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## Locking and Unlocking: The Potentialities for Intra-Storying-Activism in “This” Baglady Collective

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**Abstract**

*In this article we disrupt extractivist and privileged individualised knowledge production by decentering the human ‘I’ to ‘we’ through storying. Inspired by Le Guin (2019) and Haraway’s (2016) narrative baglady figuration, we explore a Baglady storytelling praxis. This means putting to work posthuman theories with the more-than-human, where knowledge-making is generated through the intra-actions of our collective’s storying. Starting with the provocation of locking and unlocking, we story to make sense of political and ethical affectivities that disrupt and interrupt everyday materialities and spatialities. From here, we speculate with movements of response-ability as “intra-activism” (Renold & Ringrose, 2017, 631). For us, storying puts in motion intra-action, speculation, calls to act, relationality, and feminist community building that we frame as intra-storying-activism. Making and re-making stories with intra-storying-activism navigates non-hierarchical post-authorship to re-imagine, speculate-with and trouble the human from extractivist positions. By foregrounding relationality as a multiplying storying, we create playful, dynamic, and generative spaces for knowledge making as a collective that both welcomes and provokes calls to act.*

**Keywords:** *Baglady storytelling praxis; posthuman materialism feminism; feminist collective; extractivism; intra-storying-activism*

**Introducings**

Doing lone scholarship in an ecologically damaged world feels insurmountable. Extractivist practices continue unbounded, as a capitalist worldview sustains extraction from the natural world as a sovereign entitlement (Bösel, 2022). Through working in collective ways, we problematise linear and individualised knowledge production by conceptualising such practices as an intellectualised ‘extractivism’. In doing so, we connect posthumanisms with ecological and sustainable practices in thinking-otherwise with extractivism, whose roots proliferate in colonial exploitation and pose an existential planetary threat (Dedeoğlu & Zampaki, 2023; Bösel, 2022). By troubling extractivist practices, we set aside sole authorship to unlock the generative potentiality of non-hierarchical collective storymaking. For us, storying puts in motion intra-action, speculation, calls to act, plurality, relationality, activism, and feminist community building that addresses the multi-scalar relationality between the human and more-than-human world. Feeling locked out of scholarly practices that offer a counter to overwhelming problems is our provocation. Telling collective stories is our key to unlocking an individualised helplessness.

In order to disrupt extractivist and privileged individualised knowledge production, we attempt to decentre the human ‘I’ to a more-than-human ‘we’ illustrated throughout this writing with hyperlinked stories. By philosophical thinking and storying beyond humanism, we playfully disrupt dominant working practices to create posthuman counter-knowledges (Braidotti, 2018). Through framing the human in a critical enmeshment with the more-than-human, we play with metaphors of locking/unlocking with and through collective narrative experimentations.

**Storyings**

Storying, we find, is powerful because there are always substantial narratives nestled within (Moxnes & Osgood, 2019). Through narration, stories and things melt into each other to reveal the “...and...and...and” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1977, 10). Given that we articulated our stories by gazing through the “existential mirror” of a global pandemic, storying practices are a means of responding to Ferrando’s (2021) clarion call to act on the demands of this “shedding time” (19). Because the past, present, and future are alive in every moment and a product of the context, they *produce* the context through the inseparable entanglement of spacetime-mattering (Barad, 2007). By creating



stories which disturb some traditional academic conventions, we have not only written through and with, but also *as* disturbance (Guyotte, 2023, 94).

Another benefit of storytelling as posthuman praxis is that it illuminates how thinking-with theory is a colliding, entangling and intra-acting phenomena (Barad, 2007). Harnessing the differences that storying affords can be a productive force that accounts for all entangled bodies and their affect(s) (Strom, 2023). Because stories beget more stories it is an active making and doing of knowledge that we think of as a verb rather than a noun, a way of “knowledge-ing” that is a process of unfolding (Taylor, 2021, 30). By storying and doing, we bring focus to a narrative pluriversality that is non-linear in process, “engaging in multiple worlds, perspectives, and insights” (Kayumova & Dou, 2022, 12; Kayumova & Strom, 2023).

What matters is that storying stays on the move as knowledge un/en/folds. In fact, when you think about it you cannot stop a thing like a story moving on. Stories can be thought of as open and nomadic happenings that are perpetually “unfinished and perhaps unfinishable” (Taylor, 2021, 30).

## Collectivisms

Collectivism is not easy work, as we acknowledge later. But for us, storying beyond individual scholarship is worthwhile as it kindles sympoietic knowledge-ings (Haraway, 2016). As Kayumova and Strom (2023) describe, rather than being isolated human individuals, we aim to create *pluriversal* spaces from which equity and justice emerge as practices from the multivocal and multi-perspectival lived experiences of the human and more-than-human collective. Inspired by Taylor et al.’s (2023) deliberate attempts to *move* against the isolation engendered by the pandemic lockdowns, we pivot those authors’ “movings-becomings-beginnings” (13) to create our own collective concept-ing *of* and *by* storying-becomings-beginnings.

Storytelling as a collective reveals the layering of relational feminist praxis that is a sensemaking (Vasudevan et al., 2022). It has the benefit of explaining the present whilst simultaneously “weave[ing] a new world into being” (Krawec, 2022, 12). As stories add in, they collide with events (Hodkinson et al., 2021). By focusing on the redemptive power of connection, making is preferred over production (Haines, 2022). Picking up the threads that link a collective together, like ours, traces their warp and weft (Isom, 2023) that simultaneously help us to unlock from the chains that bind us to the academic neoliberal machine. Through collective practices, storytelling illuminates the responsibility to become kin and slowing down to attune in spaces of not knowing (Kanngieser, 2020a, 2020b; Krawec, 2022; Pyry, 2022.). As we story, we are drawn to building communities and what matters is keeping sight of one another (Pirrie et al., 2021).

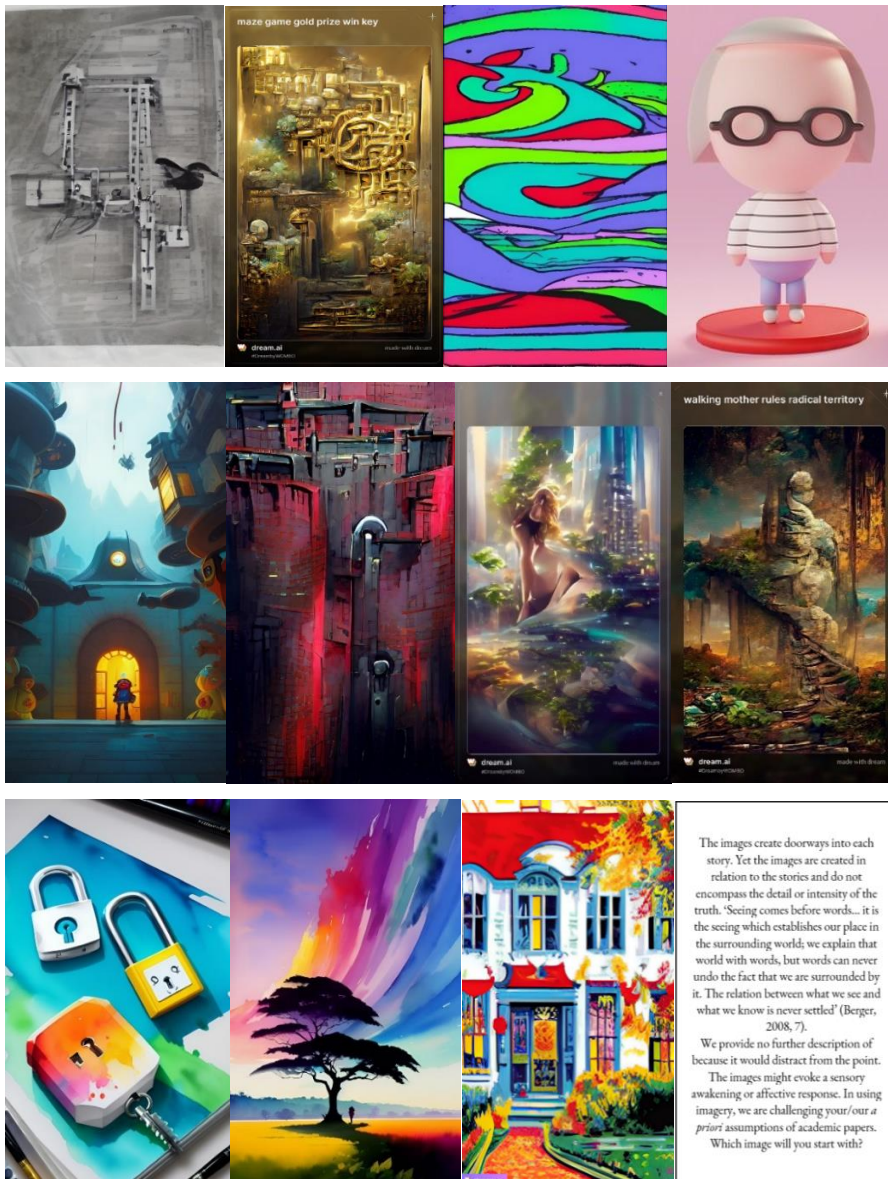
Many reasons draw us to collective working. In venturing into higher education, we have all encountered traditional doings of academia<sup>14</sup> that foreground normative figurations of solo knowledge production. Standardised conceptions of what and whose knowledge counts are reified within logics of neatly ordered forms of research (Helper et al., 2019) that sustains a status quo. Scholarly outputs are positioned as academic keys that unlock the door of knowing. This state of play folds in a binary logic, much like an input and output ideology of a conveyor belt that legitimises limitations of being in or doing academia (Taylor, 2021). Trouble comes when learning is framed as a commodified exchange of information which fails to attune to the vibrancy of a plurality where knowing is numerous, intertwined, and constantly altering (Strom et al., 2020).

<sup>14</sup> Similar points were reinforced at a ‘Un-key-noting’ event at ECQI 2023 by the CG Collective. (see Fairchild et al. 2022).

But what problem(s) does this create for us, and how can posthuman theories and praxis re-imagine a more creative scholarship (Bozalek, 2022)? Mac Naughton (2005) argues that a more tactical use of knowledge enables activism through relationships. Yet let us be modest and appreciate that any collective activism is always more than our knowledge and our stories. To embrace posthumanism is to embrace the relation of our experiences and material engagements. A posthuman praxis does not forget the human, but instead brings us closer in negotiation with the complex assemblage of non-human, the earth and technological life as “zoe-geo-techno” (Braidotti, 2019, 36).

## Bagladyings

**Figure 1.** ‘A’ Baglady Gallery: Meet the here and now collective .





Baglady storytelling praxis works with posthuman theories to entangle more-than-human bodies within new knowledge-making through the intra-actions of collective storyings. Inspired by Le Guin (2019) and Haraway's (2016) narrative Baglady figurations, different formations of the Baglady storytelling collective flourish in numerous space~places through a shifting membership of doctoral students and scholars at different stages (Albin-Clark et al., 2021; Latto et al., 2022; Ovington, et al., in press). Being Baglady draws on Braidotti's words to "[f]unction in a group, function in a pack" (cited in Dernikos et al., 2020, 49).

We take inspiration from the science fiction writer Ursula Le Guin (1989/2019) in her essay *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* where she proposes the potential of narrative truthmaking.<sup>15</sup> Le Guin's (1989/2019) essay emphasises that early human survival mainly came from gathering plants, seeds, and nuts into bags, and so reframes the human origin tale away from the linear hero hunter narrative. Instead, the bag acts as a symbol for the potential of creating and pollinating multiplying stories. Haraway (2016) conceptualised baglady narrative practice as a way of making knowledge as composting stories that transform from what they were into life-giving earth that can then become part of what is to come. Storytelling has the benefit of cross-pollination as it takes flight to places anew and proliferates. Additionally, it resonates with a posthumanist praxis that thinks with an ecological urgency (Dedeoğlu & Zampaki, 2023).

It is not surprising that narrative research is vibrant in posthuman and feminist materialisms scholarship (Adsit-Morris, 2017; Albin-Clark, et al., 2021; de Rijke et al., 2022; Fairchild et al., 2022; Hohti, 2018; Moxnes, 2022; Moxnes et al., 2019; Taylor, Blaise, & Giugni, 2013; Taylor et al., 2023). Whilst Haraway and Weigal (2019) call for narratives that navigate ethics in a more-than-human world, Moxnes (2022) posits that "Bag-Lady-Carrier-Bag Practices" act as both philosophy and methodology (37). Storytellers encompass the listener in shaping the content and process (Wilson, 2008). Rather than be representational, the stories we tell are a research-creation where knowledge comes from liminalities (Pyry, 2022).

A story's capacity to reproduce has many parallels with concepts like becoming and becoming-with, that Deleuze and Guattari (1987) have illustrated through examples in the natural world. One instance is how orchids and wasps transform through reproduction, their "trans-species courtship dance" (Roffe & Stark, 2015, 1). In this transgression, the orchid replicates rather than imitates the characteristics of a female wasp by luring in copulating males, a *becoming-wasp*. However, during their courtship, the wasp also becomes enmeshed in the orchid's reproductive apparatus, a *becoming-orchid*. With this example, it is possible to make sense of becoming as a "difference-in-itself" (Deleuze, 1994). The indiscernibility between the orchid and the wasp during their copulation and cross pollination is described as a milieu for becoming; "a slippage, not a natural filiation, but an unnatural alliance" (Deleuze, 1998, 78).

Pollination is a helpful concept for storying praxis because it highlights the dynamics at work as stories influence each other, flourish, and move in their telling and retelling. A becoming identity is not understood as stable, because it is in flux. What this means is that subjectivities can be extended beyond the individual storyteller. It opens the potential for affective assemblages with more-than-human matter and other bodies (Renold & Mellor, 2013). Subjects become entrenched within the process of becoming, a becoming unfounded or "deconstituted" (Message, 2010, 34). Therefore, the stories we narrate or tell become entangled with other stories, that are thereafter indiscernible

<sup>15</sup> In this article we have hyperlinked the author's stories, we have written about the importance of this as a note to the reader, explaining how this article came to being: [link here](#).

from the storytellers. Becoming-with each other as storytellers provide differences in themselves by eventuating productive connections anew. As Deleuze and Parnet (2002) argue “This could be what a conversation is – simply the outline of a becoming” (2).

Simply put, stories connect, invite, and reach out.

### **Intra-activism~extractivisms**

What we do with the doings of stories matters and Baglady practices builds on the notion of “posthuman feminist intra-activist research assemblages” (Renold & Ringrose, 2017, 631.) Intra-activism integrates intra-action with activism and calls for an active response-ability. Such practices draw on Braidotti’s (2010) call to act and Barad’s (2007) troubling of being an onlooker, as their theory of agential realism considers that phenomena are inseparable and relational. For example, intra-activisms have been used to address sexualities and harassment in school spaces (Huuki et al., 2022; Renold, 2019; Renold & Ringrose, 2017; 2019). By using art-based approaches such as messages in glass jars and attending to the “fleshy materialism” (Renold & Ringrose 2017, 631) of school skirts and sexual harassment, such scholarship illuminates how activism can be embedded within material-discursive assemblages (Ringrose & Renold, 2019).

It is important to confront research practices of *thinking* and *doing* that can become privileged through the exploitation of others (Bösel, 2022). Ethics and care play an important role with the idea of intra-activism (Renold & Ringrose, 2017, 631). Because intra-activism draws on Baradian (2007) entanglements of agency as emerging through intra-action, there are many synergies with feminist leanings into the urgency of activism in research (Renold & Ringrose, 2017). In putting to work intra-activism, we aspire to make counter moves to individualisation, exploitation and extractivist privilege in academia. As such, our collective proposes that storying can *make* and *create* and *activate* different ways of knowing and being and because of that we end with questions for the reader to take away in their own bags instead of a neat conclusion.

Activist storying is always more-than. It matters that the political and ethical foreground the capacity to respond (Barad, 2007; Bozalek et al., 2018). Movements of resistance and activism are a growing research field in early childhood education for example (Albin-Clark & Archer, 2023; Archer, 2022). Recently, being an academic has become troubled with moves in England that have sidelined critical and theoretically rich teacher education to foreground technicist approaches (Peiser et al., 2022). Activist scholarship illuminates the agency for change and advocacy (Bloch et al., 2018; Cannella et al., 2016). In effect, activist-scholarship entangles activism in practice (Mevawalla & Archer, 2022; Verlie & CCR15, 2020; Yelland & Frantz Bentley, 2018).

Putting Baglady praxis to work with activism is exemplified in Hohti’s (2018) study on the politics of special educational needs, and Moxnes and Osgood (2019) work with students that highlight the complicated realities of how materialities and ethics entangle. As Braidotti (2018) states there is a need to move beyond solo stories and nurture outward-looking scholarship that connects with otherness and diversity within a political and ethical situatedness. Here, calls to action gesture towards what is affirmative and can multiply (Albin-Clark et al., 2021). In positioning storying with activism as intra-activism (Renold & Ringrose, 2017), stories of people, places, and power can reconfigure the purpose of research (Taylor et al., 2020).

Posthuman praxis is situated within ecological concerns around extractivist practices and acknowledge how the history of colonialism is deeply implicated with political, ethical, and legal ramifications (Dedeoğlu & Zampaki, 2023). For example, the Anthropocene is being experienced



in Latin America through extractivism with mountains, rivers and rainforests being decimated (Coombe & Jefferson, 2021). Such practices position the human in exploitative relationships with the environment (Ringrose & Niccollini, 2020). Because language has come to dominate knowledge making practices (Barad, 2007), it entrenches extractivist and binary thinking (Ferrara, 2021). In a world drastically altered by late-stage capitalism, it is urgent that power differences are addressed in-between colonialism, injustice and extractivism (Nonsense, 2021). And let us be frank, there are urgent global concerns to cast our gaze to in decentring the human from the focus.

## Doings

Their story connects to my gut.  
I too know this story, deeply.  
The words sharply pulse through my cells followed by a thousand women's voices  
whispering  
"I too know this story"; they too felt this story.  
Organic remembering.  
Collective connecting.  
Organic research through relationship building,  
through friendship.  
Through time  
(Haines, 2022, 50).

Unlocking posthuman theory takes some doing because the methods offer no definitive roadmap (Ottersland Myhre et al., 2017). Moreover, ontology, epistemology and ethics are all mashed up as the human is decentred. Instead, our gaze is broadened to notice, include, and listen to the more-than-human with equal gravitas (Barad, 2007). Researchers must then "think with theory" (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014) and leave the comfort of familiarity and imagine anew: "A different theory, a different discourse, different statements and questions about living, different grids of normalcy and regularity could produce me differently, for better or worse" (St. Pierre, 2001, 142). It is an ambitious endeavour, as posthuman feminism challenges western thought by dislodging humans as the measuring stick (Braidotti, 2013). Humans can never be thought of as alone, as any capacity to act is a reciprocal entangled agency beyond humanism (Barad, 2007).

Doing posthuman storying is affecting. Theories of affect and agency are useful for unlocking posthuman praxis because they draw attention to relationalities (Taylor et al., 2022). Bennett's (2010) writing on the vitality of human-non-human assemblages through "thing-power" crystallises the liveliness of intra-activity. Thinking~with posthumanism conceptualises stories as relational entangled materialities, and affect theories explain what is at work. Things and spaces are vital in storying and entangled with affect. Affect is a way of conceptualising how embodiment and emotion work as a "thinking-feeling" (Massumi, 2015). Massumi (2015) describes the ethical and political as micropolitics that are sensed subconsciously and triggered from disruption. Shocks are useful tools for thinking. In storying, attending to the affectivities of microshocks activate potentialities for knowledge making; "In this sense, affects are attributed to bodies and their capacities to engage in social, cultural, material and political relations" (Zembylas, 2022, 6). Thus, being affected entangles a serious consideration of how affect and emotions relate (Ahmed, 2004; 2017) and are an important element of storying at work.

Doing stories is personal work and sometimes they are difficult to hear when they highlight oppression and injustice. An even finer attunement to kin becomes necessary in attending to what we sense and feel (Kanngieser, 2021), and we resist urges to define and conclude where we can



(Pirrie et al., 2021). Through story sharing we can appreciate the unknown and unknowable. Listening to stories illuminates relationality, a collaboratively (re)imagining becoming otherwise (Kannigieser, 2020b), making it possible to build and rebuild relationships across human and more-than-human bodies. It becomes a priority to “care and cure collectively and relatively” (Benozzo et al., 2021, 7), in blending the personal and academic to resist sanitising our academic bodies. Storying as becoming-researchers is connected with friendly love and care, in our common worlds and our collective futures by work-ing~within the structures that attempt to lock us in or out.

Because voices are at work in the doings of storying, they layer in complications to meanings (Mazzei & Jackson, 2012). Voices intra-act with us. So, stories cannot be separated from temporalities, spatialities and (im)material contexts, nor can they be (un)entangled from wider relationships. As such, we hesitate from seeking similarities. Instead, we attune to the *affects* of difference (Haraway, 1992). Thinking~with Massumi (2015) we accept “the notion of affect does take many forms...To get anywhere with the concept, you have to retain the manyness of its forms” (47). This means embracing difference/difference (Derrida, 1982) of how locking and unlocking affects. To do so, we attended to what is relational rather than what is defined (Massumi, 2015). Research-creation as a co-poiesis has been deeply affective for us. Instead of imposing a methodological approach onto creative approaches, the process unfolds (TEDx Talks, Manning & Mussumi, 2014), through enaction. In the same way, stories stand on their own but enact a transsubjective (Ettinger, 2006) approach, embodying a shared affect without necessarily needing shared language.

Storying and its doing is messy work. In all honesty, collective writing is a challenging mode of knowledge-ing as an unfolding research creation (Taylor, 2021; Truman, 2021). Feminist relationality and care needs attention (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017). At times working collectively is tense, as ideas emerge between the ongoing push and pull of whose voice to foreground. Many lively collective affective threads hang behind the neat weaving of words on these pages. (Re)creating a “jointness-in-separateness” (Ettinger 2006) brings creative practices, theory, and the more-than-human together. Beyond the sensitive negotiation between a large group of authors, our co-emergence means navigating the complex philosophical language that carries an exclusionary nature. Yet we seek to mitigate exclusion by storying within a posthuman kinship that acknowledges the discomforts of “doing” posthuman inquiry (Albin-Clark et al. 2023; Oyinloye et al., 2023). We are a collective but resist a “collective voice” as a singular entity and instead offer a “texture of voices” (Mazzei & Jackson, 2012) or a composting (Haraway, 2016).

Relational writing for us is influenced by “post-authorship” (Benozzo et al., 2016; 2019). By writing into each other’s writing, we re-negotiate at the liminalities of discomfort, to find comfort with each other (St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000). Not only are we writing into each other’s stories, we are writing with and into other collectives, (Fairchild et al., 2022; Ringrose & Nicollini, 2021; Swift et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2023) to build on existing feminist community building. Writing that disrupts sole authorship works across bodies that entangle more-than-human actants (Fairchild et al., 2022). Collective storytelling brings a thoughtfulness towards the response-abilities we take within Anthropocenic times and how we trouble taken-for-granted humanist research methods (Braidotti 2013; Osgood & Odegard, 2022). Through taking seriously the ethics of an expansive onto-epistemology, we acknowledge how honouring indigenous ways of knowing can be an intentional act of decolonisation for example.

Now it is time to weave in our affect(s) from locking and unlocking in/with/through the storying. We welcome you to flit between the hyperlinks and experience storying’s palpable, embodied materialities. You will find the affect(s) are visceral and more-than, sensed in-between human, non-



human inter- and intra-active movements (Barad, 2007; Gregg & Seigworth, 2010). Whilst some stories foreground affective things (Bennett, 2010), such as baby slings, other storying draws on the affectivities of spaces/places such as prisons or bedrooms. A thread of boundary crossing(s) is revealed, either with bodily movements or through physical resistances. Space(s) expand to explore the emotive in-between intra-affectivities. For example, **Louise Platt's story** describes how walking with their baby claims space as an *unruly feminist act*. Their discussion of walking across lines and the restricted movements of Covid-19 materialises that feeling. In contrast yet with some similarity, **Jo Albin-Clark's story** explores the use of diagramming as a fluid methodology to unlock research potentialities but finds the dead ends in the mapping both curious and full of affective uncertainty.

Stories become objects of curiosity resonating with microshocks (Massumi, 2015), revealing little truths. With these truths, habits and everyday shocks register as immanent forces in the everyday (Stewart, 2007). Such ordinary affect offers problems or questions, such as memories of keys unlocking haunting places, or the doubt layered into methodological choices. Entanglements of affectivities-in-motion with stories, problems or questions are not fixed, but instead emerge, transform, and reconfigure through intra-action (Barad, 2007). **Julie Ovington's story** powerfully chronicles how the micro, in contrast to a generative potential outlined elsewhere in this paper, can be brutally inflexible. Our blood-kinship relationality illuminates the necessity of micro-management in the spatio-temporal aspects of our lives. Their story also demonstrates “the ‘intra’ness of entangled im/material forces” (Renold & Ringrose, 2019, np). Inspired by this, we extend our ethics of care beyond the human members of our collective. In noticing the agentic affective capacities of the non-human im/material forces, we recognise that “it matters what matters we use to think other matters with” in space~places (Haraway, 2016, 12).

Becoming attuned to activist spaces emerges through intra-actions. For example, **Sharon Smith's story** with parents' of children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities accounts how they experience policy barriers. What is storied is a near-impossible game imagined as a grabbing for that supposed ‘Golden Ticket’. The materiality of this imaginary space foregrounds being trapped in a neoliberal world, and the political thinking-feeling that textures such affectivities. By embracing affectivities, moments attract attention (MacLure, 2013) and **Charlotte Marshall's story** demonstrates the vitality of relationality between humans and non-human objects, padlocks in this case, in processes of becoming. Tools for locking transverse, and open relationships, dialogues and knowledge-ing. Simultaneously, their use in a school classroom undermined constrictive normative ideas of what teaching and learning should entail—perhaps exemplifying what **Alice Elwell's story** describes as *affective equivalence*, a decolonising force entangling the teacher and students together. **Philippa Isom's story** too unpicks the locks internally constructed in her ethico-onto-epistemology and orientation towards her ‘teacher-ness.’ By sorting through the boxes that had kept her long-held beliefs, she was able to make a distinction between the ‘clicks’ in the locks that hold ‘treasure’ and those that restrain. Similarly, **Anna Pilson's story** traces the affective impact of an orthopaedic foot brace where she reframed the object from something limiting physical position to an agent that freed barriers that internal ableism had erected. We never quite know just what, when, how or why we will be affected by the more-than-human, but it is important that we in-brace (Massumi, 2015) ourselves for their impact.

**Lucy Harding's story** features how gates can symbolise disruption to the rhythms of life in the prison that was her workplace. Affective materialities resonate with any troubling of ableism. Being a keyholder in that institution is redolent of the uneven power dynamics in the Academy that

privilege certain kinds of outputs. An attunement to power circulation catalysed a deliberate centring on a politics of citation (Ahmed, 2017) to embrace indigenous methodologies. Thus, the vital force of the encounters between humans, gate, and foot braces support Barad’s (2007) assertion that each intra-action is a reconfiguring.

It could never have been predicted prior to entering these assemblages that material objects, supposedly “dumb matter” (Massumi, 2002), could communicate new worldings (Haraway, 2016). **Philippa Nicoll Antipas’s story** opens with the sentence: “[t]here were tears’ employing the noun ‘tears’ to introduce the sadness and frustration of the 2021 Covid-19 lockdown in Aotearoa/New Zealand.” However, as the story progresses, ‘tear’ operates as a verb, as she began to tear down barriers to her doctoral project by thinking with the minor gesture (Manning, 2016) of sending co-researchers packages. In contrast, **Faelyn Carley’s story** demonstrates how repetitious linguistic threads convey the affect of the immaterial. The phone notification that causes the humans on the campus to ‘scatter’ is preceded and followed by an amorphous sensation of ‘tension...tension...tense’.

### Intra-actings-with

Intra-acting with the doings of storying provoked an appreciation of how much categorisation and definition informs academic work. Storying reveals the hidden interconnections between emotive experiences and their shaping that lie beneath processes. When emotions and experiences shift shape, separability (and thus binary thinking) are troubled *through* intra-action. By embracing the intra-active textures of affectivities, we create fresh trajectories for knowledge-making from a less privileged position. From there we can trouble exploitative practices by seeking a more sustainable posthuman praxis in a post-Anthropocentric world (Bösel, 2022).

Yet the here and now of (be)coming collective is not a one-off, but rather an intra-activity with kinship, steeped in politics of collectivity (Manning & Himada, 2009). It is not a “Politics with a capital P” (Manning & Himada, 2009, 5), rather something micropolitical. Massumi (2011) argues any entanglement that emphasises affect possesses political aspects. Baglady relational kinshipping is by default rhizomatic, in the sense that it constitutes an alliance (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). Such alliance unfurls a growing-together in different directions in unlocking barriers of time, space, and hierarchy. It has grown adventitiously, via embracing difference and centring on a flexible (and complex) ethics of care. Manning and Himada (2009) states that the simple act of allowing each other time, space and guidance is micropolitical, as in the Academy flexibility can sit outside its moral agenda.

In this case being affected is inseparable from storying intra-actions. In creating and offering (our) stories as propositions, or “lures for feeling” (Whitehead, 1978, 25), we invite readers to affect and be affected (Spinoza, 1974). Fresh trajectories unfold through traversing boundaries. As with some of our storying, we/they/us re-claim spaces that defy traditional gender roles and these minor acts, form a resistance against the multiple boundaries placed on movements. Consequently, the orientation of our work towards attuning to its affective potentiality is indeterminable, relational, and embodied (Massumi, 2015). Being invited into collective-making has enfolded an enthusiastic messy middle in action. Collaboration here is a dynamic “doing”, rather than a “thing” (Manning & Himada, 2009, 1). In encountering different storyings, the reader may be affected by minor and micro-perceptual facets and in a tentacular way welcomed into the Baglady collective. We feel that too. What happens is an expansive attunement through the relationality of intra-activity with/in our



work that decentres the human in recognising the agency of the im/material. Consequently, a more explicitly open, ethical and micropolitical research unfolds that expands upon each encounter.

Storyings intra-acts by decentring (or at least jiggling) the human from privileged positions (Bösel, 2022). Affective jolts of intra-acting micro-politics are at work (Massumi, 2015). Problems are worked through by storying. In that sharing, we are speaking out loud both the *being* of the problem and the *becoming* of calls to act in response. Problems materialise through relational textures, from things that are real/imaginary and through spatialities of boundary-making and unmaking. Storying works through experiences of being locked out and how we unlock with and through storying. But what is also at work is the more porous barriers of entering and exiting the project.

There feels like three ideas afoot here.

Firstly, storying is woven through non-human materialities that can lock, stifle, and restrain. Real things (such as foot braces or bread) are provocative agents, but their scale need not impact on potentialities. Rather, storying entangles the everyday (Stewart, 2007) and mundane, yet the scale or ordinariness does not inhibit the heft or surprise of affect.

Secondly, storying encompasses speculative imaginings (Haraway, 2016) that at first occupy the liminalities of perception. What is imagined is a way of managing painful truths embedded within anecdotal, fictional/non-fictional layers of metaphor. Moreover, storying theorises with non-linear connections that are practical yet intensely personal. Such speculative imaginings exist in different temporalities that can stay inert or repeat, confound, and haunt. More problems and questions arise from storying with micropolitics (Massumi, 2015). Ethics are bound up with exclusion, loneliness, frustration, fear, freedom, inadequacy, and injustice (and more besides). A quality of working as a storying collective is the addressing of isolation, including pushing back on how theory (and methodology) can exclude (Albin-Clark et al. 2023; Oyinloye, Hawxwell & Ovington, 2023). Hence, locking and unlocking was a powerful provocation. We bet, dear reader, you are imagining how you could story your own being locked in or indeed out and in effect, becoming Baglady already.

Thirdly, there is a continual storying of how boundaries restrain, resist, and are transgressed. So more-than-human spatialities are indeed packed full of micro-shocks (Massumi, 2011) that interrupt and disrupt movements. Transgressing is unpredictable and deeply situated. Furthermore, storying is thinking in process and a rhizomatic response to the same provocation. Those same provocations have an agency of their own when they are on the move. Moreover, we all came to the edges of vulnerability in sharing stories, some of us worried that they were not *good enough* or even telling *proper stories*, but the shared vulnerability created an affirmation. We were and are not alone.

### **Intra-storying-activisms**

Through storying, we engage~with the complexities of our intra-actions and how this can become a call to act. Within our praxis there are multiplying belongings (Braidotti & Regan, 2017) that signal how ethical and political intra~activism underpins how we act in and for the world (and to each other). In navigating neoliberal constraints that encourage competition and individualism, we seek out a different way of doing academia with kin~shipping. Storying microshocks can disrupt hierarchies (Latto et al., 2022). Kinship involves an acceptance of complexity, so we keep one foot in daily striated spaces whilst dipping our toe into the smoother territory of research-creation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Truman, 2021). Whilst we cannot remove all the tensions within our kinship, we endeavour to attain a convivial symbiosis (Massumi, 2015).

Therefore, *this* Baglady iteration of kinshipping is a multi-valent micro-political resistance with a response-ability to the human (and more-than-human). From here, we trouble and undermine the stratification of power exuding from the Academy. In turn this reveals creative place~space(s) fertile for invention and intervention (Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Manning & Himada, 2009). What culminates is a unique convergence of stories that has a contextual situatedness when (re)told as speculative fabulations (Haraway, 2016). As such, our stories are not meant to chronicle absolute truths about experience or fixed expressions of what *is* or *was*, rather they bring “perception to the fore” (Manning & Himada, 2009, 5) to catalyse *worldings* (Haraway, 2016). It imagines a different “past-present-future now” (Truman, 2018, 32).

Storying as a collective has provided us with “a processual methodology - as a sympoietic practice” (Taylor et al., 2023, 16). Baglady storying (in this iteration) conflates posthuman praxis and activism by exemplifying how ethics can be navigated through imaginative speculations as both a philosophy and methodology (Haraway, 2016; Moxnes, 2022).

In the process, storying power and affect is revealed, serving to inspire a revolt against the academic machine and find different research paths. As an activism that is pitted with empowerment, it is by harnessing vulnerabilities that we position difference as a productive force (Strom, 2023). Storying is generative and ongoing, iterative in nature whereby stories told are made and (re)made, cross-pollinating as evolving becomings (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) with the seeds of new adventures to come. Adventures that tell of affective intensities that reverberate in the walls of the body and beyond. Affect lingers, collides, and enmeshes with other stories—old, new and the unknown providing stories for another day that we will (re)turn to as they are “gifts” (Taylor, 2023) that just keep giving. Gifts that nourish as we make sense of the world, we are part of and the things we are entangled with. But, for now we write into the research collectives of Fairchild et al., (2022), Ringrose and Nicollini, (2021), Swift et al. and Taylor et al., (2023) to amplify the importance of attuning to the mundane and infra-ordinary (Perecs, 1973). We do this with the aim of epitomising that *making* sense of theory, *doing* research and what counts as data does not have to fit the confining parameters of linearity and tradition(s).

But the question remains about how collective storying counters extractivist practices and sets in motion intra-activisms through posthuman praxis. *How* we navigate non-hierarchical collectivism and *what* storying amplifies about non-human and more-than-human things and spatialities is key. Therefore, just as Fairchild et al. (2022) aim to recast academic conference spaces through performative material-discursive events, we unlock academic writing spaces via storying. Through the potentialities of kinshipping as a spark for pluriversal knowledge-ings, we ignite “affective intensities” (Fairchild et al., 2022) that folds back into itself in processual “worldings [and] whirlings” (Taylor et al., 2023, 15). In this sense, kinship kin-dles creativity and complexity.

Intra-activist scholarship is a rich seam of existing art-based research practice (Renold & Ringrose, 2017). Baglady praxis adds the potential of speculative imaginings into “posthuman feminist intra-activist research assemblages” (Renold & Ringrose, 2017, 631) in the collecting, shared reading and knowledge-ing with storying. Through our praxis, we propose that Baglady practice might be a more intra-storying-activism, to emphasise the potential of futures of what can be imagined and composted in storied knowledge-making (Haraway, 2016).


Stories carry political potential in drawing attention to how activist-scholarship interrupts and disrupts through speculation (Albin-Clark et al., 2021; Albin-Clark & Archer, 2023; Latto et al., 2022; Ovington et al., in press). Micro-shocks ripple through every day and imaginary stories but








leave traces (Massumi, 2011). Affective traces are important to ponder with and carry the kernel of rallying yourself to act, as Braidotti calls us to do to in the posthumanities (2010). As storying spreads, the narrative pluriversality opens new thinking that is already multiplying as it is on the move (Kayumova & Dou, 2022; Kayumova & Strom, 2023). Storying can acknowledge that we too might be part of the problem with an active commitment to find ways to be part of the solution (Braidotti & Regan, 2017). Collectivism and storying offer playful and generative means of making sense with posthuman theory and praxis and open the door to imagine ways to confront or acknowledge what is troubling (Latto et al., 2022).


We leave you with some Baglady **intra-storying-activisms** questions to ponder:


 What locks you out? Story with us (Baglady invitations are always open!)

 Can you soften the gaze from human privilege and extractivist positions? There is so much more-than. In a time of great ecological precarity, this is urgent work. Our more-than-kin *needs* us to notice.

 What do you notice in relation to how things, spaces and boundaries interrupt and disrupt? These affectivities are generative micro-political keys to think with.

 How can you build communities and authorships to trouble hierarchies? It is not easy work, but those affects are *full* of lively potentiality.

 In what ways do you speculate and story about the real and the imagined? *Really*, we are all Baglady storytellers.

 What can you practically do in response to storying? Join in that call to act and become part of **intra-storying-activism**.

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