12

GRIEF-AS-GATEWAY

Imagining an Otherwise Ethnographic Practice

Z Nicolazzo

Tender Beginnings

On August 27, 2020 my mother passed away. She died of cancer that had metastasized in her mouth, throat, and stomach, and while the facts of her death feel clinical to recount, what is more visceral to me are the feelings surrounding her passing. I have vivid sensory memories from the period after her death: of my roommate holding me as I wept; the smell of fallen leaves in the New Hampshire forest and Nag Champa incense when I went back to her cottage; the sound of ducks as the sun set over the pond by which she lived her final years; of passing out – of literally being bowled over with grief – the evening after releasing her ashes with family and friends; of the constant patience my partner has expressed and the deep sadness we share that my mother and her never got to meet in this realm. Ultimately, it is not the cancer I remember so much as the affective resonances left by the crater cancer carved into my life.

The loss of my mother remains deeply challenging. While I understand many aspects of the effects of her loss on me, there are moments I continue to struggle with the ongoing affective ripples of her passing. Years on, my brain is still searching for her, my heart still yearning, my fingers still wanting to text her. I see old emails between us when I am searching for some piece of information on my computer and I am laid out by the sight of her name, still there even though she is not. When I am feeling most lost, I close my eyes and remember releasing her ashes, taking refuge and comfort in her being amongst the elements: in the air I breathe, the water I drink, the earth on which I walk, and the heat that surrounds me. It helps, and yet I can never feel as steady as I did when she was alive. As Christina Sharpe (2023) noted regarding losing her mother, "After my mother died, I felt off-kilter. Torqued. Listed to one side or the other. It was as if I'd lost my center of gravity" (p. 223). Even writing these

words, I feel a heaviness on my chest and my fingers are shaking over the key-board, reminding me of the physical effects of ongoing, unending grief.

In the wake of my mother's death, I have thought often about how grief has been a steady trace through my scholarly career. However, despite grief being a constant companion, it is an affective field I actively sought to neglect, thinking if I just looked over it, I could get over it. But the cruel irony is there is no 'looking over' grief; not for me. And, as Ahmed (2012) articulated, "Don't look over it, if you can't get over it" (p. 187). So, I have begun to consider what grief and loss means for (my) educational praxis, including my work as an ethno-grapher. Admittedly, ethnography has been rightly critiqued for the extractive logics and colonial roots upon which the methodological tradition was devel-oped. And yet, possibilities exist for imagining what more liberatory ethno-graphic practices may look, sound, and feel like (e.g., critical collaborative ethnography; Bhattacharya, 2008). Especially in connection to ethnography alongside marginalized populations, it becomes imperative for researchers to be attentive to how power, (in)equity, and relationality, and affect flow across the scene of research.

In this chapter, I argue grief both floods the scene of ethnographic research alongside marginalized populations and by attending carefully, precisely, and with empathy to the (absent) presence of researcher ←→ interlocutor grief(s), ethnographers can envision more ethical and just modes of scholarly practice. I argue grief is a gateway to imagining what I pose as an otherwise ethnographic practice[1], or a rethinking of notions like 'the field' 'into' and 'out' from which ethnographers move. In this sense, ethnographic attentiveness to grief-as-gateway invites more complex and nuanced understandings of the ethical dimensions through which one does research alongside marginalized populations. In doing so, I want to be clear I am drawing on the legacy of queer and trans women and people, many of whom are scholars of color, who talk about the transformative nature of trap doors (Gossett, Stanley, & Burton, 2022), thresholds (Jackson & Mazzei, 2011), and silences (Mazzei, 2007; Cheung, 1993). My suggestion of grief-as-gateway, then, is not intended to be 'new' or somehow separate from these other beautifully crafted texts. Instead, it is a way of thinking/feeling/doing that has an epistemological lineage from which I am drawing without desiring to usurp or co-opt the particularities of others' modes of inquiry.

In exploring the connective threads between grief and ethnographic research, I use this chapter as a space to imagine an *otherwise ethnographic practice*, a mode of ethnographic practice moved by those affective residues which animate one's life, both in and beyond the scene of research. In doing so, I resist easy temptations to create a stepwise guide or 'how to' for such an otherwise eth-nographic practice. I try instead to move with and beyond method, to provide extramethodological[2] momentum for thinking/feeling/doing ethnographic prac-tice in ways that have affective resonance. Qualitative methods texts abound with technical information, acting as guides for 'how to do' the work of quali-tative research. And while there are indeed some (contested, as they should be)

axioms for qualitative research broadly – and ethnographic work specifically – I am wondering about the spillover, the moments when life becomes too much, the excessive realities of affect in the day-to-day doingness of the research through which we move as scholars. In essence, I want to address what happens when one is overcome, bowled over, jostled by the absent presence of swirling affect. What happens when the everyday realities of life – including death, dying, grief, and loss – mediate our very being, which is to say, the very doing of the (falsely) assumed technical work of qualitative research? If, as some have argued, we are the 'instrument of our research' (e.g., Stewart, 2010), then the affective field in which we move – and which moves us – shapes us instrumentally, and we'd do well to attend to its influence. In this chapter, then, I invite readers to become curious about how affect – particularly grief – move them and their research in ways that necessarily crack open methodological possibility.

The Thing About Dreaming Is…

…it can be hard to do. Simply put, many of us are not invited to dream. Not only that, but those of us who have understood the importance of dreaming and have practiced it through the generations are then actively discouraged from continuing when we get to the academy. Qualitative research has methods, we are told. There are structures and routines and analytical processes. We are told we need to learn these and then, possibly, maybe, perhaps we can bend some of those rules. Dreaming and imagining otherwise worlds (King et al., 2020) is not synonymous with 'rigorous' qualitative research. Or at least that is the story we are told. And so, our ability to dream begins to atrophy, as a result of misuse. We lose a semblance for the words, replacing them with notions of goodness, transferability, coding, thematic analysis, and saturation. As Machado (2019) stated, "Putting language to something for which you have no language is no easy feat" (p. 134), and so the language we had becomes harder to find the further it gets from us.

   And yet, there are people and communities who have been putting language to dreaming otherwises for quite some time, namely Indigenous and Black populations. As a result, Indigenous and Black Studies are academic traditions through which embracing the imaginative possibilities of elsewheres is firmly rooted. That said, the overwhelming whiteness of the project of education is such that these life-affirming processes have been under threat of annihilation (e.g., Brown, 2022; Morrill & Sabzalian, 2022; Smith, 2012). The violence of this whiteness extends to every corner of the project of education, including qualitative research, which remains hostile toward affective overtures, unless they are foregrounding thought rather than resting in the feelingness of the feelings. So, even where dreaming and imagination has thrived, the project of education is such that it seeks to contain, eradicate, or otherwise mark the ~~existence~~[3] of such ongoing, intergenerational livingness. And the more

entrenched that existence becomes, the more the institution practices a form of forgetting; a forgetting that starts anew the cyclical loop of ~~existence~~, forgetting, and unknowing – the project of whiteness itself. As a qualitative research tradition with a long educational history, ethnography has been long enmeshed with the violent scene of education; it has been institutionalized in ways that limit possibilities for ethnographic practice otherwise. And yet, those possibilities (could) exist. What if we sought to resist the way education seeks the ~~existence~~ of those practices of remembering and holding onto livingness? What if we listened hard for practices of survivance (Morrill & Sabzalian, 2022), tales of fugitivity (Patel, 2019), and ways people proliferated possibilities of life through the dark (Nicolazzo et al., 2023)? And if we did, what might it look, sound, and feel like to imagine an otherwise ethnographic practice?

Imagining an Otherwise Ethnographic Practice

Even as ethnographic practice has changed over the last five decades, it remains a complicated figure in the landscape of educational qualitative research. The language of ethnography – of the 'field' 'into' and 'out' from which the ethnographer moves – creates a trap in which those seeking otherwises may get caught. What if the 'field' were not something one moved 'in' or 'out' from, but was something(s) in which one was always already enmeshed? What if the 'field' was not just physical, but was a sensory experience, and one that challenged temporal boundaries of the here/now to include and link together the past/present/future tenses? And, if these questions were to be seriously considered – a task I will begin in this chapter – what may be the ethical implications on ethnographic practice, especially with and alongside marginalized populations? Put another way, what are the ethical demands and implications for a 'new' ethnographic practice that dreams otherwise worlds alongside marginalized populations? How ought an ethnographer do the justice she seeks alongside interlocutors who have/do/will continue to experience *in*justice as an ontological reality? These questions unfold into new questions, all of which begin to trace the edges of what could be rather than feeling restricted to what 'ought' to be. Here, how we feel, and how we feel with/between/across peoples, times, and spaces become gateways through which to imagine something altogether new. Or, if not new, then at least otherwise to what one 'ought' to do as an ethnographer, which is often tied tightly to extending the violent whiteness inherent in the project of education.

In what follows, I reflect on multiple moments of grief from past ethnographic experiences. I use these affective floods of grief to imagine an otherwise ethnographic practice. While grief may not be the *only* affective node through which to do such imagining, it is the one that resonates most for me, and as such, I use it here as an object lesson that could well proliferate in various directions. That is, grief is *a* gateway rather than *the* gateway to imagining an otherwise ethnographic practice. Moreover, it is a gateway I focus on here

largely owing to how grief adheres to, through, and on the lives of queer and trans populations, which are groups I am not only a part of myself but have been those with whom I have been in community through ethnographic research. As I have stated before, queer and trans people are not ourselves of oppression, but are from it (Nicolazzo, 2021). In thinking from an affective perspective on this axiom, then, I contend that while we are not ourselves embodiments of grief, grief does embody much of what we are made to sift through as we live in a rampantly antiqueer and antitrans world[4]. Grief becomes a condition of living for us, and as such, is a powerful place from which to feel a way toward an otherwise ethnographic practice.

Losses In/Through Ethnographic Practice

When I was collecting data for my dissertation and eventual first book (Nicolazzo, 2017), I experienced multiple losses, both of which invite questions as to what it means to think/be/feel an otherwise ethnographic practice. Framed as an 18-month critical collaborative ethnography (Bhattacharya, 2008) of transgender college student experience, my study was already mired in an affective field of loss. That is, trans people must (be willing) to cope with death and loss as primary functions for our being-in-the-world[5]. To name our transness marks a movement from who and how we have been socially implicated and framed, a rejection of a catastrophic gendered system through which our access to explore future possible selves is limited. As we move toward and into ourselves, we simultaneously shed and move out from who we are told we cannot be(come); the affective friction surrounding these movements, regardless of their ease, is circumscribed by death and loss. "*I am not* − " and "*Instead, I am* − " are disjunctures at which trans people make decisions and confront realities shaped by the realities that shape their sociopolitical worlds. We let go and we hold on anew, sometimes for a bumpier ride than we would have desired, given the desire some have for our ~~existence~~. Death and loss flood the ethnographic field, then, when it comes to being with and alongside trans people. It is all the more so the scene of research when the researcher is trans, as was the case for me.

  Moreover, my grandmother passed away from heart failure during the data collection phase of my project. She was well into her 90s, so while her passing was not unexpected, I had not expected to lose her when I did. I left my research quickly, heading back to the Northeast to be with family during her services. Much of what happened felt like a blur in those days and weeks, with traces of memory still present: my friend and roommate holding me as I cried during lunch; my jealousy of people in the airport not traveling for funeral services; the guilt I felt at not having been able to finish faster so my grandmother could have known me as Dr. Nicolazzo; the full complexities of family dynamics that circulate surrounding the death of a matriarch. When I returned to my life in Ohio and reconnected with participants in the field, I was met with a moment of kindness that has stayed with me: they had all purchased and signed a card for me. And in that card, one participant signed it with *Your Micah*.

> He was mine.
> I was hers[6].
> We were each other's.
> Which made the second experience of loss all the harder.

To be honest, Micah and I went through a lot together. Over the course of our relationship, we had grown close in ways I am not sure either of us could then – or can now – fully explain. We may have come together as researcher and participant, but we quickly developed a lasting connection as people, friends, advocates, guides, and collaborators. I can recall checking in on her when she posted a #IfTheyGunnedMeDown photo set on Facebook in the wake of the murder of Michael Brown. I looked forward to our interviews and time together, and know they did, too. So much so that, in the final semester of data collection, I remember the exact moment, time, and place where he asked me, "So when are you going to finish your dissertation?" I gulped hard as I told her this would be my last semester of data collection. I saw the shock and worry register on their face – they also didn't want this moment to end. I quickly assured her I would stick around, that I would continue coming through and we could stay connected through social media and I would have a celebration with folks when I defended successfully and if he wanted, he could even come to the defense. And, and, and...but the seam had torn a bit...what had brought us together was ending...it was time for me to 'leave' the field, to 'finish' data collection, to 'part' with participants.

I've thought about this moment time and again, especially in connection to what it means to be trans and research with trans people. As reticent as I was to accept the title at the time, what did it mean for me as a trans elder to 'leave' trans youth, many of whom may not have had access to (m)any trans adults in their day-to-day lives? How could I ethically 'part' from people with whom I had lived so much life? Experienced death and loss alongside? Created worlds with? Envisioned futures in ways that defied the futures others continued to try to determine for us? In short, I began to wonder how I could do ethnography differently, because while I had recognized the way harm moved through my work as a qualitative researcher (Magolda & Weems, 2002), I wanted something more, something different, something otherwise from the ethnographic practice through which I had begun to frame my scholarly life.

Coming back to the words of Christina Sharpe (2023), the imbrication of grief and loss through my early ethnographic career has me "feeling off kilter. Torqued. Listed to one side or the other. It [is] as if I['ve] lost my center of gravity" (p. 223), methodologically and otherwise. Who I am as an ethnographic researcher, as a trans ethnographer who does work alongside trans people, and as someone for whom death, dying, and loss continue to be present even in – or perhaps all the more pronounced through – absence has been remarkably astounding for me to realize. In seeking ways forward, I have done one of the few things that makes methodological sense for me: to describe the

ethnographic scene thickly (Geertz, 1973) with the hope that doing so acts as a way for me and others to reach out and steady ourselves together. Because I've realized – and Micah helped me with this so many years ago, if only I had understood their grammar at the time – that if I have lost my center of gravity, perhaps I am not alone. And, if we are always together in being off kilter, we can be together in seeking a (new) stasis, a (new) way of thinking/being/feeling that helps us regain our footing. Because after all, He was mine. I was hers. We were each other's.

   If grief, death, dying, and loss is to be a portal, then, I want to let it. Which for me means letting it in and getting closer to it. I need to ask questions of grief, just as grief has asked questions of me, Micah, and so many other (multiply) marginalized trans people. And if grief-as-gateway is a process of receiving, asking, and reflecting on questions, then I need to be open to the profusion of possibilities that may underlie an otherwise ethnographic practice that is altogether different from what I have done in the past. Not that what I did was 'wrong;' this is not about normative judgements (pun intended). Instead, it is about seeking, desiring, and wanting to want more than that which we have been given. To have more and more options. To proliferate possibilities, and to do so by replicating the thickness that signals ethnographic goodness. What if, for example, I asked thick questions? What if they came 'thick and fast' so as to help me, and others, and us together imagine an otherwise ethnographic practice that undid staid notions of 'entering' and 'leaving' the 'field' of research?

   I am at the precipice of the gateway.
   I am ready to pass through.

Otherwise Ethnographic Practice

I have been wondering lately what it may mean to imagine an otherwise ethnographic practice as a series of breakages. Ahmed (2017) talks about breakages as simultaneously comings together, that a break – the snap of a branch, for example – is a moment to pause, to look around and see who else is/has/may be on the verge of a similar breakage so as to provide the catalyst for coming together. If one is snappy, as she notes, then perhaps it is a moment to convene with fellow snappy people. The sonic percussions and affective realities of the moment – *snap!* – becomes a place/time through which to develop tighter community in seeking otherwise worlds.

   If breakages are to serve as the gateway through which we pass, and if grief is the affective field in which that gateway exists, then I wonder what may be ways that – similar to Ahmed – I, too, may start by rearticulating what breakages mean with, for, and alongside (multiply) marginalized participants. For example, while we are framed in pejorative ways as breaking with (tradition, family, friends, gender, normativity), this is not really the story I would tell. To be fair, it is indeed *a* story, but it is one reproduced through the modes

of dominance through which we are made to navigate daily. Instead, I seek and desire narratives about how we have broken free, from, and/or seek breaks beyond the perils and catastrophic effects of everyday life. I yearn for a recasting of queer and trans breakage that recognizes the harm that continually circulates in our worlds and how that harm has forced us to find, create, develop, and hold tight to the families we create, such that one's 'leaving' is not something one does – not when we have worked so hard to be here, together.

Thinking back to Micah and me, the ethnographic suggestion that I 'entered' and 'left' Micah's life on a particular timeline chafed at the seams of our trans lives. There was no 'entering;' Micah and I were always already looking for one another. There was no 'leaving'; Micah and I were with each other and had begun the process of world-making in ways that felt resonant with who we were and could become. For Micah and me, there was no 'field' either; while our lives came together in particular spaces and times, what we were developing was boundless, transversed virtual and physical realms, and was more than ethnographic practice could contain. And circulating this all was the reality that we desired this otherwise ethnographic practice because we needed to, had to in order to cultivate a world that felt just, equitable, and full of trans livingness. For us, then, it was an ethical maxim, that of trans livingness together, that drove us to seek an otherwise ethnographic practice. If Ahmed's maxim was "don't look over it, if you can't get over it" (p. 187), Micah and mine's was: *want to want more, because we always already have.*

The 'we' here is important. As marginalized and marooned populations, we often are told we will never find things. We will never find love, safety, security. We will be alone, castigated, isolated. We will know no peace. And yet, in coming together, we make magic. We create worlds that give us all that we could ever want and more. As Gossett and Huxtable (2022) described, we engage in the fugitive practice of *underworlding*, or creating life in the unseen, shadowy spaces beyond the gaze and grip of cisheteropatriarchy. Perhaps this is why so many queer bars were underground. Perhaps this is why shadows and night feature prominently in the spaces and stories of our be(com)ing. Perhaps this is why the Internet, for all its persistent issues, has long been a vibrant space for imagining future possible selves for queer and trans people (Nicolazzo et al., 2023). And the reality is that *we do this together.* As CeCe McDonald (BCRW Videos, 2014) has aptly claimed, "We protect each other." As Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson remind us time and again from the past, if we are all we have – as the state so often wants to remind us – then what we have is glorious and profound indeed. We can make feasts out of crumbs and homes out of heartbreak. No one should have to; and yet, in coming together, we have/do/will continue to make the otherwise worlds we desire, want, and want to want.

Furthermore, our coming together is at least in part – large or small, it does not matter – owing to our shared experiences of collective grief. The violent world we live in forces us to(ward) grief. Grief then pulls us into ourselves all the further, only making it harder to reach out and be together. And yet, there

are cultural practices of being alongside one another in grief. Sitting shiva, home-going ceremonies, hospice care...there are plenty of reminders that together we have the capacity to think/be/feel otherwise. We grieve together because we come together. We live with, in spite of, alongside, together in, and through grief. Together. Always. Perhaps, then, the response to the cisheteropatriarchal insistence on our ~~existence~~ is a movement together with, through, and alongside our collective grief. Grief-as-gateway becomes a praxis through which to imagine otherwise worlds.

And the same may well be true of ethnographic practice. If there is the possibility of imagining otherwise worlds alongside collective grief, and if grief floods the ethnographic field, and if the (absent-)presence of that grief is a vital animating reality for marginalized and marooned populations – researchers and participants alike – then there must be different modes through which we can desire an otherwise ethnographic practice. What could it mean to have an otherwise ethnographic practice with no beginning or end? One in which one does not 'enter' or 'leave' the 'field' because one was always already in it with and alongside the communities to whom they were dedicated? How might the dissolution of these false constructs of 'entering,' 'leaving,' and the 'field' be life-affirming in ways that the construction of ethnography as an imperial project has sought to eradicate from view? And what of the ethical implications therein? That is, could one envision an otherwise ethnographic practice as being not just more equitable and humane – words that despite their import often feel insufficient given the ongoing constellation of cruelty being meted out against (multiply) marginalized populations – but more attuned to our always already praxis of living? Could this be a mode through which we do not push away grief, do not ignore it, but recognize, hold, and be with our collective grief in a way that helps us honor the myriad possibilities for livingness that we contain within our collective selves? I think so.

At the outset of this chapter, I suggested an otherwise ethnographic practice was extramethodological. One of the reasons I made this comment was a signal that there would be no stepwise guide for how one can 'do' otherwise ethnography. Indeed, many of us have been doing this for generations, even if called by another name. And while I am not proposing a guide, readers should not interpret this a nonchalant 'anything goes' attitude whereby one can do as they please and slap a fun/cool/hip label on it as a form of methodological virtue-signaling. Instead, I imagine an otherwise ethnographic practice as being one of an ongoing *rehearsal for living* (Maynard & Simpson, 2022). That is, the undefined nature of otherwise ethnographic practice here and now, in this chapter and text, does not signify there have not been ongoing (re)definitions with, for, and alongside those of us who have always already been in community. Perhaps these (re)definitions are not clear to you, dear reader, because they are not meant for you. Or perhaps, dear reader, if you see/feel/know them clearly, it is because they were always already waiting for you to find them, here and now. Guides are ultimately only good for those who are ready for them. Gifts come in many shapes and forms, and they do not always need to be presented to be felt, seen, experienced, and lived as such (Nelson & Shotton, 2022).

In this way, then, imagining an otherwise ethnographic practice is not just extramethodological, but also extratemporal in its rupturing of space/time. If there is no 'entering' and 'leaving' the 'field,' then there may not be temporal boundaries by which one may need to use to project an image as researcher. Here, I am thinking about Newton (2000) and Wolcott's (2002) calls to reimagine an ethics of intimacy alongside participants. To extend Fine's (1994) thinking, an otherwise ethnographic practice may also challenge us to *over*work the researcher-participant hyphen. Perhaps the notion of 'researcher' and 'participant' get overworked to exhaustion, until they are no longer necessary, useful, or capable of anything further. And so we give them a rest and just be together, as we have always done. The research project itself may still be there, and yet, it is not central to the process of world-making with and alongside which the marginalized communities and us as 'researchers' are desiring (more).

Were I to (re)turn to my dissertation project through otherwise ethnographic practice, then, I imagine I would have invited participants into feeling through our project. What did it mean for Micah to tell me they were mine? How could I have heard and explored Raegan's desire to join the study in order to develop community as a yearning for? As a potential sadness from previously not having? As a wanting more together than we can ever each have alone? While I do not think I did a 'bad' job with the project, I do know much of what was left of the cutting room floor was how the affect swirling around us all – 'researcher' and 'participants' alike – related to the absent-presence of feeling that we did not name (and perhaps did not name because we did not have words…although maybe we could have found them together). Imagining an otherwise ethnographic practice could have helped us come home to each other in altogether different ways. Which is to say, we could have come home to ourselves in more gentle ways. Because we were/are/will be always better together. And that's what an otherwise ethnographic practice reminds us (all).

Tomorrow is Today; Yesterday is the Future

At my mother's home-going ceremony, which took place on a miraculously seasonable Northeastern fall day in October, I read Mary Oliver's (2017) poem titled When I Am Among The Trees. It was one she must have loved, as she had typed it out on a small piece of green paper and placed it on her desk where she could see it often. That green piece of paper is now in a frame on my nightstand, next to a framed picture of my mother, young, giving the person behind the camera a knowing eye. When I feel lost, I go back to this poem – I go amongst the trees. I close my eyes and imagine an otherwise world where my mother is safe, comfortable, and has everything she needs and wants. I remember my grief is not mine alone, and if I let it, perhaps it can be a gateway to practicing livingness in profoundly altering ways. I sit patiently as the grief floods my system and read the stanza that moves me most:

I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often

(p. 123)

I want an ethnographic practice that does not hurry (me/us) through the world. I want an ethnographic practice that moves slowly, one through which we bow often. I want an ethnographic practice that does not reside in the hubris of perfection or that seeks to sublimate its flaws but encourages goodness and discernment. An ethnographic practice that comes together in the break(age)s and meets us when and where we are off-kilter, a practice that recognizes we can move otherwise in relation to the golden thread of grief that connects us as (multiply) marginalized populations. This is the extramethodological practice I desire most for us.

We are through the gateway.
As it turns out, we always have been.

Questions for Consideration

1.   What does your grief tell you? What do you tell it?
2.   How have you learned to (not) attend to your grief?
3.   Why does grief feel unsettling in relation to collecting, analyzing, and representing data?
4.   What would taking this approach mean for my ethnographic/(post)qualitative practice?

Notes

1 Here, I am thinking alongside the work Amanda Tachine, Leigh Patel, K. Wayne Yang, chapter authors, and I co-created in our edited volume *Weaving an Otherwise: In-Relations Methodological Practice*. Not only is this important in terms of following a genealogy of thought, but as an ongoing connection to those methodological practices that center Indigenous, Black, queer and trans, and people of color world-making.
2 An extension of thinking on *extraidentity* I theorized with Alden C. Jones and Sy Simms (Nicolazzo et al., 2023), I use this neologism to think with and beyond the oft-rigidity of methodological practice. That is, I am not interested in completely foregoing methodology, and yet, desire more from it.
3 Warren (2018), Wilderson, III (2010), and Hayward (2017) use the strikethrough as a way of noting the active and ongoing process of erasure Black, trans, and Black trans populations experience. The strikethrough does not just operate in the past, but is a past/present/future condition, a way of signaling the *longue durée* of antiblack, antitrans, and antiblacktrans livingness.
4 As a result, the educational worlds apes in which we are embedded are not only antiqueer and antitrans, but also aid in the furtherance of antiqueer and antitrans life worlds beyond the University. What is learned has damaging effects, both in and beyond the academy; both in and after qualitative research processes occur.

5 When I was an undergraduate student, I wrote my senior honors thesis on Martin Heidegger's text *Being and Time*. While I was often asked what I would do with my philosophy degree, it never escapes me how much I put it to work in my scholarly life.

6 At the time of our working alongside each other during my dissertation study, Micah told me they used multiple sets of pronouns. I continue to honor this choice by shifting Micah's pronouns within written texts. This also has the delicious result of reminding readers of the unpindownability of gender both epistemologically and ontologically. That it is suggested to be natural(ized) is itself a violent imposition for many, especially trans people.

References

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Duke University Press.

Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a feminist life*. Duke University Press.

BCRW Videos. (2014). CeCe McDonald, Reina Gossett, and Dean Spade: Police + prisons don't keep us safe − we keep each other safe [Video]. *Vimeo*. https://vimeo.com/90554286.

Bhattacharya, H. (2008). New critical collaborative ethnography. In S. N. Hesse-Bieber & P. Leave (Eds), *Handbook of emergent methods* (pp. 303–322). Guilford Press.

Brown, Z. (2022). Archives in the hold: Overreading Black student activism. In A. R. Tachine & Z Nicolazzo (Eds), *Weaving an otherwise: In-relations methodological practice* (pp. 63–75). Stylus.

Cheung, K.-K. (1993). *Articulate silences: Hisaye Yamamoto, Maxine Hong Kingston, Joy Kogawa*. Cornell University Press.

Fine, M. (1994). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzil & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 70–82). Sage Publications.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. Basic Books.

Gossett, C. & Huxtable, J. (2022). Existing in the world: Blackness at the edge of trans visibility. In R. Gossett, E. A. Stanley, & J. Burton (Eds), *Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility* (pp. 39–55). MIT Press.

Gossett, R., Stanley, E. A., & Burton, J. (2022). *Trap door: Trans cultural production and the politics of visibility*. MIT Press.

Hayward, E. (2017). Don't exist. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 4(2), 191–194.

Jackson, A. Y. & Mazzei, L. A. (2011). *Thinking with theory: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. Routledge.

King, T. L., Navarro, J., & Smith, A. (Eds). (2020). *Otherwise worlds: Against settler colonialism and anti-blackness*. Duke University Press.

Machado, C. M. (2019). *In the dream house: A memoir*. Graywolf Press.

Magolda, P. & Weems, L. (2002). Doing harm: An unintended consequence of qualitative inquiry? *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(4), 490–507.

Maynard, R. & Simpson, L. B. (2022). *Rehearsals for living*. Haymarket Books.

Mazzei, L. A. (2007). *Inhabited silence in qualitative research: Putting poststructural theory to work*. Peter Lang Press.

Morrill, A. & Sabzalian, L. (2022). Surveillance-based inquiries in and beyond the academy. In A. R. Tachine & Z Nicolazzo (Eds), *Weaving an otherwise: In-relations methodological practice* (pp. 29–43). Stylus.

Nelson, C. A. & Shotton, H. J. (2022). (Re)considerations of answerability through gifting. In A. R. Tachine & Z Nicolazzo (Eds), *Weaving an otherwise: In-relations methodological practice* (pp. 92–106). Stylus.

Newton, E. (2000). My best informant's dress: The erotic equation in fieldwork. In E. Newton (Ed.), *Margaret Mead made me gay: Personal essays, public ideas* (pp. 243–257). Duke University Press.

Nicolazzo, Z (2017). *Trans* in college: Trans students's strategies for navigating campus life and the politics of inclusion*. Stylus.

Nicolazzo, Z (2021). Imagining a trans* epistemology: What liberation thinks like in postsecondary education. *Urban Education*, 56(3), 511–536.

Nicolazzo, Z, Jones, A. C., & Simms, S. (2023). *Digital me: Trans students exploring future possible selves online*. Rutgers University Press.

Oliver, M. (2017). *Devotions: The selected poems of Mary Oliver*. Penguin Books.

Patel, L. (2019). Fugitive practices: Learning in a settler colony. *Educational Studies*, 55(3), 253–261.

Sharpe, C. (2023). *Ordinary notes*. Farrah, Straus & Giroux.

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). Zed Books.

Stewart, D. L. (2010). Researcher as instrument: Understanding "shifting" findings in constructivist research. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 47(3), 287–302.

Tachine, A. R. & Nicolazzo, Z (Eds) (2022). *Weaving an otherwise: In-relations methodological practice*. Stylus.

Warren, C. L. (2018). *Ontological terror: Blackness, nihilism, and emancipation*. Duke University Press.

Wilderson, III, F. B. (2010). *Red, white, and black: Cinema and the structure of U.S. antagonisms*. Duke University Press.

Wolcott, H. F. (2002). *Sneaky kid and its aftermath: Ethics and intimacy in fieldwork*. AltaMira Press.