant are imperceptible amongst our incessant questioning and second guessing of how to be responsible to the research that we started under another research paradigm. However, the *Waste* call in our email inboxes reinvigorated potentialities, provoking us to engage our writing wasteland once again. This time we entered with an invitation "to escape or overspill ready-made channelings into the dominant value system" (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 87). We hesitantly brought this work, which we were not sure would be seen or counted as valuable, forward. We allowed ourselves to attend to what might happen when we put forward writing and thinking that remains open, malleable, unfinished, unknowable, unexpected, and even unrecognizable within any established norms, rules, methods, and so on. We still are left with the idea that it might not be enough. We are still left wondering what it is about. What it *is*. It might be post qualitative inquiry, and it might be *something else* within qualitative inquiry.

References

- Atkinson, P., & Delamont, S. (2006). Rescuing narrative from qualitative research. *Narrative Inquiry, 16*(1), 164–172.
- Benozzo, A., Bell, H., & Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2013). Moving between nuisance, secrets, and splinters as data. *Cultural Studies <—> Critical Methodologies, 13*(4), 309–315.
- Bernstein, C. (1979). *Poetic justice*. Baltimore, MD: Pod Books. Retrieved from <http://eclipsearchive.org/projects/JUSTICE/html/pictures/005.html>
- Caputo, J. D. (Ed.) (1997). *Deconstruction in a nutshell: A conversation with Jacques Derrida*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- Caputo, J. D. (2012). Teaching the event: Deconstruction, hauntology, and the scene of pedagogy. *Philosophy of Education Archive, 23*–34. Retrieved from <http://ojs.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/pes/article/viewFile/3597/1218>
- Central Avenue Church. (2016, August 30). *John Caputo—Theology of the unconditional* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jn9OQxuJDQQ>
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Collective. (2017). I am Nel: Becoming (in)coherent scholars in neoliberal times. *Cultural Studies <—> Critical Methodologies, 17*(3), 251–261. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708617706120>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Washington, DC: Sage.
- Davies, B., & Bansel, P. (2010). Governmentality and academic work: Shaping the hearts and minds of academic workers. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 26*(3), 5–20.
- Davies, B., Flemmen, A. B., Gannon, S., Laws, C., & Watson, B. (2002). Working on the ground. A collective biography of feminine subjectivities: Mapping the traces of power and knowledge. *Social Semiotics, 12*(3), 291–313.
- Edgoose, J. (2001). Just decide! Derrida and the ethical aporias of education. In G. B. Egéa-Kuehne & Denise (Eds.), *Derrida & education* (pp. 119–133). Retrieved from <http://files/1631/undefined.html>

- Gale, K., & Wyatt, J. (2009). *Between the two: A Nomadic inquiry into collaborative writing and subjectivity*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Goldsmith, K. (2011). *Uncreative writing: Managing language in the digital age*. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com/Uncreative-Writing-Managing-Language-Digital/dp/0231149913/ref=sr1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1454379389&sr=1-1&keywords=uncreative+writing
- Guyotte, K. W., Flint, M., Gilbert, B., Potts, C., Irwin, A., & Bennett, L. (2019, online first). Meanwhile: Intra-actions with/in a post-qualitative readings class. *Qualitative Inquiry*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419868497>
- Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage. (2016, June 29). *The challenge of God - Plenary address by John D. Caputo* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRSkOUJ1b9w>
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Koro-Ljungberg, M., MacLure, M., & Ulmer, J. B. (2018). D...a...t...a..., data++, data, and some problematics. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 462–483). Washington, DC: Sage.
- Koro-Ljungberg, M., Carlson, D., Tesar, M., & Anderson, K. (2015). Methodology brut: Philosophy, ecstatic thinking, and some other (unfinished) things. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(7), 612–619. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414555070>
- MacLure, M. (2013a). Researching without representation? Language and materiality in post-qualitative methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 658–667. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788755>
- MacLure, M. (2013b). The wonder of data. *Cultural Studies* <—> *Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 228–232.
- Manning, E., & Massumi, B. (2014). *Thought in the act: Passages in the ecology of experience*. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctt6wr79f>
- Morley, L. (2016). Troubling intra-actions: Gender, neo-liberalism and research in the global academy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 31(1), 28–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2015.1062919>
- Social Justice Institute UBC. (2018, February 15). *Erin Manning on neurodiversity, Black life and the university as we know it* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYHSHRzj7eY>
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2013). The appearance of data. *Cultural Studies* <—> *Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 223–227. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708613487862>
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2017). Writing post qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 24(9), 603–608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417734567>
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2019). Post qualitative inquiry, the refusal of method, and the risk of the new. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 107780041986300. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419863005>
- Sweet, J. D., Nurminen, E., & Mirka, K.-L. (2019). Becoming research with shadow work : Combining artful inquiry with research-creation. *Qualitative Inquiry*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419857764>
- Taylor, C. A. (2016). Edu-crafting a cacophonous ecology: Posthumanist research practices for education. In *Posthuman research practices in education* (pp. 5–24). Springer.
- Wyatt, J., Gale, K., Gannon, S., Davies, B., Denzin, N. K., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2014). Deleuze and collaborative writing: Responding to/With “JKSB” *Cultural Studies* <—> *Critical Methodologies*, 14(4), 407–416. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708614530313>