

Stephanie
Springgay

Selfie

Research-Creation,
Socially Engaged Art &
Affective Pedagogies

Stephanie
Springgay

BUY

Secrets

DUKE

Duke University Press
Durham and London

2022

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

DUKE

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

Research-Creation,
Socially Engaged Art, and
Affective Pedagogies

© 2022 Duke University Press

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞

Project editor: Lisa Lawley

Designed by Courtney Leigh Richardson

Typeset in Whitman and Quicksand by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Springgay, Stephanie, author.

Title: Feltness : research-creation, socially engaged art, and affective pedagogies / Stephanie Springgay.

Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2022006104 (print) | LCCN 2022006105 (ebook) |

ISBN 9781478016267 (hardcover) | ISBN 9781478018902 (paperback) |

ISBN 9781478023531 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Affective education—United States. | Affective education—

Social aspects—United States. | Arts in education—United States. | Affect

(Psychology) in art. | Feminist theory. | BISAC: EDUCATION / Arts in

Education | EDUCATION / Teaching / Methods & Strategies

Classification: LCC LB1072.S685 2022 (print) | LCC LB1072 (ebook) |

DDC 370.15/34—dc23/eng/20220421

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022006104>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022006105>

Cover art: Hand-lettering by Courtney Leigh Richardson,
photo by Jim O'Sullivan.

Duke University Press gratefully acknowledges the Social Sciences and
Humanities Research Council of Canada, which provided funds toward the
publication of this book.

DUKE
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

For all the artists,
students, and
teachers who make
this work possible

DUKE

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

Introduction	Feltness On How to Practice Intimacy	1
Chapter One	Bitter Chocolate Is for Adults! Matters of Taste in Elementary Students' Socially Engaged Art	31
Chapter Two	Imponderable Curricula Living the Future Now	55
Chapter Three	Fluxus and the Event Score The Ordinary Potential of Radical Pedagogy as Art	81

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Chapter Four	Anarchiving as Research-Creation <i>Instant Class Kit</i>	111
Chapter Five	Conditions of Feltness	135
Chapter Six	Make a Public	153
Chapter Seven	Pedagogical Impulses	171

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Notes	179
References	183
Index	195

Writing this book could not be possible without the love and support of my family and friends, as well as the vibrant arts and academic communities that I am a part of. I am especially grateful to the many students, teachers, and artists with whom I have had the pleasure of working over the past decade, especially Shannon Gerard, Hannah Jickling, Reed Reed, Rodrigo Hernandez-Gomez, Sarah Febbraro, and Hazel Myer. I am immensely grateful to my graduate student research assistants and collaborators extraordinaire: Aubyn O'Grady, Zofia Zaliwska, Julie Smitka, Andrea Vela Alarcón, Arden Hagerdon, Sarah Truman, James Miles, and Lee Cameron. You are colleagues and mentors, and you have always pushed my thinking to places I could never have gone on my own. This book is as much yours as it is mine.

The research-creation projects and the writing of this book would not be possible without Rita Irwin, who created a speculative, experimental, and collaborative space at the University of British Columbia in the early 2000s. You seeded the possibilities to do research differently. I am forever grateful for your mentorship and love and the enormous permissions you made for your students to intervene into the neoliberal logics of academic work. Among the many people I met in Vancouver, Leah Decter has been a constant companion in my research-creation endeavors, and I'm so glad that we can continue to think and work together. Nancy Nisbet is Vancouver kin who has been part of this journey through research-creation and radical pedagogy. Allison Moore's steadfast friendship (and our Zoom coffee conversations during the pandemic) has sustained me in more ways than she knows. Allison and I began our artistic careers together in Toronto in the early 1990s long before either of us had ventured into academia. We came together at a time in the arts community when feminist collectives were flourishing as an important site for reimagining artistic

D

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

practice as research. And while she no longer go-go dances in my kitchen, Linda Knight's arts-based research continues to inspire my thinking-making-doing. Jess Dobkin has been a collaborator and coconspirator, and I am moved by her generosity and plushy pink trickster performances; one always needs a Lady-Jane latrine-vitrine as a counter-archive. Natalie Loveless's encouragement got me through some challenging moments in the writing process. Her research-creation theorizing and practice has been so foundational to the work I do; to me she is the research-creation whisperer. Jorge Lucero is my interlocutor in art as pedagogy. I am indebted to your *Conceptual Art as Teacher* practice. To all those whose names I can't cite here, do note that you are part of the pages (that I hope will become worn) and the life lived doing this work.

While the research-creation events described in these pages took place before I joined McMaster University, the book itself was written during my first year as director of the School of the Arts. I am so inspired by the creative energy of my colleagues in the school, and I am lucky to work in such an environment. This book was possible in an impossible year because of the work we will do in the present future together. I could not have survived the first year in a new position without my fierce feminist colleagues Susie O'Brien, Christina Baade, Melinda Gough, Chandrima Chakraborty, Christine Quail, and Catherine Anderson. Your mentorship and queer feminist care are incalculable.

I want to thank Elizabeth Ault and her team at Duke University Press for the encouragement and support to put this book out into the world. I met Elizabeth at the affect theory conference, and, to all those who were gathered together there by Gregg Seigworth, you are held in the highest regards. All the feels and felts go out to you. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their capacious readings of the manuscript and their insightful suggestions to make the work stronger. Thank you to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funding the research-creation events. The photographs included here were taken by me, by the artists, or by the graduate students working on the various projects. Special thanks to Julie Smitka and Andrea Vela Alarcón for editing and managing additional photoshoots.

Finally, on a personal note, 2021 has been a year of immense pain, heart-break, and loss, but within that space of crisis extra special thanks go to my mother Barbara and to Maurya and Liam for the meals made, loads of laundry completed, and your radical imaginings of a better and more just future. Your intellectual curiosity, creativity, and rage are felt into these pages.

DUKE

x Acknowledgments

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Feltness

On How to
Practice Intimacy

Thirty-five elementary school students stand on the banks of the Don River in Toronto, Canada, a major waterway through the city that empties into Lake Ontario that lies only a short walk from their public school. They giggle and cheer as the artists Hannah Jickling and Reed Reed, as part of the *Upside Down and Backwards* residency, arrive in a red canoe filled with brightly colored wooden stakes measuring approximately three feet long and six inches wide. The students had painted these color bars in their classroom days prior. Each student created a bar of pure color (hue) and tints (adding white) in two-inch strips. While math, color theory, and paint mixing know-how were combined in the lesson, its main objective was to queer and interrupt settler colonial Canadian landscape art that often romanticizes nature as wild and untouched. Scholars

D

UKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

like Myra Hird (2017) and Nicholas Mirzoeff (2016) argue that Western Enlightenment aesthetics is characterized by dominant narratives of beauty, rationality, and control. This is illustrated in the paintings by the Group of Seven Canadian landscape painters from the 1920s. Their iconic images of wind-swept White Pines, isolated karst rocks, and pristine waterways still permeate the Canadian national identity. The Group of Seven paintings, along with other landscape art that depicts Canada as a heroic and barren land available for human conquest, dominate elementary school art education. These landscape paintings, which tell a false story of *terra nullius*, are used to craft a narrative of Canada as a place of wild beauty—which is not the students’ lived experience as racialized newcomers who live in the dense urban surround. Jickling and Reed introduced the students to contemporary art that looks critically at the Canadian landscape and offers counter-images: Jin-me Yoon’s photographs that place her Korean community, family, and self in a landscape painting by the Group of Seven artist Lawren Harris; work by the artists Elinor Whidden, Terrance Houle (Kainai Nation), and Trevor Freeman, who manipulate the icon of the canoe to place it in landscapes very different from those swept by the great northern winds; and work by the Cree artist Kent Monkman, which reenacts iconic landscape paintings but tells the story of Indigenous genocide.

After the fanfare of Reed and Jickling’s arrival, the canoe pulls up onto the shore and the color bars are unloaded onto the sand. Working in small groups, the students are encouraged to arrange their bars by staking them in the sand and shoreline and to use digital cameras to photograph various arrangements and combinations, including their own bodies in the photographs. The color bars have also been reproduced on vinyl paper and used to cover juice boxes handed out to the students for a snack. These kid-oriented color bars are also arranged (once emptied) in colorful compositions in the sand. As a counter-action, the multiple color bar configurations, called *Endless Paintings*, and the students’ bodies are inserted into the Canadian landscape, disrupting the whiteness of typical landscape art. As a culmination of the event, the students and the artists arrange all of the wooden color bars in the sand at the edge of the water in a rainbow sequence facing a large metal bridge. The students gather on the bridge to view the rainbow color bars and their watery reflection. In the first weeks of the residency, the students had been shown a landscape painting of the Don River from the vantage point of that same bridge. In countering conventional landscape painting, the students’ rainbow compositions create reflective interferences that queer the nature-culture divide (Springgay and Truman 2019a).

This book is concerned with socially engaged art as research-creation that germinates a radical pedagogy of “feltness.” Feltness, as I will articulate throughout the book, invokes intimate pedagogies of touching, of transcorporeal, affective force. Each chapter is attuned to a number of research-creation events that were collaboratively coproduced among researchers, artists, students, and teachers over a decade as part of *The Pedagogical Impulse*, including residencies such as *Upside Down and Backwards*. Documentation of the research-creation events along with additional publications, living archives, and resources can be found at <http://www.thepedagogicalimpulse.com>.

Research-creation is a geographically distinct term that shapes the Canadian landscape of artistic research, placing emphasis on the coimbrication of creative practices and academic research. As *research-creation* is the term used by our major funding body, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), it therefore must also be recognized as constructed within increasingly neoliberal institutional models of knowledge mobilization (Loveless 2019; Manning and Massumi 2014; Truman 2020).¹ While the definitions and practices of research-creation are diverse and varied, my specific interests are in its relationship to feminist, antiracist, anti-ableist, and anticolonial education. As Natalie Loveless (2019) contends, research-creation is a transdisciplinary practice that challenges conventional modes of knowledge and value in the university. Research-creation, for me, has become a question of how to work ethically and in *intimate relation* with diverse publics. As a white settler scholar working in TKaronto (Toronto) on Turtle Island (Canada) I recognize my privileged position within the arts and the academy. From this perspective, my research-creation theorizing and practice aims to critically reflect on and confront historical and ongoing enactments of settler colonialism and transatlantic slavery and the ways in which the arts and the university are complicit in such logics. I began my academic career at a time when artistic research was flourishing in the academy, rendering permissible alternative methods of research even before terms such as *research-creation* made such work legible. My privileges as a white artist-scholar allowed me to navigate the arts and alternative research practices with (some) ease. I recognize that the whiteness of research-creation has erased (and continues to erase) other forms of cultural production. While I situate my research-creation within socially engaged art and the Pedagogical Turn, I am also mindful of these colonial spaces and practices and the problematic savior narratives that are carried out within these fields.² (I return to these complexities later in this introduction.) That said, I find socially engaged art as research-creation compelling particularly for what it might do, the kinds of speculative worldings it makes possible.

The research-creation projects that make up the material of this book take up questions and matters regarding socially engaged art, research-creation, and radical pedagogy in postsecondary institutions as well as in elementary and secondary schools in North America. This book not only enlarges urgent conversations and theoretical frameworks for doing research-creation but contextualizes these arguments with examples from diverse socially engaged projects coproduced by students and teachers. Each chapter therefore makes an important connection between research-creation, socially engaged art, and radical pedagogy in different contexts, revealing how children, youth, and adults negotiate learning that disrupts and defamiliarizes schools and institutions, knowledge systems, values, and the legibility of art and research. The various examples in the book explore the *how* of research-creation as an ethics and politics committed to queer, feminist, antiracist, and anticolonial intimate practices. The *how* of research-creation resonates with Félix Guattari's (1995) ethico-aesthetic paradigm. In the final chapter of *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-aesthetic Paradigm*, he asks: "How do you make a class operate like a work of art?" (133). Guattari's provocation leads us to consider the artist-pedagogue. Departing from the view that art is work done by an artist to predictable materials, or that the classroom is capable of being shaped by a teacher, a *classroom as a work of art* renders art and pedagogy in an ever-evolving entanglement of mutating coemergence and co-composition. As an experimenter, the artist-pedagogue does not mold students into a work of art, as if the students simply become raw materials separate from the pedagogical event. Rather, artist-teacher-student-classroom become a creative assemblage replete with the potential to open itself to future creative instances. If a classroom operates as a work of art—not as an object manipulated from the outside but as a spatiotemporal site of cocreation—it becomes enmeshed and enlivened with potential future worldings. In opposition to dogmatic models of education, Guattari's words conjure possibilities of learning that are inventive, artful, and open. Subsequently, it asks questions about what a radical pedagogy of the future might become.

One of the motivating factors that led to *The Pedagogical Impulse* were questions that I had regarding what has been called the "Educational Turn": as curators and artists were using educational forms and pedagogical methods in their art practices, they were often doing so outside of public schooling and at a remove from students, teachers, and meaningful pedagogical theories. In this book I engage with some of the critical conversations on the Educational Turn and begin the work of thinking through the *how* of radical pedagogy. Specifically, I want to shift radical from defined as the avant-garde toward *pedagogy*

as relational, transcorporeal, and affective, or what I have called feltness. In theorizing feltness, I bring this to bear on research-creation, radical pedagogy, and questions of collaboration.

The Pedagogical Impulse

Since the 1990s, under the auspices of the “Educational” or “Pedagogical Turn,” artists and curators have produced a wide variety of artist projects, exhibitions, curatorial initiatives, alternative schools, discursive events, and published texts to counter neoliberal and capitalist models of education. These educational art and curatorial practices were in part a response to severe funding cuts in the arts and higher education and to the corporatization of the university (Allen 2011; Bishop 2012; Graham 2010; Holert 2020; Rogoff 2008). Some of these initiatives took place outside of formal institutions, for example in parks or shop fronts, while others set out to establish alternative pedagogical models within galleries and other institutional venues including art fairs such as Documenta. In some instances, educational forms such as the seminar or workshop were co-opted as modes of knowledge production and exchange, privileging the discursive as an art form (Podesva 2007). In other iterations, alternative models of education were developed as a counter-rhetoric against a formal education that was increasingly complicit with neoliberalism. Despite the diverse range of educational projects, in many cases they relied on art’s instrumentalization of education, often absorbing the processes of knowledge production that they sought to disrupt. Through mimicry the Educational Turn perpetuated the norms of education under a rubric of alternative schooling. Debates were waged about whether these educational initiatives were artistic works and about the terms by which they could be evaluated; on the merits of antagonism versus conviviality (Bishop 2012; Kester 2004); or on the nature of collaboration and cooperation that such projects engendered (Finkelpearl 2013; Jackson 2011; Kester 2004). Claire Bishop acutely argued that because educational projects went “unseen” (they had no formal art audience), or had no concrete termination period (the work did not seem to end in some cases), they could not be adequately evaluated and critically analyzed on the basis of their aesthetics—in other words, aesthetics had been compromised and instrumentalized (see Bishop 2012; Bishop 2013; Bruguera 2020). I re-turn to these challenges about the role and place of audiences in chapter 1, and I suggest that such questions continue to privilege particular colonial values and tastes.

Notwithstanding these critical deliberations, few conversations occurred that interrogated what was meant by *pedagogy* in these instances. As Irit Rogoff (2008)

argued, knowledge production, learning, and pedagogy were being used interchangeably and without any real inquiry into how education was being deployed, theorized, or for that matter altered. Pablo Helguera (2010) similarly contended that most pedagogical projects relied on historical, limited, and superficial understandings of current educational theories and praxes. When discussions about pedagogy were entertained, references were limited to Paulo Freire, John Dewey, and Jacques Rancière, neglecting the vast scholarship on curriculum and pedagogy that has occurred for more than a hundred years. My contention is that the majority of education-as-art projects only gestured at education and did not actually transform processes of learning, and that the pedagogical work undertaken was often undertheorized, short-term, and focused on spectacular modes of presentation.

As Janna Graham, Valeria Graziano, and Susan Kelly (2016) assert, few of the initiatives under the auspices of the Educational Turn made connections to the institutional struggles that teachers and students were experiencing or mobilizing against. They argue that pedagogical projects rarely intervened in the corporatization of higher education, or in the increasing debt that students and artists were facing. While many of these educational projects used the language of the alternative art school, or of experimental and inventive pedagogy, they too often simply mirrored neoliberal norms of education and failed to account for the kinds of educational reforms and radical pedagogies that already existed inside and outside of schools. Graham (2010) has also argued that, when artists and curators are perceived to be in a better position to imagine alternative arts education, while the teacher becomes merely a trope in the bureaucracy of schooling, the Educational Turn risks reifying the avant-garde. To reorient the Educational Turn, Graham, Graziano, and Kelly (2016) insist, we must learn from the histories that have informed radical pedagogy and art education, including social movements and ethics of resistance. These genealogies, they contend, locate art and pedagogy in wider practices of care, decolonization, feminism, and antiracism that are needed to “contest the anxiety, debt, precarity and isolation produced at the hands of current neoliberal educational reform” (Graham, Graziano, and Kelly 2016, 35). This is what Guattari (1995) meant when he proposed that a classroom behave like a work of art. Radical pedagogy becomes a practice committed to working transversally, to resisting disciplinary categories and hierarchies, and to an ethics and politics of relationality. Transversality cuts diagonally through dualisms and emphasizes processes of becoming that connect previously unexplored topographies. For Guattari (1984), transversality’s radical potential was affective and collective.

My own research regarding socially engaged art and pedagogical art practices problematizes, questions, and examines the complex emergences of *radical pedagogy as feltness*. How are artists, in collaboration with students and teachers, understanding and materializing radical pedagogy? What is radical pedagogy and how might it create different future worldings? I found it curious that while there was a desire and need to alter the forms of the pedagogical encounter to be more relational and social justice oriented, much socially engaged art was happening *outside* of the classrooms of public education, and rarely in consultation and collaboration with students, teachers, and scholars of education. As educational forms were proliferating in contemporary art, they continued to take place apart from classroom spaces and therefore made no impact on art education, teacher education, or student learning. Arts education in schools remained on the periphery of contemporary art, in part because of perceived values associated with community-based art or school art (see Reed et al. 2012). To me this represented a missed opportunity to think deeply and intimately about what radical pedagogy could become and how it could offer strategies for enduring and changing precarious worlds. For education to significantly change, the Pedagogical Turn needed to move *into* the classroom (while at the same time disrupting it), to the site of its production, and at the same time become more accountable to diverse educational scholarship and theories.

Feltness: Research-Creation, Socially Engaged Art, and Affective Pedagogies enters into conversations about the transversal nature of research-creation and radical pedagogy. It proposes that the future of radical pedagogy is conditioned by what I call feltness, a practice of intimacy. In an era of increasing neoliberal reforms, the corporatization of the university and of education more generally, and the reliance on impact factors and numerical measurements to assess the value of research and pedagogy, I posit intimacy as a necessary source of disruption. The book is oriented around three concepts-practices-theories: *feltness*, *research-creation*, and *radical pedagogy*. Chapters take up these concepts-practices-theories through a series of research-creation projects and events in school contexts, along with analyses and historical archival research into the radical art and pedagogy of the 1960s and 1970s. Each chapter extends and unravels its own transversally connected theme to make way for diverse stories about my ongoing research-creation practice. The stories subtly reveal the relationships between the speculative ideation of grant proposals and initial research questions and the practice of research-creation as pliable, in flux, and context-responsive. These stories act like way-finding, or navigational, nodes

D

U

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

within a messy and complex research landscape and situate my accountability to feminist, anti-oppressive, and anticolonial practices.

Entangling feltness, research-creation, and radical pedagogy, I produce a story that matters (Haraway 2016) about the impact of socially engaged art in school contexts. The book aims to offer theoretical and exemplary enactments of research-creation as intimate, contribute significantly to debates on, and practices within the Pedagogical Turn, and attune to the various ways radical pedagogy emerges in different educational contexts.

Feltness and Touching Encounters

Feltness has various entry points, including the textile process of hand-felting; affect theory and feelings; the material and embodied experience of being in the world; queer-feminist theories of touching encounters; and feminist materialist conceptualizations of more-than-human entanglements. Intimacy conjures radical relatedness, reciprocity, and care.

A starting place for the concept of feltness is my art practice of hand-felting sheep's wool or human hair (Springgay 2008; Springgay 2019).³ Felt is a non-woven fabric composed of interlocked fibers. It is produced by matting, fusing, condensing, and pressing fibers together. The agitation of fibers in the presence of heat and moisture causes the wool fibers to interlock, preventing the fiber from returning to its original position; felting is irreversible. There is a myth that felt was first discovered by a monk who lined his shoes with wool, and another by a couple copulating on a pile of fleece; both stories convey the necessity of friction, in and through touch.

Wool felt is resilient and retains its strength and properties for a long time. Felt can be produced industrially and is used as a fire retardant and insulator, as well as a craft material. The process of wet hand-felting is an activity that is skin-based and tactile. Rubbing woolly fibers between palm and fingers is itself an intimate practice that touches. Feltness recognizes bodily, fleshy, tactile, intense, frictional becomings.

It is important to acknowledge that felt is part of the legacies of settler colonialism in Canada, as the fur trade profited from beaver pelts that were used to make felted beaver hats. From the late sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, beaver hats were an essential part of men's fashion in Europe, and eventually in Canada as well. By the seventeenth century, beaver had been depleted in Europe, but the North American fur trade provided a new source. The Hudson's Bay Company was founded in 1670 to source and procure the much-needed pelts. It is not the focus of this introduction to detail this history,

but at the same time it is crucial to account for felt's role in the violent dispossession of Indigenous peoples, the exploitation of Turtle Island, and the role that capitalism plays in anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism.

Its history notwithstanding, felt has been a rich material source for feminist textile arts practices that explore social and political issues. Felt making, like other textile arts, was traditionally associated with women, craft, and the domestic sphere, devaluing it within the hierarchy of the arts (Parker 1984). Since the 1960s, many contemporary artists have turned to fiber and textile arts as a social and political statement, subverting its associations with domesticity and craft while asserting the politics of gender (Black and Burisch 2021). Artists who incorporate felting include Maria Hupfield (Anishinaabe), who meticulously constructs everyday objects out of gray industrial felt—a suit, mitts, boots, a canoe, an Anishinaabe jingle spiral—that can be displayed or worn by the artist and activated in live performances. While the gray felt conjures a neutral aesthetic, the objects reference Anishinaabe experiences and stories. Leah Decter uses wet and needle felting to create garments, objects, and spatial installations. Her work contends with histories and contemporary issues related to settler colonialism and settler and Indigenous relations. My own felting practice is shaped by feminist and queer contemporary textile arts and examines the labor of craft, durational performance, and body knowledges.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 485) call felt an “anti-fabric,” made by the agitation or entanglement of fibers. It has no warp and weft, and it “is in no way homogeneous: it is nevertheless smooth, and contrasts point by point with the space of fabric (it is in principle infinite, open, and unlimited in every direction . . .)” (475). When felt is formed, the individual coils of wool are no longer individual but become an aggregate of the whole. The fulling process makes the individual fibers indistinguishable even upon close inspection. Deleuze and Guattari use felt as a model for smooth space, space which could be defined as full of potential. They write: “Smooth space is filled by events of haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of affects, more than one of properties. . . . It is an intensive rather than an extensive space, one of distances, not of measures and properties” (479). This is in contrast to striated space that is gridded, linear, and metric. In this instance, feltness as radical pedagogy works in opposition to and ruptures neoliberal and capitalist structures of education and learning.

The commingling that felt performs enacts what Stacy Alaimo (2010; 2016) calls *transcorporeality*. Transcorporeality recognizes entangled and touching relations between bodies, things, and environments. Transcorporeality “emerges from a sense of fleshy permeability,” eroding a human-centric understanding

of the world (Alaimo 2016, 78). Or as Karen Barad (2007, 384) argues, “We need to take account of the entangled materialization of which we are a part.” Connecting felt with theories of touch and transcorporeality becomes a way to open up and reconfigure different bodily imaginaries, both human and nonhuman, that are radically immanent and intensive; as an assemblage of forces and flows that open research-creation to helices and trans connections (Springgay and Truman 2017).

I also understand feltness as feeling, sensuousness, and affect—and I enjoy the messy leakages between different affect theories. Sara Ahmed (2004) describes affects through the language of “stickiness” and “circulation,” contending that they matter because they move and, in moving, constitute dynamic economies between things. Movement and rhythm inflect affect and connect, disrupt, and invert life. Affects are the atmospheres generated by particular compositions between bodies. Attuning ourselves to the affective atmospheres around us asks us to be more deliberate about creating the kinds of worlds in which we want to live. An interest in the affective and in the materiality of all things seeks to rupture human exceptionalism, animacy, and agency while understanding the circulations and exchanges between entities as inscribed in relations of power.

Felting disturbs, intensifies, and provokes a heightened sense of the potentiality of the present. It is a proposition that remains open; it is infused with experimentation, emergence, and undoings. Felting invokes the intimacy of touch. Touch reminds us that gestures are incomplete and “that to reach toward an other is never more (or less) than the act of reaching, for an other cannot be discovered as such” (Manning 2007, 9) and that in touch is the ongoing unfolding of difference. This is what Donna Haraway refers to as *becoming with*, a mode of ethical touching; we are always imbricated in all that we touch and that touches us. Touch and its conjunctive intimacies, including the possibilities of “non-innocent knottings” (Haraway 2016, 29) and violent entanglements, becomes a powerful means by which to create and invent new ways of making a difference in the world.

In felting, wool fibers commingle and enmesh and evoke what Barad (2012) refers to as a queer self-touching. When we touch ourselves, she writes, we encounter an uncanny sense of the stranger or otherness within the self. Using quantum theory to shape a theory of self-touching, Barad explains how a particle touches itself, and then how that touching subsequently touches itself, releasing an infinite chain of touching touches. She writes: “Every level of touch, then, is itself touched by all possible others” (212). This radically queers any notion of difference and identity. Self-touching, she argues, “is an encounter with

the infinite alterity of the self” (213). In touching, or felting for that matter, “each individual always already includes all possible intra-actions with ‘itself’ through all the virtual Others, including those that are noncontemporaneous with ‘itself.’ That is, every finite being is always already threaded through with an infinite alterity diffracted through being and time” (213).

Intimacy is conventionally described as closeness, affinity, attachment, and familiarity. As feltness—relationality and reciprocity—intimacy becomes a mode of invention and creation that proliferates indeterminately and affectively. This is an ethics of care that is “uncomfortable and perplexing” and that does not place human mastery at the center (Alaimo 2010, 17). In articulating research-creation as a practice of intimacy, I am holding space to be touched by the thinking-making-doing of research-creation, as well as the bodies (human and nonhuman) that co-compose the research encounter.

As a practice of intimacy, research-creation recognizes that everything is in relation, indeterminate, and constantly forming. However, it is crucial that we ask complex questions about what it means to be in relation; to be intimate: *How are relations composed and sustained over time? How are all bodies in relation being accounted for, attuned to, and offered something for their contribution to or labor of being in relation?* Opening space for the production of intimacy demands that we are response-able to the formation of relations. Intimacy stems from an awareness of the efforts it takes to cultivate relatedness in difference.

Research-Creation: What Does a Practice Do?

The Pedagogical Impulse has been funded by two Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) research-creation grants. The first grant prioritized questions about socially engaged art with children and youth in K–12 classrooms in Toronto, Canada. I curated a series of artist residencies in public schools, developed curricular materials for classroom teachers, and explored pressing issues about doing socially engaged art with children in a series of socially engaged discursive events called the *living archive*.

Some of the residencies lasted only a few weeks, while others unfolded over a full school term. The artists did not approach the residencies with preestablished art projects in mind that would represent some aspect of the curriculum, nor a set of technical skills they wanted the students to master. Rather, what emerged in each classroom context was co-composed between teachers, artists, and students through class discussions, small experimental creative activities, artistic interventions, slideshows of contemporary art, research-driven assignments, and student interests and inquiries. Artists were paired with a

classroom teacher and their students, and together they determined a starting concept for the residency and the socially engaged projects. This concept sometimes came from the school curriculum and sometimes from student interests or questions. For example, in chapter 1, I discuss two socially engaged projects that emerged from the concept of *trade*, which appears in the grade-six social studies curriculum. Artists were paid CARFAC fees and provided with a stipend for materials.⁴ Teachers were provided half-day or full-day paid leave on a regular basis for meetings with the artists, research team, or any other activity outside of class time.⁵ Research assistants (graduate students) were also funded through the grants and were paid wages for their contributions to the project. I offer more on the importance of feminist collaboration later in the introduction.⁶

I refer to all of the various events in a residency as both research-creation events and socially engaged art as radical pedagogy. The residencies were photodocumented by my research team, and in some instances students took control of the cameras.⁷ Selected images were curated for the research website, and some have been chosen for the color insert in this book. The practice of research-creation produces different kinds of documentation. Some images are more ethnographic in nature and capture the activities and processes of student engagement. Other images document student research-creation work, while others represent artists' artworks included in the research-creation events.

Recorded conversations with the artists and teachers took place at regular intervals throughout the residency, and members of the research team kept detailed field journals. The combination of artistic practice and more conventional ethnographic practices is crucial to my orientation and practice of doing research-creation. Recorded conversations and field notes are used not to substantiate the artistic research, nor to give weight or value to it as empirical evidence. Incorporating methods of observation is as much a part of artistic practices as of ethnographic practices. In fact, Loveless (2019) argues that research-creation is a hybrid transdiscipline. This requires that we let go of disciplinary boundaries that insist on tidy categories such as art, education, social science. Rather, as a *hybrid* or what I would call *oblique* practice, research-creation cuts across the disciplinary specificity and generates something else altogether (Truman and Springgay 2019). Further, any ethnographic tendency in my practice is always approached from the perspective of being an artist and curator, in the sense that such methods as field notes and interviews are never procedural, generalizable, or used as extractive data. For example, the field notes, annotated in Moleskine notebooks, have not been consulted while writing this book. They are, in fact, due to the pandemic, locked away in my

university office. Even if they weren't, they served their purpose years ago. The graduate students and I met biweekly, sometimes with the artists and teachers and sometimes with only ourselves, and the notes served as *attention nodes* for our iterative conversations. They provided questions, responses, and tensions, and seeded new ideas and directions as the research-creation events unfolded. They were not intended to be data repositories but spaces that gathered and tuned in to the iterativity of research-creation events in that moment in time. They are not used to quote from, or as data mining. I use such notebooks on a daily basis—they literally litter my desk. There is one for this current book project where, even while on a Zoom call about unrelated matters, a word, an image, or a moment flutters in and I write it down in the pages between the dark, blood-red covers. There is another for WalkingLab.org, my other research-creation endeavor, and I've started one for the research-creation event of directing an art school. There are some that are miscellaneous that capture my everyday notations, lists, and fleeting thoughts. These notebooks once recorded notes from readings, but over the past few years I've transitioned to using my computer for such tasks. The act of writing by hand is part of a thinking-making-doing for me, and these notes are more diagrammatic, or scored, than they are a series of prose compositions like more typical field notes. George Maciunas, a Fluxus artist who will be explored in greater detail in chapters 3 and 4, created what he called *Learning Machines*, graphic notations on three-dimensional folded papers, much like flip books. They held an immense amount of information in visually scored diagrams, and the pages could be moved in such a way to suggest that the information was networked, entangled, and transversal (versus the linear page-turning of a conventional book). I consider the research notebooks to operate in a similar way.

When all of the residencies were complete, the teachers were invited to a day-long Teacher Institute with my research team, and together we examined the research-art ephemera that had been generated. This workshop with teachers resulted in the curation of a series of thematic galleries on the research website, called *Image Resources*, that highlight some of the curricular concepts that emerged in the various residencies. Importantly these concepts were cogenerated with the teachers and grew out of a desire to have more accessible resources available on socially engaged art and pedagogy. However, these online pages contain more-than-curricular resources; they act as catalysts for future action. They seed transversal lines of thought at the axis of art, pedagogy, and research-creation.

Too often art created in the context of schools, particularly art created with children, is undervalued. In a recent publication in conversation with

the Cuban artist Tania Bruguera (2020), Claire Bishop challenges Bruguera's engagement with "demonstrable outcomes" in the project *Museum of Arte Util* (2013). Bishop asks, if art demonstrates beneficial outcomes, is it mirroring neoliberalism and the instrumentalization of art? While I can agree with Bishop that determining the value of a project on evidentiary outcomes is problematic, I appreciate Bruguera's insistence that the evaluation does not come from institutions (an outside) but is realized internal to the project and in relation to those who cocreated it or participated in it. Further, benefits are not quantifiable but reflect on a project's ethical and political responsibilities. Erin Manning (2020) similarly articulates value as the process of form-taking, its activation, and its potential to move an event into another. "Value," she writes, "is a capacity for intensification" (87). I return to the question of value and outcomes in chapter 5.

One of the ways I wanted to contextualize the residencies in the schools was to situate them within the larger art world and to provide robust critical reflection on what it means to do socially engaged art with students. To do so, Hannah Jickling and Reed Reed, the artists introduced in the opening scene of the introduction, engaged in a series of socially engaged discursive events with a number of artists and curators. The recorded conversations, like Bruguera's ethical and political benefits, pry open the complexities of working in horizontal structures with children and youth. The conversations were edited into online publications available on the research website, and form a *living archive* of socially engaged art as radical pedagogy. Formed through generative conversations, the *living archive* puts the residencies into relation with other artists and curators working with children, and with other socially engaged pedagogical projects. In much the same way that Bruguera insists on art's usefulness or its ability to mobilize civic change, the *living archive* engenders conversations regarding the outcomes, impact, and challenges of doing socially engaged art with children and in a community without evaluative metrics. In chapter 3, I discuss the ways in which I use ongoing conversations with contemporary artists as *living archives* of research-creation, not as extracted data but as moments of feminist accountability and responsibility. What is significant about the *living archive* is the work that it does. As living, the archives bring the past and the contemporary together pedagogically. They too, like the notebooks, are about *seeding* the research: attuning to it and moving it into something more-than.

I consider research-creation to be a generative practice. In the conventions of social science research, the method of data collection prevails. In research-creation, rather than thinking about existing data, to be mined and extracted

from a research site, the generativity of thinking-making-doing germinates and seeds. Research-creation is not a thing but an event that emerges from the middle. To practice research-creation requires being inside a research event. This means that quite often an artist-researcher does not have a clear set of directions or procedures determined prior to beginning an inquiry. In *Knowings and Knots* (Loveless 2020) various authors remark that research-creation is a practice that starts in the middle. Randy Cutler (2020, 4) writes that the “process begins with permeable curiosity as an emergent mode of being and knowing,” while Paul Coulliard (2020, 66) states that, rather than having an output at the beginning of a project, “it is the ‘doing’ that leads me to identify and clarify” concerns. Being inside a research event does not mean that one shows up in a research context with no plan. Rather, the porosity of the event is speculative, emergent, and always in movement. In the unfolding of an event of research the *what* (the questions we are asking) and the *how* emerge co-extensively of each other.

I have long argued that research-creation is composed by concepts rather than discrete definitions or procedures. For Deleuze and Guattari (1994) concepts are never simple. Every concept, they write, has multiple components. Concepts “link up with each other” (18) and require a “junction of problems where it combines with other coexisting concepts” (18). Concepts do not describe things; concepts *express* an event. Thus, research-creation is not definitive. Rather it is constituted through concepts that are constantly in the making, linking up and problematizing an event. Erin Manning (2020, 11) writes that a “concept is not a general category. It does not claim to encapsulate. It is not a metaphor. It cannot be debated. A concept is an intensive feature, an intercessor into thought.” Concepts elicit touching encounters, where, in the speculative middle of a research event, concepts seed and germinate—or, as Manning (2020) contends, concepts create propositional paths to follow.

Research-creation, both in theory and practice, emerged during *The Pedagogical Impulse* events. The research in schools provided me with the spatiotemporal sites to experiment, innovate, and generate other ways of working with diverse publics. How I practice and theorize research-creation therefore emerged alongside my questions regarding radical pedagogy and socially engaged art. Research-creation as a methodology of thinking-making-doing materializes in the process of *doing* research; it is not known in advance and applied to a research problem. The first two chapters are organized around artist-residencies in K–12 classrooms and their socially engaged projects. There are other publications on the various residencies that can be accessed via the website.

D

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

For a second SSHRC grant I extended earlier questions regarding the Educational Turn with a specific focus on radical pedagogy in postsecondary institutions. I was interested in Fluxus pedagogy and its relation to contemporary art as pedagogy. Fluxus was an international group of artists from the 1960s and 1970s who emphasized participatory events over the autonomous art object. Many Fluxus artists taught in higher education and blurred the boundaries between Fluxus art and teaching. For this larger project, the research-creation examined archival material from Fluxus teaching alongside contemporary enactments of art-as-teaching. In addition to working in Fluxus archives, I involved postsecondary artist-teachers in the *living archive* project. These conversations examined the ordinary “stuff” of teaching—syllabi, course-based activities, and classroom atmospheres—that point toward the continued significance of scores and intermedia in contemporary teaching. This Fluxus-inspired work is detailed in chapter 3. The seeding of the Fluxus archival work produced a number of other research-creation projects in postsecondary classes that I explore in chapters 4 through 7. I weave material from historical archives throughout these chapters into conversation with contemporary teaching practices not to demonstrate a mimetic relationship but rather to generate a series of arguments about the nature of radical pedagogy today. My interest in the archives ruptures conventional art historical interest in Fluxus to focus on moments where art practices moved inside classroom spaces and were concerned with curricula and pedagogy.

Positioned in conversation with other texts on research-creation, *Feltness: Research-Creation, Socially Engaged Art, and Affective Pedagogies* enhances the theoretical debates put forward by Natalie Loveless (2019; 2020), Erin Manning (2013; 2016; 2020), and Manning with Brian Massumi (2014), as well as in previous work I have published with Sarah E. Truman on walking and research-creation (Springgay and Truman 2018; 2019a; 2019b; 2019c). Truman and I argue for a propositional approach to research-creation (Truman and Springgay 2015). Propositions keep the event of research-creation open, in flux, and oblique. I offer these propositions here:

Speculate: Research-creation is future event-oriented. As a speculative practice, it invents techniques of relation.

Propose enabling constraints: Enabling constraints are expansive and suggestive. They operate by delimiting process and possibility, although they always include more possibilities than any given event realizes.

Create problems: Research-creation is a practice that does not seek to describe, explain, or solve problems. Rather, it is an event that creates concepts that problematize. Concepts are not pre-given or known in advance. As an event of problems, research-creation brings something new into the world.

Think-in-movement: The aim of research-creation is not to reflect on something that has passed. Thinking-in-movement is to think in the act; it is a thinking saturated with rhythm and affect.

Note emergences, rework emergences: Concepts proliferate in research-creation, and with them, ethico-political concerns emerge. Once an ethico-political concern emerges, rework it to see what it can do.

More-than-represent: Rather than attempting to represent or report on research-creation, use it to propel further thought and create something new: new concepts, new ethico-political concerns, new problems.

Expanding these contributions to research-creation, the projects examined in this book are situated in school contexts and therefore not only offer complementary and extended theories about research-creation but contribute to questions and examinations of the intersections between socially engaged art and radical pedagogy.

Loveless (2019; 2020) and Manning and Massumi (2014) recognize the ways in which research-creation emerged in Canadian universities and granting systems alongside the institutionalization of artistic research that confined creative work to rigid criteria and impact metrics often determined by other disciplines and research methods. Manning and Massumi note that, at the time that the term was introduced into the Canadian landscape, there was inconsequential thought about how the concept would emerge through its conjunctive and would therefore amount to little more than an “institutional operator: a mechanism for existing practices to interface with the neoliberalization of art and academics” (2014, 88). Counter to this argument, one might claim that the lack of a distinct identity for research-creation may in fact have enabled its capaciousness, which in turn allowed those of us practicing and writing about research-creation to make sense of it as it unfolded in each unique instance.

As the language of research-creation gained momentum in the university, Loveless notes that anxieties emerged about the academicization of the arts and the pressure to become more “research”-oriented. This momentum, Loveless

(2019) and Lowry (2015) argue, was in part fueled by funding structures and financial bottom lines. However, despite these cogent critical reflections on the institutional and the problematic commodification of research-creation, most of the artist-scholars writing about research-creation are deeply committed to its conjunctive potential. As Loveless writes: “I continue to see research-creation as one of those cracks . . . that lets the light shine in, through its experimental and dissonant forms of practice, research, and pedagogy” (2019, 8). Her commitment to feminist, antiracist, and anticolonial art and scholarship creates openings for the potential of research-creation to disrupt the university as we know it and to create radically new ways of thinking-making-doing. Likewise, Manning and Massumi, through the SenseLab in Montreal, have been foundational in crafting research-creation through process philosophy, foregrounding the immanence of the research event and the emergence of research-creation as ecologies always in movement. Research-creation has enabled artist-researchers the opportunity to “re-story” our disciplinary practices within institutions and challenge questions about the legibility of art as research (Loveless 2015; Loveless 2019). Loveless writes, “In asking us to unhook ourselves from a primary alliance to disciplinary identity, the critical discourse of research-creation wedges open inherited forms of legibility and value that configure our daily activities as academic practitioners” (2015, 23). I read Loveless’s text on research-creation intertextually with Dylan Robinson’s (2017) writing about Indigenous public art and research-creation in order to notice ruptures in how we articulate research-creation practices. If research-creation is actively working to interrupt institutional norms regarding legibility and value in the university, we need to resist, as Robinson notes, settler modes of perception that are driven by settler legibility. Legibility is a continual process of centering whiteness and the violence of settler colonial genocide. To that extent, what becomes possible when research-creation operates through illegibility to institutional norms? Leah Decter’s (2018) research-creation practice and scholarship pivots around the idea of *depremac*y, decentering the supremacy of white canons of theory and practice. Research-creation as more-than, as otherwise. However, the whiteness of research-creation, particularly the writing about research-creation, should not be ignored. By this I don’t just mean the Euro-western theories that have often been relied on to craft research-creation stories but also the ways in which research-creation temporally negates Black, Indigenous, and People of Color’s art-research practices that decenter and confront institutional violence and demands of legibility. Research-creation’s claims of newness and intervention obscure the work that BIPOC artist-scholars have always been doing. Here I’m thinking of Audrey

Hudson's work on hip-hop that interrupts and intervenes into the prevailing whiteness of art, education, and the academy. Audrey Hudson, Awad Ibrahim, and Karyn Recollet (2019) and Syrus Ware (2020a) draw on speculative fiction and on Afro and Indigenous futurisms because such futurisms always already foreground cultural production while centering Black and Indigenous lives, ancestors, and arts practices. In prying open disciplinary logics and structures, research-creation must not create new silos or gatekeepers. Rather, in thinking otherwise, research-creation must expose the violence of settler colonialism and anti-Black racism in order to create more just and flourishing worlds.

My return to the university as a graduate student predated the term *research-creation* but came at a time that arts-based research was flourishing and rapidly changing the social sciences in Canada. As a practicing artist and curator, trained in fine arts and the humanities, I saw this as an exciting time to be in the academy. This moment was marked by significant changes in what constituted and was valued as a research methodology in the social sciences. In the field of education there is a long history of arts-based research, including potent rationales for doing arts-based work, theoretical frameworks, and various examples from the visual arts, fiction, poetry, performance, theatre, and music. Notwithstanding arts-based research's own challenges, tensions, and debates, which are not the topic of this introduction or this book, my position as a research-creation artist-scholar is predicated on the epistemological and ontological explications for doing artistic research that were already thriving in the field of education when I was in graduate school—and the University of British Columbia, where I studied, was a hotbed of activity in this regard.

However, I wish to mention a few specific challenges that are in conversation with Manning and Massumi's and Loveless's shared concerns. In the social sciences there were robust debates regarding the criteria of assessment for qualitative research, often mired in deliberations about the validity and generalizability of research. Such conversations dominated the field of arts-based research as I entered graduate school. This resulted in the creation of prescribed criteria for arts-based work that resembled existing language and criteria used to assess other qualitative methods. Research-creation entered into the Canadian lexicon in 2004 as I was finishing my doctoral work, and I held one of the first SSHRC research-creation grants. Although it would be many years before the early publications from SenseLab started to impact the field, for me research-creation's conjunctive opened up a theoretical moment to shift the question from "what criteria" to the "how" of a research event's doing and working. In other words, I was able to move away from the demands of how work should be assessed using external criteria to, *How does your work*

do what it is doing as it unfolds spatiotemporally? This was significant for me because of my concerns regarding pedagogy as something open and emergent, and because of my interest in the creation of different publics as part of the research event. Research-creation enabled me to make sense of curating public performances and art projects outside of structural demands that it be evaluated by established rubrics in order to be understood as meaningful or valued as research. Instead, the research-creation events were accountable to the communities with whom the work was being made in collaboration, and mattered for the kinds of relations and solidarity for which it made space inside the research event; *this* was the doing and working of the artistic research. Natasha Myers shares similar concerns, noting that the arts offer her a means to disrupt “disciplined modes of inquiry.” Research-creation engenders the asking of different research questions and forces researchers to “confront the limits of knowledge, what we can know and what we cannot know, and the accountabilities required to take stock of how we know” (Myers 2020, in Truman 2020, 227). Research-creation becomes a way of becoming responsible to the creation of different worlds, and to the telling of stories that matter (Haraway 2016; Loveless 2019).

Tangentially, another debate that seemed pressing in the early 2000s in the field of arts-based research, at least in education, was the relationship between process and product, inquiry versus output. Some arts-based scholars called for an emphasis on the artistic form of doing research while others saw merit in conducting research using traditional qualitative methods and then disseminating research through artistic outputs such as performed ethnography. Regardless of which side of these debates you landed on, the bifurcation of inquiry and dissemination cemented the boundaries between the act of doing research and the mobilization of that research. Research-creation facilitated a movement into the conjunctive to rupture such distinctions. In many instances the research-creation event is both the doing of research and simultaneously the mobilization of that research to specific publics—or the production of a public (see chapter 6).

This is the work of the conjunctive in research-creation; or the proposition *with* (Truman and Springgay 2016; Springgay and Truman 2018). Instead of perpetuating an idea of art as separate from thinking and writing, the hyphenation of research-creation engenders “concepts in-the-making,” which, according to Manning and Massumi (2014, 88–89), is a process of “thinking-with and across techniques of creative practice.” The conjunctive, Owen Chapman (2020, xvi) writes, “invites the juxtaposition of other terms, concepts, and

categories.” Manning and Massumi (2014, 88–89) consider the conjunctive as crucial to formulating an understanding and practice of research-creation. The conjunctive they write is “a mutual interpenetration of processes rather than a communication of products.” Research-creation taken as a conjunctive whole becomes a “thinking-in-action” and a “practice in its own right” (89), as opposed to the combination of distinct disciplines where each discipline remains intact. For Manning and Massumi research-creation is experimental and catalyzes emergent events. Similarly, the proposition *with* is used to indicate associations and connections between entities. However, *with* is more than merely additive; it represents ethico-political (in)tensions brought to bear on research-creation. *With* is a milieu, an active set of relations that are composed of dimensions and vibrations that materialize a moment of space-time. If research-creation is composed in the conjunctive of response-able relations, as a practice of intimacy, then we can ask: *What grows and emerges within such a place?*

The conjunctive nature of research-creation shifts the language and emphasis on data collection and extraction, in one instance or register, and the output and circulation of findings in another. Rather, thinking-making-doing complicates linear proceduralism or methodocentrism, generating endless possibilities for doing research. For Loveless (2019) research-creation challenges the assumptions that monographs or peer-reviewed manuscripts are the only top-tier, valid forms of research outputs and skepticism regarding artistic practice as *de facto* research. She contends that research-creation as a hybrid, conjunctive practice has the potential, following Donna Haraway (2016), to tell other stories that matter. Research-creation practices, Loveless (2019, 24) writes, become “valid modes for rendering research public.” For scholars trained in qualitative social science methods, research-creation offers a possibility to pry open established patterns of doing research. Research-creation, as Loveless so aptly describes it, becomes a crack, a movement of the not-yet-known where in its capaciousness it becomes a more-than.

In parallel to the debates waged against socially engaged art regarding its artistic merits, arts-based research became polarized by those who believed specialized training in an art form was needed in order to do arts-based research, and others who argued that the arts sanctioned varying degrees of experimentation and improvisation regardless of its artistic qualities. These debates about rigor are crucial but require attention that dismantles such dualisms. In a recent roundtable publication on research-creation, Erin Manning (2020, 238–39) noted that:

Rigour is an important concept; but not rigour as assessed and valued from the outside. . . . This kind of internal rigour is very close to Henri Bergson's notion of intuition as a practice that recognizes the difference between problems and false problems. False problems are problems that already carry their solutions. The institutions we work in are habituated in the deployment of false problems. [What is needed] is the sensitivity to the difference between a generative problem and a false problem. . . . This involves being moved by thought rather than seeing ourselves as its mover.

When Bishop (2012) argues that educational art lacks rigor because it is “unseen,” she is applying assessment criteria that is already preformed, imposed from the outside. Research-creation demands instead that that rigor be internal to, and generated in and of, the event itself. As a highly transdisciplinary practice, research-creation, Loveless (2019, 33) contends, “fails to *fully* fulfill the criteria of any one disciplinary location. . . . It is an *in-coherent object*.” I like to think of this failure in the way that Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013) refer to “fugitive knowers,” modes of thinking not allied with governmentality, discipline, legibility, and order. Research-creation as a radical departure evades the capture of criteria already presupposed from the outside; it mobilizes other ways of mattering. The transversality of research-creation becomes a kind of radical illegibility. In the same roundtable, Natasha Myers (in Truman 2020, 232) argues: “Sometimes we need to forget and unlearn what we think matters. We need to rearrange our sensorium and sense making practices and disrupt disciplinary thought styles and ways of seeing so that other worlds within this world can come into view.”

In the past decade in the social sciences, and to a greater extent in educational research, a new methodological shift has occurred called “postqualitative research,” influenced by Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic and assemblage thinking, Barad’s agential realism, Rosi Braidotti’s and Haraway’s feminist post-humanisms, along with various theories that fall under the umbrella of feminist materialisms and affect theory. Postqualitative research challenges the social sciences’ methodocentrism, which presumes to know a priori what a research event might do and which privileges linear procedures of data extraction, analysis, and dissemination. Postqualitative research challenges the subject-object bifurcation that makes possible the extraction of knowable data and the humanist means by which research is carried out. Elsewhere I have written that postqualitative research and research-creation *are not* synonymous, and that postqualitative researchers problematically use art practices

and forms to demonstrate that they are doing research differently (Springgay 2019). Cutting up transcripts, putting them in jars, or weaving them together with glitter and glue is not the work of research-creation. However, postqualitative research demonstrates the extent to which academics from different disciplines are working to dismantle the ways in which research is executed, valued, and circulated within institutions. If research-creation, as Loveless contends, offers a feminist, antiracist, and anticolonial mode of working to disrupt the institution as we know it, then much of the work produced under the framework of postqualitative research similarly (albeit quite differently) aims to deterritorialize the status quo of research methods. In this way research-creation works against a sense of deep alienation and an incapacity to act. Instead, research-creation as feltness expands the dimensions of knowledge and research methods both critically and politically and as radical pedagogy.

The concept of radical pedagogy has many different meanings. For some, radical pedagogy is connected to the avant-garde and involves innovation, experimentation, and unorthodox approaches to teaching and learning. For others radical pedagogy necessitates an analysis of the social and political aspects of educational institutions, policies, and practices. Radical pedagogy is also concerned with social justice, including antiracist, anti-ableist, and decolonial approaches (DiAngelo and Sensoy 2014). Here, radical pedagogy examines privilege, oppression, and ideology in order to challenge and dismantle educational inequality. Radical pedagogy centers a subject's positionality to examine how it informs and shapes their opinions, reactions, and knowledges. All of these meanings are enmeshed in the socially engaged art as research-creation projects discussed in this book, but so too does the work of these projects and the analyses in the book aim to expand and magnify radical pedagogy as feltness.

Interdependencies: Collaboration, Coauthorship, and Feminist Care

Staying alive—for every species—requires livable collaborations. Collaboration means working across difference, which leads to contamination. Without collaboration, we all die. (Tsing 2015, 28)

I open a discussion on collaboration with this passage by Anna Tsing, which shapes a particular understanding of multispecies interdependency and relations. For Tsing, human and nonhuman subjects are transformed through encounters, or, in her words, human and nonhuman subjects *become contaminated*. Through contamination, new directions and assemblages occur, and

each participant in the collaborative encounter is made different from that relationship. I read Tsing's contamination along with Alexis Shotwell's (2016) scholarship on purity and compromise. There is no pure state, environmentally, bodily, or otherwise, but purity politics have conditioned heteronormative, racist, ableist, and settler colonial notions of what counts as human. Against possessive individualism and boundedness, contamination means being responsible and accountable to the kinds of encounters that take shape and to the results of those relations. Interdependency, then, Shotwell argues, requires that we displace habits of thinking with modes of attention and care: "To say that we are entangled is to say that we are responsible by virtue of our relationships to near and distant others" (107). To be contaminated is to be accountable to difference.

The socially engaged research-creation events that compose this book were created in collaboration with teachers, students, artists, and a team of graduate student research assistants. Part of practicing intimacy is being accountable to the various collaborators, coauthors, and co-composers with whom I have been in relation over the past two decades. I have been privileged to conceptualize the *how* of research-creation: to materialize a number of research-creation events and projects with diverse publics, and to coauthor with colleagues and graduate students. This book would not be possible without these interlocutors, and their words and insights are part of the felt fabric of this text. And while this book and the writing contained within it is the product of my labor, very little of the research-creation eventing would be possible without the collaboration and work of many others. Aubyn O'Grady, Andrea Vela Alarcón, Julie Smitka, Zofia Zaliwska, James Miles, Arden Hagedorn, Lee Cameron, and the many artists that will appear throughout the book have co-composed my thinking-making-doing.

In the book I oscillate between the singular pronoun *I* and a collective *we* to account for the students, teachers, artists, graduate students, chocolates, funeral flowers, fabric nets, boxed publications, and all the in-betweens of human and nonhuman circuits that generated this work. The universal *we* can be problematic, and I don't intend for it to flatten relations or issues of diversity and equity. But because the teachers, students, and schools must remain anonymous, while artists who choose to be identified in the research are named, the oscillation between *I* and *we* seeks to pause within these tensions, not to erase them. In writing *we*, I am accountable to the *we* of my research team, which co-composed itself in multiple and mutable ways over the past twenty years. *We*, similarly, articulates other compositions of artists and students in a grade-six classroom. *We* contaminates *I* like interlocking wool fibers in felt making; once fulled they are forever changed and altered into a

new form, a co-composition. My use of *we* recognizes the interdependent and entangled web of relations that are necessary to do research-creation, socially engaged art, and radical pedagogy. In shifting collaboration from inclusive participation to radical relatedness and a feminist ethics of care we must ask: *Who and what are we accountable to in our research-creation relations? Who do we show up for and how are we present for their needs? How do we listen, attend to, and tune in to the differing relations of collaboration?* In caring-with others, we mobilize in direct action to create more just and flourishing worlds. Collaboration as feminist ethics places care front and center in research and teaching. Feminist care acknowledges that forms of care are entangled with gender, race, and disability that have pathologized dependency, and the labor of care work. Care must also be recognized as deeply embedded within historical and ongoing violence while also fostering strategies for living (Nash 2019). When collaboration means interdependent kinships and responsibilities that “proliferate outward,” this requires “a more capacious understanding of care” (Care Collective 2020, 41). In the words of Donna Haraway (2016), collaboration must be accountable to noninnocent knottings.

A constant tension within socially engaged art is its participatory nature and the complexities of collaboration. When we conceive of collaboration in convivial terms, participation becomes a symbolic gesture that fails to dismantle racism, settler colonialism, and other forms of ongoing intersectional oppression (Springgay and Truman 2018). When we talk about socially engaged art as participatory and collaborative, as if those two concepts make the work inclusive and thereby transformative, then the events fail to engender a radical pedagogy of feltness. Rather, what is needed are questions about the *how* of collaboration as a feminist ethics of care: *How do we come together? How are we in relation? What contaminations are flourishing? What are not?* Astrida Neimanis (2012, 216) astutely notes, “To collaborate is a doing-in-common, more than a being-in-common.” Collaboration must, Neimanis insists, recognize that not all comings together are benevolent but can be fraught with tense negotiations. Collaboration is not what the artist, or research-creation scholar, wishes a participant to do but the activity of the work’s potential as opened up by the process of coming together itself. As Loveless (2019, 102) eloquently notes, research-creation “is attentive to how form makes worlds,” where the worlding is micropolitical “from inside the belly of the beast: the classroom.” For Loveless, pedagogy is how she cares: a pedagogy that is feminist, anti-oppressive, and imbued with curiosity, eros, and the uncanny.

If collaboration is predicated on interdependent care relations that contaminate, then part of what research-creation needs to do is to dismantle the

structures, knowledges, and research conventions that have created careless institutions, states, classrooms, and communities. The ethics and politics of doing research-creation with diverse publics means that we must create conditions for other ways of living and learning. This means troubling our relationship with institutions and transforming the kinds of value we allow for particular forms of knowledge and research practices. Foregrounding intimacy and feltness requires that we turn from extraction-based practices to ones conditioned by transcorporeality, reciprocity, relationality, and care. And like Loveless (2019), who claims that not all research-creation is enacted in this way, I am also tenacious enough to insist that it *should be*. Research-creation as intimate and capacious has the potential to generate new kinds of research relations and to seed the flourishing of diverse publics and worlds co-composed by the research encounter.

I opened this introduction with the *Upside Down and Backwards* residency and the *Endless Paintings* on the banks of the Don River; I now turn to another rainbow composition, this one of institutional chairs inserted into the library at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Jickling and Reed, in addition to working with elementary students, were artists-in-residence in the teacher education program at OISE. The *Extra Curricular Curriculum Vitae* residency culminated in an installation of old, colorful furniture—arranged in rainbow sequencing and stacked precariously—and a series of performance lectures by teacher education candidates. Incorporating a set of odd instructional slides found in the OISE basement, the teacher candidates drew on the educational archive and “the course of their lives” to illustrate an incidental curriculum through performative lectures. The rainbow furniture was the stage for the performances, while simultaneously amplifying and queering curricular objects, such as school chairs, that condition the educational body in particular ways. Lecture topics included the importance of shoes, experiencing allergies to parents, bathroom anxiety, and learning through the nose. The performance lectures enact what educational scholars Madeleine Grumet and Bill Pinar ([1976] 2014) call *currere*, which shifts the curriculum from a set of static objectives and content to complicated conversations that entangle the self with social, political, and ethical frameworks. Examining one’s own experiences as shaping a “living curriculum” (Aoki 1993) emphasizes a fluid, dynamic, and iterative process of learning, much like research-creation. *Currere* emphasizes the role that curriculum plays in a subject’s becoming. As a recursive method entwining past, present, and future, *currere* interrogates our lived experiences and, in doing so, makes room for the possibility of becoming altered and undone (Miller 2005; Mishra Tarc 2015).

As a way of being in the world, socially engaged art as research-creation, like *currere*, is a practice that discovers things it wasn't looking for; as Tsing (2015, 278) writes, "Muddling through with others is always in the middle of things; it does not properly conclude." The socially engaged art as research-creation attended to in the pages of this book emerges from an accountability to education as living, as liveness, imbued with the intimacy of feltness.

How to Make a Classroom Function Like a Work of Art

Writing about socially engaged art as research-creation moves the felted, transcorporeal, and affective forms of thinking-making-doing into a text-based platform that is incomplete. It is my hope that, in the enfolding chapters, readers engage with the complex, messy, and nonlinear instantiations of doing this kind of work in public elementary and secondary schools, as well as in the university.

Chapter 1 is situated in two different elementary schools and classrooms and thinks with two socially engaged art as research-creation events that converge around the idea of children as tastemakers. The projects rupture and intervene into normative and racialized conceptions of the child as incomplete and as one with uncultured taste. Repositioning the school as a candy factory and a flower boutique, where students engage in a range of experimental projects that examine, disrupt, and cultivate different visceral taste sensations, the resulting collaborations question childhood, value, labor, and economy and position elementary school students as changemakers. The chapter engages with art criticism that often devalues artwork produced in collaboration with young children, arguing that this position is conditioned by normative and colonial understandings of taste. When positioned as tastemakers, children become socially engaged artists in their own right, disrupting the overdetermined value of art and education.

Chapter 2 continues to unsettle the ways that particular bodies, knowledges, and affects are regulated and governed in schools, where certain curricular moments are undervalued. The chapter contextualizes artist residencies in nonart spaces through an examination of the Artist Placement Group (APG), who organized a number of artist residencies in industry and government in the 1960s in the United Kingdom. The APG approached their practice through a method called the "open brief," which emphasized relationality, unknowability, and curiosity. Guided by the notions of placement, and of art in a social context, the APG is considered one catalyst for socially engaged art and artist residencies. The open brief method, I argue, creates conditions for an imponderable

curriculum to flourish. Examining three artist residencies that were situated primarily in secondary schools, the chapter questions dominant narratives of what counts as educational, foregrounding moments of liveness, ridiculousness, and humor that enable youth to reimagine their situated worlds. Extending debates on socially engaged art and the Pedagogical Turn regarding the aesthetic value of the artwork—or its efficacy—the imponderable foregrounds the *extra-* of pedagogy as art—extrarational, extraordinary, extraeducational—and the unexpected and indeterminate ways that youth remix, remake, and reimagine future worldings. The chapter makes the case that the significance of socially engaged art practices as research-creation is an expression of speculation and futurity; a future that has not happened yet *but must*.

While the APG was influencing significant change in art in the UK, another group of artists working primarily in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, though with international connections, was Fluxus, known for their method of scoring. Scores are open-ended propositions that catalyze an event and encourage an art practice that is indeterminate, performative, and situated within the ordinary. Understood as *feltness*, scores invite intimate participation either through collaborative inquiry or through embodied and sensory performance. Chapter 3 focuses on curricular materials that Fluxus created to impact educational reform. These curricular materials, such as course planning calendars and syllabi, were rendered as tarot cards, board games, and other score-influenced materials. These historical archives are examined alongside a living archive of artists teaching in postsecondary institutions. I consider the ways that the ordinariness of the score, its situatedness in everyday objects and actions, emerges in similar mundane aspects of teaching and learning such as syllabi, assignments, and classroom atmospheres. It is this ordinariness that conditions radical pedagogy as art, both historically and in current postsecondary classrooms.

In addition to the score, Fluxus artists often created Fluxkits, box-type publications that contained small objects—scores, booklets, photographs, containers, and objects—that were typically housed in an attaché-style case or box. Chapter 4 engages with counter-archiving and anarchiving research-creation practices that disrupt conventional narratives and histories and seek ways to engage with matter not typically found in official archives, as well as the affective experiences and lived histories of human and more-than-human bodies. While my interest in the Fluxus archive was initially prompted by a desire to examine the history of radical pedagogy, as the research-creation project unfolded the question needed to expand and transform. Accountable to the lack of Indigenous, racialized, queer, and trans contributions to the Fluxus

archive, and responsive to the *living archive* of current artist-teachers, different questions emerged at this juncture: *How do we want an archive to function now? What can an archive seed?* This chapter explores anarchiving as research-creation and the *Instant Class Kit*, a mobile curriculum guide and pop-up exhibition of fourteen contemporary art projects dedicated to radical pedagogies and social justice. Produced as an edition of four, the *Kit* brings together contemporary curricular materials in the form of artist multiples such as zines, scores, posters, games, diagrams, newspapers, and other sensory objects. The lessons, syllabi, and classroom activities produced by this new generation of artists, many of whom are queer, trans, Black, and Indigenous, address topics and methodologies including queer subjectivities and Indigenous epistemologies, social movements and collective protest, immigration, technology, and ecology. Anarchiving as research-creation becomes a practice of responding to and countering the colonial logic of the archive while attending to its ephemeral and affective qualities. It is also fundamentally about practicing an ethics based on reciprocity, response-ability, and care that centers relationships to land, human, and more-than-human bodies. Thinking with the *Instant Class Kit*, this chapter lays out a theoretical framework for anarchiving as indeterminate, as felt, and as response-ability. Research-creation as anarchiving, exemplified by the *Instant Class Kit*, becomes a way to distribute and enact radical pedagogy.

Four multiples of the kit were assembled and three circulated to classrooms via mail to be activated by instructors and students. Chapter 5 engages with various activations of the *Instant Class Kit* in postsecondary classrooms and the various conditions of feltness that opening and unboxing the kit enabled. The conditions of feltness the kit seeds prioritize touching transcorporeal encounters and attune themselves to affective assemblages that undo or refuse humanist logics that dominate institutions for a practice of study that is committed to antiracist, anti-ableist, and anticolonial frameworks. Conditions create spatio-temporal openings to widen our attentions and to tune into the *how* of research-creation. Conditions ask questions about what art or research-creation *does* as a way of being in the world. Conditions affect how we come together in relations in response to something urgent, an impulse that requires situated and accountable responses. Conditions shift research-creation from content to anarchiving incipient form.

Chapter 6 engages with a series of publications produced within a semester-long course at OCAD University, Toronto, titled *Pressing Issues* and taught by the artist Shannon Gerard. The course is a seminar-studio hybrid course with a syllabus that consists of one score or proposition: *Make a Public*. The course

blends readings and seminar discussions with field trips, explorations into the field of nanopublishing and artist multiples, and culminates in the students directing a publicly engaged community publication project. Playing with the concept of *public/ation*, I turn to public pedagogy scholarship to think with the public/ations—the publics and the printed matter—that emerged in the semester-long course. As more postsecondary institutions create socially engaged programs and courses, and more scholarship on the teaching of socially engaged art proliferates, it is crucial that different pedagogical theories be explored—including public pedagogy. In connecting publications, publics, and public pedagogy with socially engaged art, my arguments extend current scholarship on public pedagogy to consider more-than-human public/ations and their role in a radical pedagogy to come. Further, the chapter will consider the kinds of interdependent ethics of care needed in socially engaged pedagogies given the nature of moving inside and outside of classrooms while working with diverse publics.

The final chapter, chapter 7, returns to the *Upside Down and Backwards* residency and the *Endless Paintings* on the Don River that opened this introduction to consider the outcomes and impact of research-creation as vectors and impulses. The chapter illustrates a number of other research-creation projects concerned with questions around art and pedagogy to suggest that the pedagogical impulses discussed throughout the book are not only urgent but deeply connected to other research-creation events—and that, in and of itself, becomes a way to think about impact. The chapter also makes a case for the idea of research-creation as pliable.

DUKE

INTRODUCTION

- 1 For a robust discussion on research-creation in relation to other arts-based or artistic research practices see Natalie Loveless's book *How to Make Art at the End of the World* (2019).
- 2 The Pedagogical or Educational Turn emerged in the 1990s as a research-informed art practice concerned with questions about education.
- 3 The artist Joseph Beuys, whose practice is loosely connected to socially engaged art, often used felt as a material. However, his work is not a reference for my own felting practice. He typically used grey industrial felt, while I am interested in the handmade process of felting wool and human hair and draw on feminist textile art practices.
- 4 CARFAC is Canadian Artist Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens, a non-profit association for visual artists. Among their many mandates is supporting economic and legal rights for artists. They publish an annual fee schedule that publicly funded museums and galleries must follow. I use CARFAC rates to pay artists.
- 5 Grant funds would pay for the cost of a substitute teacher so that the regular classroom teacher could meet with the artists or research team. This was, and remains, a significant part of my research-creation practice. Teachers work tirelessly; to contribute to and participate in the projects, their labor needs to be acknowledged and rewarded. I did not want meetings or planning sessions to happen after school hours, and I wanted to consider their paid work as vital to the projects.
- 6 Rather than limit the kinds of research possible, SSHRC funds enable the research-creation to flourish because funding makes possible such large-scale projects. SSHRC prioritizes paying students, artists, and community collaborators and supports highly speculative proposals. There are no expectations by the funders to produce particular kinds of outcomes nor final reports, and research-creation is a grant category in the SSHRC funding taxonomy.
- 7 Photodocumentation with students is governed by institutional ethics. In many cases this included both University of Toronto ethics and Toronto District School Board ethics. In photographing students, parental or guardian consent is required. The consent process incorporated a multipronged approach. All students could participate in

the project regardless of consent. Parents or guardians and students could consent to the following: (1) documentation of student artwork only for research purposes, not to be published; (2) documentation of student artwork for research purposes, with publication allowed; (3) documentation of student artwork that could include images of the students, only for research purposes and not to be published; (4) documentation of student artwork that could include images of the students, for research purposes and with publication allowed; (5) no documentation of any kind. Class photos were given to us by the teachers, with student names labeled. We further annotated this photo based on the consent forms submitted. At the end of each research day, as the digital images were uploaded to a hard drive, my lead research assistant would move images into folders marked by the first four categories described above. Any images that fell into category number 5 were destroyed. Images that were later curated for the research website had to be selected from folders 2 and 4, while folders 1 and 3 could be used for reflections and discussion among the artists, teachers, and research team. Obtaining consent to use photodocumentation is complicated but not impossible if you follow such labor-intensive and consensual processes. Names of schools have been given pseudonyms per ethics guidelines, and students and teachers are not named in the research. Artists could choose to have their identities included in documentation.

ONE. BITTER CHOCOLATE IS FOR ADULTS!

- 1 As mentioned in the introduction's note 7, for ethical reasons, schools discussed in this book have been assigned pseudonyms.
- 2 This is the website for the National Bitter Melon Council. You can find more information on their project here: Andi Sutton, "The National Bitter Melon Council," March 2021, <http://www.andisutton.net/post-is-a-post/>.
- 3 Both of the school-based residencies started from the proposition *trade*. However, based on student input and different school contexts, the two residencies became unique. However, both residencies commenced with a socially engaged activity that got students thinking about value and its relationship to trade and commerce. Students were introduced to the artist David Hammons and the work *Bliz-aard Ball Sale* (1983). In this artwork Hammons sold snowballs on a street corner in Cooper Square in New York City's East Village. The snowballs were of varying sizes and were laid out on a colorful woven mat. Having been introduced to this artwork, and after engaging in a series of classroom discussions on trade and value, the students gathered outside the schools to make their own snowballs in small groups. In both instances it was an unusual winter in Toronto and there was very little snow on the ground. The artists hauled snow, which they collected from local ice rinks, in large Ikea bags to the schoolyard. In groups the students made snowballs according to the kind of value and trade they wanted to create. After they had made their snowballs, and with an adult supervisor, the students moved through the school neighborhood and traded or sold their snowballs to strangers. Some groups made their snowballs quickly, amassing as many as they could with the intended value of a snowball fight with a group of