The Witch
A Pedagogy of Immanence

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree, Masters of Education

Cassandra "Iowyth" Witteman

Lakehead University, Orillia, Ontario, Canada

December 2020

Abstract

This thesis examines three key texts which serve as a means of exploring the process of reclamation, of delving into a process of reconstruction of Indigenous identity but also of social identity within a philosophical and moral structure of the biophilic. This is done through an autoethnographic lens, as I have chosen three formative texts that have served as foundational stories in my coming to know myself. Through reflecting on this process, I investigate how one may relocate the self through the process of storying, as an immanent part of nature and in so doing, I posit that even those living within structures of colonialism may begin to reconfigure the fragmented spaces of the modern into something that recognizes and elevates lived relations with the land as a form of authentic and vital knowledge of the self. Through the figure of the witch, I examine the potential of archetypes to participate in this storying of the self into relation with the world, considering the special nature of the witch as deriving their power from sources outside of human control and as a natural and, often, subversive figure. I theorize the ways in which the witch as an archetype has participated in my own storying of self as well as the potential for archetypes such as these to participate in a relocation of humanity as manifesting within and through nature.

Keywords: Autoethnography, Indigenous, Witchcraft, Archetype, Biophilia

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: The Beginning, My Story

Crouching on the ground, my hands are pressed onto the earth with my face resting heavily on top of them. I am curled tightly into a ball, with the hands of a half-dozen members of my affinity group tenderly stroking my back. I had never been touched with sensitivity and love in my entire life. I was tucked up like an animal awash in an unfamiliar experience, a fragment of stoneware pottery returning to the soil, with water falling out of my eyes and colours rotating like kaleidoscopes on the inside of my closed eyelids. There was the warmth of a dying fire and the sounds of the living forest all around us. I had opened up, perhaps for the first time in my life. The group had decided to perform a ritual right there and then, to hold my body and channel into me the love that I had been denied, to hold my body and cradle me as I was finally allowed to fracture, to break into pieces, to let down the walls built out of hardened muscle and to experience real human connection. My first Witchcamp marks a turning point in the odyssey to reclaim my life from the crippling effects of childhood trauma. It was one of the first instances that I can recollect in which I felt truly and fully myself, one of the first places where I learned that I could experience life without shame, and one of the most profound healing experiences of my life.

My Relations

To trace back the beginnings of this story is to look at my history, the story of my ancestors. From what I know of my family's story, it is the coming together of two very injured people, each carrying a long history of intergenerational trauma. My grandparents on my father's side were Dutch survivors of the German occupation of Holland, POW's and members of the Dutch resistance. They died when I was 13, within months of one another and despite many opportunities, nothing of our family's history was passed down, including our language. Nothing

is known to me except for a few scattered stories without detail or perspective. Despite the absolute ubiquity of windmills and tulips in my grandparents' house, we never spoke about their lives or where they came from.

My mother's mother was Métis-Anishinaabe from the Penetanguishene region. She died in her 60th year, after being so heavily medicated that she was triggered into a massive heart-attack. She had suffered for many years from Schizophrenia, Emphysema from her smoking, and Porphyria from the secret shame of abuse inherited from her parents. It is said that at one time, our family once lived on the Peninsula in Penetanguishene on a large parcel of land, which had been sold for some paltry amount to White settlers. From what I can remember of my grandmother, she had a warm nature and a deep throaty laugh. She was incredibly generous and kind but was haunted by a past that I dared not ask her about. She lived with our family all through my childhood and I can remember brief instances when her walls would come down. She would talk about her past and it was almost too terrifying for me to comprehend.

On both sides of my family is inherited generational trauma, both spoken and unspoken. My mother's family has all but lost their links to our shared heritage. There is a Métis sash in our front hallway but very little relevant cultural knowledge available to be shared through the generations. Yet, I have always suspected that something survived the cultural genocide. We may not have known our names for the Creator, but we knew of her existence. As children, my sister and I understood that the world is made up of a web of connections. We instinctively understood that we should respect all life, that we should attempt to respect and understand different ways of life, learning from their unique approaches to the world, just as our own unique approaches to life could be understood to enrich the lives of others. As children, my mother told us that we had rights – rights to our knowledge, to our own way of life, even if it was different

from that of my parents or those around us. Yet, my upbringing also came with the weight of unprocessed intergenerational pain.

When I took the ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) Test, I scored a 6 out of a maximum of 10. Many metrics that measure the correlation between ACE (Center for Disease Prevention and Control, 2015) scores and incidence of alcoholism, suicidality, or liver disease have a final category of 4+. Yet, when placed in relief to the trauma of my parents, the trauma of my generation pales in comparison to theirs, and theirs, in turn, pales in comparison to that of my grandmother's generation. In each generation that I look back to, I find greater and greater misery, greater and greater violence, dislocation, and disease. It is incumbent upon me and my generation to take the trauma of our ancestors, to not only find meaning in their pain but to also find healing through our own stories. In my search for meaning, I have tried to find my place as both a White-coded woman and as the inheritor of the fall-out of cultural genocide. I experience the felt reverberations of a world war and the inheritance of the colonizer and colonized both.

The dynamics of colonialism were also played out within my family system. My father, the white settler was the outer authority to which we needed to bend and to hide the way of life that was lived in secret when he was gone. Another correlative finding of those with a high ACE score is an incidence of repeated instances of trauma later in life, a category into which I unfortunately also fall. I found many people to replace my father, keeping alive the repression and indignities of my youth. Much like the generations before me, I had been set up with a narrow bridge across a great chasm. At every step, it seemed that there were rotten boards and gusts of dangerous wind that threatened to pull me into an unknown abyss. As a teenager soon to graduate from high school, I had a moment of startling clarity in which I felt that the path that lay before me headed straight to an early death. I felt death in the daily pains in my body that have

remained chronic throughout my life and I felt it especially in the desperate need for escape. If I didn't profoundly alter my course, I thought, then I would certainly succumb to my fate, the fate predicted in the studies, of running from my inheritance, the same inheritance that had overcome my mother and her mother, and perhaps countless others before them.

The Territory of Return

Without a community structure or access to Elders, it became incumbent upon me to find my way back into connection, to what Absolon and Willet (2005) lay out as the foundations of Indigenous research, to revise, research, re-claim, re-name, re-member, reconnect, and re-cover. I had no connection to my roots. We had lost our shared language, our stories. I also had the added project of trying to resolve the inner tensions of my identity as both a White settler and Anishinaabe, as non-binary and queer. One of the most compelling sources for my own attempts to make sense of and to transform my own family's story was found in the pagan community, particularly within the Reclaiming tradition of Witchcraft. In it, I saw for myself a process of transmuting trauma into resilience, as a way to re-write the story of my childhood and my family's struggle to survive poverty, trauma, addiction, and mental and physical illness.

In modern reconstructions of shamanism, I have been able to reach backwards, looking towards a time when my own whiteness would have been colonized. In reconstructions of Norse paganism, I can begin to see the road that led my ancestors to this place and can begin to expand my imaginary to include a time when my family line would have been free of the illness that makes you want to eat up everything in the world, leaving nothing for your children or grandchildren.

Our Collective Storying of the Real

It is our stories that serve as the moral and ideological framework of our lives, our stories that make meaning out of the seemingly disparate and swirling sensations of the real (Bietti,

Tilston, & Bangerter, 2018). Yet, our stories are also not merely our own, we have a storied culture and it is the stories that we share that serve to carve out the meaning of our collective relations (King, 2003). We may look at our culture, our pedagogy, through the stories we intentionally tell our children, but take for granted the stories that they encounter in the wild, the books, movies, television shows, and internet phenomena that comprise the ordinary and everyday moments of their lives. It is this folk encounter with story that I will examine through a series of popular texts, popular texts that I will treat with all seriousness as potentially foundational stories, stories that presented me with a theoretical escape from the paradigm of capitalist materialism. My reading of these texts may be understood as occurring through the lens of a lifelong feminist, of a queer person, a believer of animist traditions, a practioner of folk magic and a person who is seeking their basic foundations within our shared life in nature. I treat the popular, the folk culture, as the theoretical centre of this pedagogy, looking at how our stories teach us into relationship with the world.

At a ritual event called *The Eagle and the Condor* (2006), held in a small local hall in Montreal, meant to unite the Indigenous peoples of Canada and South America in collective wisdom and solidarity, I was told a story. The ritual leader talked about the culture of the Earth becoming like a snake with two heads, so instead of eating its own tail, it constantly battles itself. This marks a symbolic threat to the cycle of the seasons, to the cyclical nature of all things. I was told that our life here could affect all life and that the balance on Earth was important to more than just people. It makes me think of the need to return to a sense of balance, not just for humanity but also for the more-than-human world (Abram, 1996). What we do as human beings doesn't only affect human life. We have the potential to cause untold suffering for the living world around us, to disrupt the lives and happiness of beings other than ourselves.

In my thesis, I want to tell my story but not just my story. I want to share a series of interrelated texts that have been foundational to a process of reclaiming both my spiritual heritage and my sense of agency within the world not just as an individual but as a member of the world and I want to talk about how these texts became part of a search for a path back into connection. Having no sense of mooring, little guidance, and a great deal of harm to unpackage, I took and take messages from the world as a kind of dialogue with spirit. Sometimes messages come in the form of popular media, and the media I discuss here have each served as integral pieces in a process of rediscovery and reclamation. Through Witchcraft, I have sought to recast myself from a victim of trauma to a survivor. It has felt like re-learning a hidden language. I believe that within settler culture, there are emancipatory clues, directions to another world. Within the toxic mess we have found ourselves in, there exist the echoes of connection. There are hidden stories that hold the felt knowledge of our place on the Earth and it feels that if I listen closely enough, I can hear the voices of my ancestors speaking to me through lost fragments scattered throughout a culture that absorbs and eats whatever it comes into contact with. The stories of our shared legacy are there still, somewhere in the digestive tract of a Catholicism that ate early Indigenous cultures, in a politics that established itself upon the Iroquois Confederacy (Unites States Select Committee on Indian Affairs, 1988).

Growing up in isolation, I did not have the ability to connect with community but as we see the world over, Witchcraft and paganism plant seeds in those who lack connection to community within their immediate locale, both through the imitation of those practices and philosophies found in popular media texts, such as the ones explored here, but also through an increasing availability and accessibility of literature on the subject (Schutten, 2006). In my youth, the internet, movies, and television were my gateways into a larger intellectual and

spiritual tradition. Movies like *The Craft* (Wick, 1996) became touchstones in my process, of constructing an emancipatory imaginary. A movie showed me not only could young girls control their own experiences, but they could appeal directly to forces beyond culture and society and connect with the greater mysteries of nature without a mediating structure. Both of the main characters in *The Craft* experience trauma and use Witchcraft as a means of redressing the external structures that created their trauma. Their magic weaves their experience into a larger tapestry of both personal and social harm that the film radically suggests we might actually be able to encounter and transform.

A foundational document of Reclaiming Witchcraft, entitled *The Principles of Unity*, states, "Our ultimate spiritual authority is within, and we need no other person to interpret the sacred to us." It says, "We know that everyone can do the life-changing, world-renewing work of magic, the art of changing consciousness at will" (BIRCH council, 2018, para 5). In my coven, I began to understand my trauma, but more importantly, I began a decade-long search for a means of being in the world, with community, of sharing my own wisdom with those who came after me, and of finding the authentic ground of my own unique experience. I have striven to take part in the work "to help to heal the wounds of the earth and her peoples" (BIRCH council, 2018, para 8). Circle was the place where I constructed my identity as a teacher, where I developed my pedagogy, where I engaged in leadership, healing, friendship, and forging connection with the natural world.

Starhawk is considered a foundational leader of the Reclaiming movement (Starhawk, 2020), an eco-feminist form of spirituality that uniquely attempts to unify spirituality with the pursuit of justice, both social and ecological, through political activism. In a particularly dark time in my life, I came across her novel *The Fifth Sacred Thing* (Starhawk, 1993). I tore through

that book just as it tore through me. I felt rewritten. It is a book that models a fictional future

society based on Starhawk's own experiences with non-violence, and peace and anti-nuclear

activism. It presents a radical form of human freedom, one that I had never felt before, or even

imagined possible. It wasn't so much the metrics of such a world as it was the evocation of felt

instances of reality in which the characters felt free to pursue their creative inclinations, where

food, water, and housing were freely given. I felt my heart breaking open reading her words and

it left me changed. As someone experiencing housing and food insecurity, it was in this

particular moment in time where the story shined a light onto my pain. It made another world

seem possible, a world that I still believe in. The mere idea blew open my imaginary, it planted a

seed. I believe in the radical possibility of total social reformation. The felt reality of this

narrative helps to guide my practice in a heart-centred way, in a way that leads towards a vision

of collective freedom through mutual-aid, and of freedom through interdependence.

In speaking of texts I encountered in the world, I also discuss texts that I currently

encounter in the everyday and that have a deep impact on my daily experience. Memes have the

potential to carry explosive bundles of meaning; they can whisper heretical messages about

giving up one's dedication to work-fetishism, they can advocate radical self-care, they can mock

and deride the overarching structures of patriarchy and capitalism, and lastly, they can present a

potential opening for the destruction of the oppressive structures that continue to stifle and

suppress our spirits. In these seemingly innocuous packets, I find myself tethered to a community

of downtrodden who feed each other on momentary instances of powerful hopeful imaginaries

that seem to whisper in our half-sleeping ears, "Remember that a better world is possible.

Remember. Remember."

A Pedagogy of Immanence

Towards the end of my first Witchcamp, one of my newfound friends and I ventured up onto the ritual ground. We did a ritual on the field, just the two of us. It was a grey day and there was a wind that ruffled the billowing fabric in my dress. Earlier, I had taught him a playful way of dispelling energy by running around, wiggling our bodies, shrieking, and giggling like children. With no one watching us, we ran around the field until we lost our breath and I remember looking at him. At that moment, I could see myself the way another person saw me. In one startling moment, I was the woman that I might become, the fear and trauma were gone and nothing was left but the wild and uncontained power of my true personality, alive like an animal. It was one of the few moments in my life when I was able to sit within myself, needing absolutely nothing, feeling utterly complete. It is the texts that carried me towards these moments of wholeness that I wish to document here, texts that gave way to moments that served to embed me within my body which is within a world. It is not transcendence from the world that I sought, but rather, the transcendence of the oppression embedded within my body, that kept me from reaching towards pleasure and imprisoned me within relations of non-consent at the whims of those is power. It is not a transcendence of, but a rooting through and in, that is presented here, a freedom that comes from being connected within and with the world. The theories that I present here stem from the most important texts of my life. I attempt to create a kind of embodied theory, a pedagogy of immanence that illustrates an inward journey, into the centre not just of the self, but of the self within the web-of-being that encompasses all life.

The pedagogy of immanence is a denial of an individuation that finds itself through a severing of connection (Benjamin, 1986). Rather, it seeks to recast humanity as *of* the world and in being with this world that we find ourselves revealed. We find ourselves through the world as we are, an emergent quality of the Earth and in embracing our immanence we may take our place

within a network of relations. The pedagogy of immanence is a realization of what is, a reawakening to the deeply felt, resonant relationships between living and moving beings. It is a remembering of the indebtedness we have to the Earth itself, one that requires of us to replenish and restore through a habitual reinvestment of energy into its systems and harmonies, but which also involves the embrace of human pleasure as another form of ecological health. The pedagogy is a push towards witnessing all life *in* and *of* the world as fundamental and inextricable from human happiness. It is a realization that our health *is* the health of the world; that I am the world and it is me and it is only through the world, in conversation with the world that I may become the truest embodiment of my authentic self.

As I come to know myself more and more profoundly, I have continually found my relations close-by. It is through a process of inner discovery that I may attempt to create a guide for thinking and, more importantly, of feeling through this path, to suggest, entice, and enchant. I have intentionally avoided closure in the thoughts and feelings presented here as they are not meant to present a completed process but rather an invitation to a journey. It is through my words that I attempt to evoke an opening in the mire, the oppression, the blindness of our indoctrination into materialist-capitalism both as a system and a way of life. I don't suggest that I have found a way out but rather suggest, merely, that there *is* a way out and that we can look for it, collectively.

Chapter 2: Embodied methodology
Autoethnography as transpersonal emancipatory gnosis

Due to my ancestry, I am drawn to a process of Indigenous research and in this vein, I comingle the felt, spiritual, and embodied aspects of my study with resonant forms of Western methodological approaches. These include critical realist grounded theory (Oliver, 2012) and

transpersonal psychology (Anderson, 2001), which I use in a search for connection through a broader lens to our collective inheritance as Western subjects, of the oppression endemic to a modern, capitalist, and industrial order. Yet, I also centre popular texts in the tradition of cultural studies (Hall, 2001), at times offering a resistant reading and at other times a search for hermeneutic depth through an engagement with polysemy (Ceccarelli, 1998), in a dance with the multiple and deep ways that a text can be understood. In addition to this, I engage in a reading that draws upon and aligns with a psychoanalytic feminist recasting of desire, of understanding feminine eroticism, being, and power (Benjamin, 1986) within my own approach to the world as a web of relationships.

In all, I have attempted to find a blend of methods that, firstly, centre the body and spirit as the fundamental ground in the process of discovery, creating space for autoethnographic narrative inquiry (see McIvor, 2010; Ellis, 2009) and, finally, that introduce a process by which I may enter into a form of transpersonal gnosis as a means of resisting, in particular, the Western tendency towards strict intellectualization (Thanasoulas, 1999). In this pursuit, I seek a way of testing the boundaries of personal experience, by pursuing the notion that if I go deeply enough within, I may begin to encounter the space in which I am touched by and may touch upon the other. Yet, gnosis here also suggests a connection to the inexplicable or a-rational at the heart of this pedagogy. So, while I may be able to point toward common feeling in the experience of humanity, there will always be an unknown at the edge of our comprehension to which I may only hint at and which one may only experience directly, through the body. It is this that I reach for with my hands waving out before me in the darkness and this that I will never find because in being found, it is destroyed. Thus, I hint and suggest, engaging in a dance with the unknown that exists as an invitation to curiosity.

Popular Texts and Feminist Revisions

In attempting to visit the stories of my own becoming, it became necessary to engage with popular texts, texts that participated in my education despite themselves, or perhaps precisely because of their nature as accessible and pleasurable. I engage with the texts as I did as a child, living in the feelings that they stir in me and also, in an act of playfulness as an adult, remembering being a child. Ott (2004) says that, "children *create rules as a form of play*–rules that frequently change as quickly as do their desires. In short, children's play values immediate gratification and personal inventiveness over inherited tradition and predetermined cultural meanings" (p. 204, italics in original). In this way, I have sought to engage in a playful and formless way in the realm of what Barthes would refer to as the connotative (see Barthes 1972; Gómez, 2017) or the symbolic, mythic level of language. This is as much an attempt to come to terms with my own latent and unspoken yearnings as it is a drive to play with, challenge, and entice the imaginary into engagement with an unknown that, perhaps, even I cannot admit to.

I engage with the connotative or mythic implications of each text as a product in and of themselves. When Hall (2001) speaks of the discursive form as ending in consumption only when the meaning has been derived, in elevating the meaning as well as the felt effect of that meaning, I bring into prominence the felt reverberations of meaning-making, rendering the texts as complete artefacts through my processing of them. I elevate the popular to the status of what might otherwise be understood as "high culture" but would more aptly be understood as just culture, by engaging with it in a deep way and seeing within it the seeds of transgressive undoing that are carried within them like dandelion seeds on the wind.

Storey (2012) suggests that reading and attempting to comprehend popular media becomes critical to understanding certain types of reality. The felt experience of the daily may be acted upon as a text, one where one may enter into the mundane with an inward eye and open

hands, welcoming meaning to emerge. I look towards my own becoming as a study, centred in my being as non-binary, encultured as a woman. I resist myself in my reading, attempting to undo and redo the process of learning that sees itself through the eyes and the mind of the patriarchy, as an-other, an alien, a beast, a woman. Instead, I seek to find in the texts of my own identity, a new kind of centre, a new locus for desire, one that finds its meaning in interiority existing with the other; not as a power over, but a power *with* (Benjamin,1986). It is this that I had been seeking in these texts and this that is whispered and buried within them, the seeds of a new humanity.

Embodiment, Writing Into Knowing

As I write, I began to engage in a process known in transpersonal psychology as embodied writing, which Anderson (2001) says,

> … is itself an act of embodiment. Nature feels close and dear. Writers attune to the movements of water, earth, air, and fire, which coax our bodily senses to explore. When embodied writing is attuned to the physical senses, it becomes not only a skill appropriate to research, but a pathway of transformation that nourishes an enlivened sense of presence in and of the world. (p. 83)

Engaging through this process serves to embed the more theoretical aspects of the work into the felt, affective realm of the body, de-centring the conceptual and cerebral process of theorization and coupling it with the processes of intuitive and spiritual knowing that may become manifest through the felt sensations.

This recognition of being in and of the body also aligns closely with Indigenous methods of knowing. McIvor (2010), a member of the Swampy Cree nation, says that being in the body, "assists with a quest to connect with spirit and the spirit-world; many messages, gifts, and teachings are offered to us in non-verbal, non-cerebral pathways" (p. 143). We attune to the body

when we wish to develop the kind of knowledge that comes from direct engagement with the world, which also involves the felt reality of spirit and all that entails. The world of the spirit may not be adequately captured in words. It must be experienced directly and thus, the body becomes the primary site of engagement, in fact, the only means for attaining gnosis. It is in the act of translating the experience of bodily gnosis that one then attempts to reach out and to connect with other felt experiences, to achieve affective resonance through embodied, sensual narrative form and poetics.

In this piece of writing, I engage in the construction of what Ellis (2004) calls a "realist story," which is presented in a series of theoretical texts threaded with personal narrative. I felt it important to begin by laying out my process through a location piece as suggested by Absolon and Willett (2005) in their chapter, "Putting Ourselves Forward" as well as by McIvor (2010) who asserts that Indigenous research must profoundly centre the self as the fulcrum of a web of relationships. Pelias, in Ellis et al. (2010), says that we may deal with the Western devaluation of "navel-gazing" through the recognition that "the navel tells the story of our first connection to another" (p. 324). Telling our own stories need not necessarily result in a kind of empty solipsism. In looking at the self as a relational being, a crossroads, we begin to see the potential for autoethnography, for stories of the self to reveal a deeper sense of the interrelatedness of the self within a world. Anderson (2001) suggests that, "Relaying human experience *from the inside out* and entwining in words our senses with the senses of the world," we may find that "embodied writing affirms human life as embedded in the sensual world in which we live our lives" (p. 83, italics in original). It is in this way that a certain kind of inquiry, which includes embodied writing, might help to place the process of inquiry itself into a matrix of connectivity

and through this process of coming to know, speak to a deeper sense of interconnectedness, a

larger web of being.

McIvor (2010) states that in telling his own story,

I also believe that my story is one of an untold generation–a generation that may feel that

they have nothing useful to say because we do not have the language… I hope that my

story will bring voice to a generation lost. Lost without our language. Lost without our

grandparents and their teachings. Lost without land and traditional food to nourish our

mind-body-spirit. But especially for those who have not lost hope. (p. 148)

We, both Western and Indigenous alike, tell our stories to connect to larger cultural forces, to

draw emphasis towards broader connections. However, in the case of Indigenous communities,

in the loss of our language, our stories, and our lands of origin, we may subsequently become

dislocated and groundless. What does it mean to be Indigenous when one does not know or

understand that land from which we came? In telling my own story through the lens of those

narratives that have shaped my own life, I hope to speak to one experience of the relational

world, shedding light on my discovery of a path back to the land, and perhaps giving hope to

those who have a similar path to walk.

Methods of Inquiry and The Limits of Knowledge

Throughout this process, I have followed a methodology akin to that of grounded theory,

as Strauss and Corbin (1994) say it "demand[s] an openness of the researcher, based on the

'forever' provisional character of every theory. For all that, grounded theories are not just

another set of phrases; rather, they are systematic statements of plausible relationships" (p. 279).

As I reflected on each text and began my analysis, I became sensitized to their connections, not

strictly through a process of coding per se, but in an embodied sense of relationality. I began to

seek out fellow feeling in the readings I would encounter and would become informed within the

process of inquiry. My time became a window within which, what Konecki (2019) calls, "serendipity" (p. 17) would occur. Conversations within my community, meditative insights, dreams, and chance encounters all become woven into the process of coming to know. Conceptual shapes hit upon an embodied resonance, suggesting an affective pairing.

In this process, my body becomes the matrix through which materials flow and become processed. Konecki (1994) says that our bodies may give us clearer and more immediate insight into what is happening both inside and outside of us, but more importantly, what is happening in the space where those two worlds meet. He goes on the state that the body itself is often the determining factor of how we relate to, and perceive, the world around us. Conceptual understandings from my readings become activated through praxis by engaging with and through the concepts into relationship through the lived instances of connection that occur during the period of study. A process of discovery involves a sensitization to the body as a means of detecting and processing instances of serendipity, making connections and drawing conclusions from spontaneous instances of personal gnosis. It becomes a process of process of rooting as well, a deep interrogation of the self and conceptions of the self. Therefore, the body leads the way in an engagement of non-self, of looking towards the connective matrix of being and attempting to transcend the particularities of what is "me."

Beyond the understanding of the whys and wherefores of my own personal experience, I have a desire to delve into a sense of the potential that these experiences have in sowing the seeds of future moments of transcendence. When thinking from a pedagogical standpoint, I wonder, how then can these experiences be transposed into a methodology? In the linked concepts of transpersonal psychology and its focus on "embodiment and integration of these states into everyday life" (Davis, 2003, p. 7) and critical realism (Oliver, 2012), I have sought a

means for turning the personal towards the transpersonal. For there are aspects of the personal that may easily become something more through reflections that lean towards the shared and potentially "objective" ground of experience.

In my own process of self-discovery and potential for self-transcendence, I continually attempt to direct my gaze at the reality that emerges into experience. I attempt to lay the groundwork for a perspective that orients one towards a direct encounter with *the world*, all the while recognizing, as Oliver (20120) suggests, that

> all description of that reality is mediated through the filters of language, meaning-making
> and social context. It is impossible to step outside our own perspective-ism and so the gap
> between the real world and our knowledge of it can never be closed. (p. 374)

I maintain the perspective that there *is* something to be known, a substance or spirit that unites all matter and energy into a single unmediated reality. However limited our grasp may be, however limited the language we have to explain it, I contend that in our personal and sensual engagement with it, we may hold within ourselves a more profound understanding than may be expressed in words, one that may be able to unite humanity with the more-than-human across the divide of individual consciousness.

Social Structure and Emancipatory Narratives

On a more mundane and practical level, I seek to engage with and describe the social world in which we live, especially structures of power and control within which we enact our social relationships. Though the social imaginary (Taylor, 2004) our practical ability towards agency is either buttressed or thwarted by what we imagine to be possible and what we imagine to be possible is largely structured upon what we have seen but also what we have been told. It is in this space of the possible that we begin to engage with the social mechanisms that take root within our lifeworlds and thus within the pre-figurative imagination (see Johnson, 1987; Ezzy,

1998). It is this space that is referred to when I am speaking about our bodies mediate our sense of the world around us.

There is an embodied sense of the real and within that, the potential for what may become real. I seek to reach beyond even my own limitations and thus attempt to utilize my body as a means of reaching beyond it, to engage in a contemplative and engaged social praxis rooted within the body that may serve to process the social imaginary, to hint towards the potential for something more. Oliver (2012) points to the process of "retroduction" to explain how critical realist grounded theory reaches towards an answer to the question, "what must be true for this to be the case" (p. 379)? He says that we take what we know and try to understand the pediment upon which it stands, to follow the structure to the limit, to attempt to abstract a truer understanding of the way the world operates. As Oliver suggests, "It allows the theorizing to go beyond what is immediately knowable but maintains an obligation to test that theorizing in the crucible of real-world experience and against competing theories" (Oliver, 2012, p. 375). When we bring the abstraction back into praxis, into relation through the felt material of the senses and into the space of serendipity, we can begin to build upon the affective categorizations and reach towards the transcendent.

It is not only a description of phenomena that is important, but the emancipatory meaning behind it. It is not just an attempt to know the mechanisms by which I have my own relationship with the more-than-human world but also a theorizing of how we may come to know the world again as human beings. Yet, I agree with Oliver who writes, "The best we can hope for is to uncover approximate evidence of tendencies rather than proofs allowing prediction" (p. 375). What I attempt to create here is not *the* means, but rather *a* means for a return to nature.

THE WITCH

Conclusion

Proper representation of the means for attaining spiritual gnosis or of direct connection with the natural world may be impossible to represent in language but I hope that in utilizing personal, embodied tools that I may inspire a shared affective resonance that may lead to a common understanding, one that may point to a potential opening, to seduce into relation through re-enchantment. I attempt to avoid a show of intellectual force that comes from a strict rationalist paradigm. I cannot possibly fit my spiritual knowledge into a neat package, but I can hint towards a way where others may feel inspired to walk.

The methods that I have utilized here are deeply personal, grounded largely in a serendipity. In the search for meaning through the self and in the environment, I begin by bringing myself into communion with the web and framework within the relations that surround me. When I engage in research in relation, I begin to follow the threads of my own connection to larger worlds that make up the reason of connection. I believe that it is through the world that we may begin to find ourselves and in asking the world to reveal itself, of waiting patiently within the present moment for a hint of life to make itself manifest, that we may live in connection. It is the reason of connection that I am attempting to articulate here, the reason of my own life and the foundations of my own identity as brought forth into the world by the texts of my world, by the stories that have become my own. It is only then, in the process of discovery, that I begin to seek the roots of these connections and in following them down into the habitus and systemic that I begin to theorize towards an embodied methodology of resistance that comes from a radical shift in the centre, in occupying a new space of being. This is the space that we reach from, into the new, reaching into connection with our relations and becoming a new a tether whereby to ground a new world.

Chapter 3: Witches, Archetypes, and Ecological Immanence
A Review of Literature

Here I provide a view of the thinkers that undergird this theory of an immanent

ecological identity pursued through a narrativizing of the witch archetype. The archetypes of the

wolf (Raphael, 1997) and the cyborg (Haraway, 1996; 2016) are expanded upon in later chapters

as two sides of a coin, of the extremes of the intersections of nature and culture upon human

identity, and as sub-categories of liminal, shapeshifting, transformative forces that present further

potential for social transformation. In the pursuit of these notions, I necessarily engage with a

wide array of interdisciplinary scholarship ranging from psychology, sociology, and philosophy

to media studies, studies of technology, and folk religious belief. I will speak to those authors

and concepts that have shaped my thinking, and who have also offered a foundation for thinking

like mine to exist.

I organize this review into three related sections: the first is the ecopedagogy of narrative

identity, which seeks to place humanity's locus within nature; the second deals with narrative

identity and archetype, engaging with how both stories and archetypes open up new formulations

of human identity and relation; and the last is the witch archetype specifically and its relationship

to alienation and re-enchantment, delveing into how the archetype of the witch might be

specially situated within the construction of an eco-narrative of human identity. To conclude this

chapter, I present a kind of manifesto for a movement towards a transgressive enchantment of

human life as an emergent part of a living ecosystem.

The Ecopedagogy of Narrative Identity

The concept of pedagogy throughout this piece is grounded in learning as activated

through encounters with the world. In transhumanist psychology, which Davis (2003) describes

as centred around "nonduality, self-transcendence, and optimal human development and mental

health" with its main practices involving "mediation and ritual" (p. 7), I have found the means to

ground the narrative media objects in this study, centred around archetypal stories as part of real

human encounters. Stories that we are exposed to become parts of our cultural imaginary; they

become rooted within the lifeworld of the individual (Habbermas, 1987), telling us what is

possible, what we may become and do.

I wield the concept of eco-pedagogy not so much in a moral or ideological sense, but

rather by a narrative situatedness within a world in which nature and humankind have become

continuous. A transpersonal eco-pedagogy embraces Maslow's (1959) concept of B-cognition,

which he says frees a person

> … from the deficiency problems of growth, and from the neurotic (or infantile, or
>
> fantasy, or unnecessary, or "unreal") problems of life, so that he [sic] is able to face,
>
> endure and grapple with the "real" problems of life (the intrinsically and ultimately
>
> human problems, the unavoidable, the "existential" problems to which there is no perfect
>
> solution). (p. 24)

B-cognition is a type of thinking that centres around the "essence, or is-ness" (p. 25). Yet, a

transpersonal eco-pedagogy is not relegated exclusively to B-cognition, it also engages with

D-cognition, namely cognition that focuses on separation, or needs and drives towards something

that isn't in the now. It is on the level of D-cognition that one may engage on the level of the

imaginary, in the fantasy world and in the projection of what *could be*, that one may open up

potentialities for B-cognition, for the engagement with the real and for the undoing of unjust,

oppressive structures that come from an excess of culture.

In the description of ecological relations, I often choose to use Abram's (1996) term, the

"more-than-human world" not only as a nod to his work in the field of the somatic experience of

nature but also to expand into the vastness of what that phrase encompasses, which operates from a groundwork of interdependence, of human life within a world that encompasses much more than us. According to Kahn (2010), eco-pedagogy itself is a continuation of Freire's (1990) critical pedagogy, going one step further through its embrace of a sense of "biophilia" (Kahn, 2010, p. 18) or a love of all life. Its focus is not merely on nurturing justice among people but also between people and the world. Thus, inspiring a love of the world and a sense of justice for all beings and things within the world becomes a central motivating force of any eco-pedagogy. It is this focus on the more-than-human that begins to welcome in the disparate needs and desires of a world other than us, into our own sense of what may and should be.

This leads one to the process of forging these connections within the individual and to the world at large. My focus on narrative identity grounds itself within this framework by engaging in what Bartunek and Moch (1994) refer to as a process of "third-order change," which is change that transcends the schemata of everyday systems into a state of transconceptual awareness in which the unknown may be encountered and new meanings may spontaneously emerge. Spontaneous new orders are then be grounded within "second-order changes," addressing the structural foundations of culture within the lived moment. I argue that if we can change our stories and who we are as individuals within those stories, new concrete relations may emerge from new positionalities.

Media narratives and archetypes may act as a means of peering into the narrative positioning of the human being within a field of interdependence but also in reaching beyond even the structural understandings of human beings within a world, looking towards the possible to create new modes of being never before conceptualized. Narratives, in this view, become a hybridized form of eco-pedagogy, a form of media narrative but also as a philosophical model

for human creativity. Hoeschmann and Poyntz (2012) open up critical possibilities for thinking

about popular media. They speak about popular media as a form of pedagogy that can serve as a

relational medium, one that situates itself in the interstice between a human being and their

agency to act upon the world, creating affordances for new ways of thinking, learning, and

interacting.

Bandura's (1971) social learning theory also advances the notion that an individual's

ability to observe behaviour in the outside world, and to represent such behaviour symbolically

within the mind, allows for a meta-experience, a means of expanding one's sense of the possible.

Thus, an eco-pedagogy represented through media narratives is one that offers us radical

exemplars of behaviour and being that may be utilized as learning material, internalized, and

applied perhaps to identity or more importantly, to a process of transpersonal engagement with

the more-than-human world.

Narrative Identity and Archetype

Identity is precipitated by the somatic experience of being. This resembles what

Heidegger (1953) refers to as *DaSein*, an experiential alive-ness that prefigures the conscious or

thinking mind. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe a similar formulation of identity, as a kind

of hazy nucleus from which there emerge certain configurations of desire that presuppose action

in the world. Within this pre-thematic miasmic sense of reality, Ricoeur's (1983; 1991) concept

of the hermeneutical process of narrative and identity takes form, which Ezzy (1998) describes

as operating through a process of "prefiguration, configuration, and refiguration" (p. 244). Where

there comes first the experience of being, this itself is prefigured through previously established

symbolic connections that serve as the building blocks of the narrative imagination, which then

goes on to become configured and refigured through a process that is both personally and

communally mediated and that is constructed to create self-continuity over time. The prefigured

symbolic imagination can also be understood through Bourdieu's' (1977) concept of the habitus wherein external political and cultural values become rooted within the body, becoming activated through momentary interactions between the individual and the social world. It is this prefigurative imagination that becomes ossified through experience and that, in times of novel crisis or deep transformational upheaval, requires plasticity in order to invent radical new orders of being.

Goffman's (1961) work on identity as occurring within asylums and penitentiaries describes how our institutions affect identity by placing individuals within narrow environmental affordances that restrict how a person's identity may be acted out. The crux between affordances and our range of expression within them, exemplifies the interstice of affordances and the habitus as well as serving as the theatre for Laing's (1967) philosophical thoughts on the 'real'. He reflects on the political nature of *reality* as systematically asserted hierarchically, moving from those who are identified as sane towards those who are identified as insane by the social order of the day. Distinctions such as these have the danger of leading to realities in which an individual may become classified as insane, or their experience as *not real*, due to overarching political narratives such as in the case in instances when normative human emotions, identities, and even cultures become rejected and thus, pathologized (see Bell, 2007; Pupavac, 2002; Wagner, 1994; De Block & Adriaens, 2013).

In my own experience, traumatic events that have occurred within a situation wherein I was unable to escape or to change my circumstances led to an incredible stress and consequent symptoms of that stress, which perhaps manifested in either depression, insecurity, or anxiety. My feelings have been medicalized since early childhood, described as a chemical imbalance rather than a rational reaction to extreme life circumstances. The fallout of extreme life

experiences has required a lengthy processing, of healing and reconnection, of contemplation of and coming to terms with the new real. I have often struggled to find the resources to engage in this process within the current configuration of our social world and was required to make exceptional contortions in order to be able to take the space to heal. I ask, what is a 'normal' reaction to an insane circumstance? The question itself points towards the fissures in the classification of insane and sane, irrational and rational, weird and normal. Without requiring the firsthand experience of institutionalization, other social structures from schools to political affiliations can be seen to create affordances, embedding the habitus of the human-world within the individual bodies of its denizens and thus shaping the daily actions and eventually, the identity of the individual. We have all been shaped by the social world in which we live and it is this world that then touches upon our imaginations, creating the boundaries around what we consider to be possible.

In trying to reach into and perhaps bring back descriptions from the edges of the unknown, one may assemble aspects of the familiar into new formulations. Jameson's (1991) concept of the pastiche is described as a fragmented imitation that is not used with an awareness of its referents but rather as a method of mixing and matching cultural signifiers without the added baggage of awareness about their origins. This allows for the flexible use of cultural signifiers without the needs for tethers, to assemble witch's hats and hieroglyphs like one would a poem, juxtaposing and working with the implied or emotional value of each symbolic reference to describe something unseen.

Winczewski (2010) warns that identity constructed via a process of postmodern pastiche can result in the dissolution of that identity through a loss of interiority. A person may lose touch with who they are through taking on too many referents from the outside world. Yet, Deleuze

and Guattari's (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus*, complete with an apt subtitle, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, looks at the dissolution of identity structures from a more optimistic viewpoint, one that sees merit in the abandonment of strict delineations of self, favouring instead the emergent quality of self that coalesces through desiring motivations in differing configurations across time. Winczewski (2010) refers to identity pastiche as a form of assemblage that lacks orientational boundaries, which in schizophrenia is exhibited as a loss of interiority through the subsequent loss of internal cohesion. Yet, in employing Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) notion of a "minor literature," we can see that there is the potential for a newly formed sense of cohesion to be created from an assemblage or pastiche created out of the referents of a "major literature." We may see a major literature as, perhaps, the stories, tropes, imaginaries, and dreams of Western Culture. A minor literature is one nested within the larger body but more than that, it is a literature that lacks definition, one that has potential routes of escape and that abhors closure (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983). It could be considered the language of outcasts, the hunted, and despised. The lack of closure described by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) allows for a definition to be created that escapes definition and thus, I posit, creating an opening for a sense of self that may escape closure from a potentially colonizing force, such as is the case in Western settler culture.

Under this framework, pastiche can serve as a means of constructing a coherent sub-narrative out of larger narrative body. This may take the form of identity pieces, which may allow for forms of identificatory cohesion that might have been otherwise excluded by structures that prohibit an authentic sense of being for cultural outsiders, the colonized, or the mad. Access to radical new avenues of expression allow for authentic identities to emerge. From the point of view of a minority within a majority, a nested sense of sanity may appear insane, a sense of

rationality may appear irrational. Yet, it also creates potential routes of escape from latent insanity, irrationality, and pathology contained within an ecocidal, hegemonic social order. It may allow for minority sentiments, among them the development of biophilia that would perhaps be otherwise extinguished by overarching distinctions between humankind and nature as a series of objects in instrumental service to 'man.' These escape routes propose a methodological path for "third-order change" (Bartunek & Moch, 1994) to take place. The narrative structure that I propose is based on shifting ground, an ecological perspective that emerges from the felt moment, from a sense of exile from current narratives of meaning and sense while still being semiotically moored within them.

Morton (2007) says, "If we could not merely figure out but actually experience the fact that we were embedded in our world, then we would be less likely to destroy it." (p. 64) This perspective not only emphasizes the being-ness of ecological relation but also a flattening of the divide between human and nature, an ecology of all that excludes nothing. This sentiment is reflected in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) plane of immanence, which rejects the distinction between human and more-than-human, locating humans within a network of moving parts, desires, motivations, and actions, all emerging and becoming within a protean messiness that becomes and undoes itself across the limits of time and space. It is not merely that we must become moored within the more-than-human but we must become habituated to the shifting and continuous dialogue between beings and forces within the more-than-human-world. A situatedness-in-relation is not one that may become ontologically stagnant. Instead, it necessitates a lively engagement with a continually evolving desiring impetus within a present moment encounter.

Buber's (2008) I-Thou relationship lays out the foundation for how one might begin to engage in a lively way of being, bringing a theory of immanence into praxis. In the I-Thou relation, the individual engages with the more-than-human from a sense of the unknown, becoming present to the moment until such a time that the thinking mind can become suspended within the engagement. At this moment, two being-nesses may come into conversation with one another, acknowledging the separate but continuous nature of inter-being. Buber believed it possible to engage in a mode of present-moment attention that engaged with the prefigurative sense of being-ness in such a way that any conscious sense of both narrative and subjective or literary distinctions melted into a shifting and dynamic somatic experience of the other refracted through the experience itself. This form of being becomes situated at the level of sense-perception, which gives way to a direct experience of the 'thou' of the world as a relationship in which there is no distinct boundary and to which time may shape, change, and evolve a living relationship between horizontal feeling and perceiving subjects. It is here that one becomes open; one's imagination becomes open to possibility. This is also captured in Csikszentimihliyi's (2008) notion of the flow state, which in itself is a complete loop or an "autotelic experience" (p. 67), an end in itself. Adrift in the stream of sensuous experience, within a present moment experience of direct relation, we can achieve a measure of wholeness.

It is this specific process that the narratives here are pointing towards and attempting to describe. It is being-in-relation that is the ultimate purpose of an ecopedagogy of immanence and it is this state of being, I argue, that is expressed by the archetype of the witch. It is engagement as a natural being, as someone who may hold within themselves the power to touch and to affect reality, as someone who may grow in direct relationship with the world and the beings in it through a present-moment awareness of an autotelic act of engaged attention.

When thinking about Bandura's (1971) sense of how we internalize both problems and possibilities acted out in our environments in lieu of personal experience, we may consider the archetype as an aspect of narrative pedagogy, as a way of understanding of one's place within the world through what Bartunek and Moch (1994) call analogical communication, which is central to second-order change, change that takes place on the level of schemata. Stories help to expand our sense of the possible by showing us potential paths of engagement. Yet, we require more than the ability to shift our schemata through demonstrated possibilities. To truly engage the transformative potential required to reshape human engagement with the more-than-human world, we need to rise above the schemata into the transconceptual, to see beyond the edges into the great unknown.

The Witch Archetype: Alienation and Re-Enchantment

Jung (1981) in his book, *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* refers to archetypes as complete concepts. They point to something beyond the individual experience that is passed down through stories. Archetypes may represent notions stored in the prefigurative imagination, a form of deep humanity. They are, perhaps, another attempt to encapsulate something that cannot be otherwise bounded within language. I wield the archetype of the witch but I resist making it fully fleshed or pinned down. I allow the concept of the witch to flexibly adapt as well as to remain semiotically open-ended in the way that it exists within the narratives I will be examining, hinting towards a reality that is never fully encapsulated. I ground the theory of the witch within Strengers' (2012) new animism as a theory that eschews narrative closure in favour of an open-ended and living thought. I wield these stories as illustrations of the potential of the archetype, as puzzle-pieces, fragments, or a pastiche that may be embodied as an identity or used as a tool for the expansion of the imagination, which may serve to create new potentials within an unfolding present moment reality.

I juxtapose the archetype of the witch with other archetypal imaginaries in order to explore the semiotic richness of the subject matter. I explore Cixous's (1986) notion of both the sorceress and the hysteric, for one. In the *Newly Born Woman*, Cixous discusses these two archetypes as forms of transgressive feminine identity. Both figures bring forth an aspect of that which has been effectively repressed by the Western mentality, namely the identificatory power of nature (via the sorceress) that may serve to heal the trauma of the schism between human and nature (via the hysteric). The very existence of these archetypes is transgressive for Cixous in that their natures confront the blindness of Western rationalism towards the emotional, subjective, and a-rational world and the perceived chaos of a natural order that remains beyond the capacity of the human mind to conceptualize and, therefore, to capture and control. The sorceress carries within herself the potential of feminine power, linked with a nature that is beyond capture. Her power also suggests the mystery of the semiotic uncertainty, of transformative potential. In the hysteric, we see the embodied physical and psychological effects of modern dissociation brought into the light through the inescapable insistence of her disorder. In the two poles, we also have the two outcomes of the process of identificatory pastiche, the empowerment of the individual to recreate reality and the dissolution of the individual into madness.

Engaging with the highly rational and materialistic Western ethos, Taylor's (1995) asserts that the modern is something we often assume to be a-cultural, resulting from a process of getting rid of old beliefs in favour of a purer form of rationalism. The problem in this, he says, is that we then assume that we in the West, lack a kind of moral framework or standpoint, misattributing scientific understandings of fact with speculation about moral value within the modern imaginary. In this way, I believe that in bringing forward the notion that our culture has

a subjective lens, we may consider and reflect upon the implicit values embedded within a secular-materialist paradigm. I assert that we have cannot possibly reach the bedrock of human experience and are not the way we are because it is the most natural or logical outcome. Does an end even exist, where we may land upon the ground of human experience, comprehending the totality of what it means to live a mortal life? The witch has the power to subvert the so-called and false 'logic' of the modern by tapping into something more essential in the process. This 'essence' is not some totalizing force like might be asserted by hierarchical, materialist thinking, but rather, it is a core power that manifests differently in all beings. Its essential-ness comes from access to the universal force, the creator, the center of all-being as something that we have in common; it lies within or underneath the social conditioning, the stories, the imaginaries of our worlds. In opening up and developing a capacity for direct contact and communication with the more-than-human world, one may also become open to a transpersonal experience of interbeing, an intimacy and immediacy that, I argue, may then bring about a biophilic revolution.

The witch occupies the mythic imagination, as someone who can connect with an unknown source of power that emerges from within her body. The archetype could perhaps be described as iconoclastic, yet it is also often represented as participating in rites with fellow practitioners. We have the fanciful descriptions of the Witches Sabbat contained in Sprengers (2009/1487) Malleus Maleficarum, or *The Hammer of the Witches* where they gather together to make paste out of the bones of children and baptismal water. The figure of the witch balances between the precipice of individualism and community but in a way that manifests as dangerous to the status quo of the society in which they reside. They represent a potentially fruitful genesis of power that originates from within individual and exiled group identity. In Said's (2013) notion of the exile, the exile remains alienated from the social order, becoming protective of their state

as one of the only things that they have control over and special claim to. Yet, exile is also identified through the intensity of the love of the place from which they have been ejected. The witch thus exists on the periphery but need not be an outsider; instead, they may serve a vital function, as a bringer of divine chaos. The figure of the witch can bring change, acting as the midwife to the painful process of third-order transformation. While privileging and exalting their position as an outsider, the witch also demonstrates a deep well of caring for the world, demonstrating this through an association with healing and nature. The coming biophilic revolution need not represent a hatred of human order, but rather a deep love for the state of humanity as a natural emanation of the living world and a fierce protectiveness over the birthing of an interdependent human existence. I use the archetype of the witch as a lens, a fulcrum point. Because the witch engages in both the material and the not-yet-imaginable, they become situated at the gateway between what is and what may be. As such, the archetype suggests the potential to live as an exile, yet both on the periphery and in connection, as capable of looking towards the expanding horizon opening up with each step into a new flexion of the imaginary.

This dislocation that many feel within the modern state can be, at least partially, understood through Habermas' (1987) apprehension of colonization. Due to the sheer complexity of the human world in which we live, Habermas posits that we become inherently colonized by it. Not able to comprehend the machinations of the very worlds that we inhabit, we see no way to interact with, affect, or change our worlds. As such, anyone who confronts this alienation has the potential to become exiled from within their own culture, to come to a realization of the State as an 'other,' a force seeking to colonize the self, not an extension of the self (as nation would be to a citizen). To achieve an embedding of ecological being within culture, we become exiles first, by confronting our alienation not only from our culture but from the natural world. Only then can

we take our place as observers, and only from this place may we begin to rewrite the narratives

of place to resituate humanity into a conscious and realized relationship with the

more-than-human.

In Taylor's (2004) concept of the social imaginary, the imaginary is seen as the

amalgamation of all the ways in which a social subject imagines their place within the world.

Gibson-Graham (2006) provides a framework for approaching this in an embodied way through

the realization of the immediacy of social relations. While we may feel helpless to engage with

something so massive as a state apparatus, we may feel more empowered to engage in the ways

that apparatus becomes manifest in the minutiae of our daily interactions. In the imaginary that

we co-create together, Gibson-Graham (2006) proposes that we avoid engaging in "weak theory"

which relegates the individual to the place of a victim, creating a closed loop for a future that

represents the inevitability of mutual destruction. They suggest instead, a means of embedding in

the prefigurative imagination the kind of grounded and momentary relations that seem to suggest

the potential for a kind of molecular transformation that may take hold at the deepest levels of

self. This resonates with Buber's I-Thou relation. The immediacy of being, in Gibson-Graham's

view, has the potential to rewrite the prefigurative imagination, to reconstruct the imaginary.

Thus, grounding through an interdependent centre, alive in a present moment awareness of

independent and linked selves, may allow for the undoing of colonial structures of subjugation

while also making room for an individual to grow in direct relationship with the world around

them, including both human and more-than-human space. Reimagining the self, thus, becomes a

process of remaking the world.

The material we use to remake the world involves our stories and the characters within

them. In Raphael's (1997) "Call of the Wild" she uses the archetype of the wolf as a means of

THE WITCH

re-imagining the animality within the human and thus expanding the affordances of identity for modern pagans, many of whom have already embraced their place in the world as witches. By embracing the archetype of the wolf, they argue that modern pagans engage in a process of bringing out resonant natural qualities in order to embody a new norm. In another manifestation of archetype as a transformational fulcrum, Haraway (1990; 2016) speaks about a breakdown of human exceptionalism through the archetype of the cyborg. She argues that the cyborg blends human and technology and in so doing, opens the door for the erosion of other boundaries. This semiotic decoupling of definitions between human, more-than-human, and machine may perhaps unmoor the stable ground of meaning and in other ways also begins to approach an embrace of the unknown. It is looking towards the edge of meaning, where definitions become inadequate, where we can reach towards the potential of a deeper, more just civilization. In embracing the imaginative potential of these semiotic reconfigurations of the human-being, we extend our vision into the space of the unknown, to call forth higher-order understandings.

Davis and Sumara (2007) put forth the idea that as all natural systems, whether brains or anthills or otherwise, coalesce into orders that supersede the capacity of individual units, and they suggest that we might wish to remain open to what they call "higher-order unities" (p. 58). These unities open the way for even more complex forms of order to coalesce. Their concept of the "not-yet-imaginable" or that which exists beyond the known horizon opens up as we begin to explore the possible. When we begin to call into question systemic oppression and repression, we inevitably face the pain that Bartunek and Moch (1994) say comes from the turbulence of third-order change. Growth inevitably causes discomfort but it also opens up the potential for a deeper and more profound sense of pleasure. It engages with a re-enchantment of the world through an embrace of wildness, chaos, and change.

This brings forth the notion of the erotic, not necessarily within the limited scope of the erotic of a restrictive Western sensibility, but more like Bell and Sinclair's (2014) sense of unrestrained eroticism that consists of a free flow of pleasure throughout the body. Bennett's (2001) expanded sense of enchantment is described as an embodied experience that puts one into direct engagement with the world. It is this form of Eros, this biophilia, this decentred love of all-that-is that is most relevant to the revolution of biophilia. Brown (2019), in *Pleasure Activism* says, "Pleasure is a measure of freedom . . ." that may help us "begin to understand the liberation possible when we collectively orient around pleasure and longing" (p. 3).

My thesis coalesces around the concept of unleashing the potential of pleasure without shame, to create what we wish in the world and to eschew repression and other forms of self-denial that hinder the pursuit of collective justice, health, and freedom. The witch archetype contains within it the components of transgression, including revolutionary pleasure, creation, and destruction that may be utilized in tandem to undo systems of oppression as well as to potentially create reality into our own images, images that cater to and suit our humanity, that bring us pleasure and joy, and that lead to a healthy and thriving world.

In Bataille's (1991) concept of general economy, he proposes the idea of the accursed share, which is a representation of all of the excess energy produced by society. He claims that in an economy, this excess must be spent on either growth or luxury. Yet, growth will inevitably reach a ceiling above which continual growth becomes impracticable. Thus, the excess must ultimately be spent luxuriously or else, he claims, repressed energy will be stored up until such a time that it is spent catastrophically in violent and orgiastic rites, such as in war. It is incumbent upon us, then, to engage in an economy of pleasure, in which we cultivate a sense of the wild erotic, of biophilia for all life, to avoid the cataclysm of mutual annihilation.

Conclusion: A Manifesto

What is required of an eco-pedagogy of biophilia is a total recasting of the role of humanity within a natural infinitude, not only as an emergent part of nature, but as an immanent one. Becoming attuned to one's nature as a manifestation of higher-order unities requires the power to transcend through transgression by grounding down into a more substantial interrelation through and with the living world. As such, narrative and archetypal tools may be used to break through the alienation of the modern to recast the human being within an enchanted world that contains within it infinitude potential for both creation and destruction. As such, the adoption of the witch archetype may offer a roadmap to those who seek a being that is in contact with a natural flow of power that exists beyond, over, and through human conceptions of power and agency. In embracing the transgressive nature of one who has the potential to access a raw form of power, that is not 'man'-made, therein lies the potential for an autotelic relationship, one that requires nothing else in order to become. Human beings are in a process of being propelled through capitalist-materialist paradigms, creating a glut of empty, object-oriented totems. Biophilia allows for a de-centring of pleasure that may then arrive at pleasurable relation in non-hierarchical modes, challenging dominant patriarchal and oppressive forms of social organization and the repression of the free-flow of energy or Eros within the social world. This free flow may serve as the basis for an authentic relationship with the immanent coherence of all things.

Chapter 4: Living Utopias
The Eco-Pedagogy of Collective Imagination

How may we respond gracefully to a set of complex, multi-layered, and interlocking issues, to the totally overwhelming scope of a global social and environmental crisis? We brace ourselves against the onslaught of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, yet, our ability to dream

may provide a possible egress into a new and hopeful future. It allows for radical solutions to the unique problems of our age to be brought into being. Van Der Kolk (2014) in his generative work *The Body Keeps the* Score, states that our "Imagination gives us the opportunity to envision new possibilities–it is an essential launchpad for making our hopes come true. It fires our creativity, relieves our boredom, alleviates our pain, enhances our pleasure, and enriches our most intimate relationships" (p. 17). He goes on to say that, furthermore, "Without imagination there is no hope, no chance to envision a better future, no place to go, no goal to reach" (p. 17). It is our hope that helps us believe in change and our imagination that gives us hope. One could say that "imaginative, discourses justify or challenge the discursive 'is' to envision the world as it ought to be" (Brownlee, 2018, p. 223). Our ability to envision a world as it *ought to be* is the essential element in a process of re-establishing a holistic and interdependent web of life. Johnson (1987) states that "The total absence of an adequate study of imagination in our most influential theories of meaning and rationality is symptomatic of a deep problem in our current views of human cognition" (p. ix). If we wish to reason well, to solve global problems and to birth ourselves as new humans into a new age of peace and justice, we will require a more full understanding of reason, cognition, and imagination as formative and interrelated wholes within a larger process of change and discovery.

In this chapter, I attempt to describe the process of collective hopeful futurity through an analysis of Starhawk's Utopian trilogy: *Walking to Mercury* (1997)*, The Fifth Sacred Thing* (1993)*,* and *The City of Refuge* (2015)*.* Through her hopeful narrative of a future humanity free from domination and free to engage in consensual relations, I discuss how our visions of our future potential as human beings may lead us into the creation of a hopeful present, one in which

we may engage in the process of continually stepping into the unknown with courage and the creative capacity to enact new futures within the now.

In an experiment on the idea of learned helplessness and superstitious behaviours, Matute (1994) theorized that people only began to become passive in the face of phenomena that they *know* they have no ability to control. In her experiment, her subjects did not know whether or not they could control a light that was turning on and off. Even though they couldn't affect it, they would continually try to figure out a way to do so. In past experiments, subjects who definitively learned that they could not affect a phenomenon, subsequently remained passive even as it become possible to create change. Yet, when there was no evidence of helplessness, even though the subjects were not able to control the light, all claimed that there *was* a method to do so. It didn't matter whether or not the subjects could control the blinking light in her experiment. The fact that they believed that it might be possible allowed them to keep trying.

Holding on to hope may often seem in opposition to reason. So-called realist narratives often skew towards the dismal, yet hope is something that may persevere even in the face of extremely contradictory evidence. It exists somewhere beyond reason, an integral part of what makes us human (McGeer, 2004). Friere and Friere (2000) in their work *Pedagogy of the Heart*, suggest that, "Hope is an ontological requirement for human beings" and warn that, "The more of a sombering present there is, one in which the future is drowned, the less hope there will be for the oppressed and the more peace there will be for the oppressors" (p. 44). In this way, if humanity can find a way to hold on to hope, despite or perhaps because of the sombering present moment, this presents a revolutionary possibility.

However, hope is also fragile and permeable. We may succumb to the peace of the oppressors and like a screen that lies over every facet of the concrete, observable world,

imagined and deeply contextual interpretations of helplessness may take root through the senses.

If we believe as in Matute's (1994) study that there is no way to affect the circumstances of our

lives, we may become passive to the feeling of helplessness even in circumstances where we *can*

make a difference. We may look to our lives and see no way to interact with them. These

matrices of felt meaning, of the prefigurative reality of the body, overlay the material world so

that when we engage with the world, we engage both symbolically and sensually. That feeling of

heaviness that comes with a lack of hope may colour our sensory experience of life. If the 'I' is

laden with the dourness of hopeless melancholy, all experiences even those of joy, may be

touched by it. We may become so inured to the experience of injustice that we may become like

Seligman's dogs who when exposed to electric shocks without the possibility of escape, learned

not to try to escape their cages even when they were freely able to leave (Maier & Seligman,

1976). They became accustomed to a world where there was no recourse. We too can lose the

ability to see the potential of the moment, helpless in the face of our own pain, even when egress

is possible.

Symbols are powerful. They may create the foundation for hopeful imaginaries to

flourish. The Ghost Dance was a ritual performed by Lakota people trapped on a reserve in the

1890s. They hoped that the dance would allow them to return to their way of life. Yet, the ritual

made the surrounding settlers so afraid that they slaughtered over 200 men, women, and children

at Wounded Knee. DeMallie (1982) quotes Short Bull as saying,

> Who would have thought that dancing could have made such trouble? We had no wish to
>
> make trouble, nor did we cause it of ourselves. . . We had no thought of fighting . . . . We
>
> went unarmed to the dance. How could we have held weapons? For thus we danced, in a

circle, hand in hand, each man's fingers linked in those of his neighbour. . .The message

that I brought was peace. (p. 396)

The Lakota were creating an egress for themselves. Despite the seeming impenetrability of their

prisons, they were constructing a collective vision for a hopeful future. Not only that, but the

creation of a hopeful future imaginary created by the Ghost Dance has survived even the

massacre, continuing to powerfully speak to a vision of Indigenous resurgence, honoured in the

form of contemporary dance and theatre pieces such as Robertson's video entitled "Ghost

Dance" (Robertson, 2010).

Our imaginations hold the power to generate change, to incite violence, and to generate

peace. Imagination eludes reason because it lies beneath it, as a process whereby the material

world becomes crystallized within the mind and body of the individual. Reason may be seen as a

dialogue between sensation and the imagined, systematic, and symbolic understanding of our

material conditions. The dialectical nature of reason, thus keeps us in touch with the world as it

is while continually moving towards the world as it *may be* (Sameshima, Wiebe, & Hayes,

2019).

Transformative Community Practice

Dyke, Meyerhoff, and Evol (2018) see imagination as significant beyond the boundaries

of learning, looking at it as "a collective social process" (p. 174). Their approach invites us to

interrogate the commonly held notion of the imagination as an isolated, inward-looking, and

contemplative space, alone. Beyond the individual, imagination becomes "an ongoing

relationship and material capacity constituted by social interactions between bodies" (Shukaitis,

2009, p. 10). Imagination occurs within living systems, emerging from within environments.

The most profound transformations emerge from within participating networks

(McCaslin & Kilrea, 2019). In *The City of Refuge* (Starhawk, 2015), the characters of Bird and

Madrone are a pair of revolutionaries from a Utopian city called Califia. In this city, all elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water are free for all to use and share. In the story, the pair travels to the Southlands, a place where all resources, including water, food, housing, and medicine care are strictly controlled by an elite ruling class. They seek out a forgotten part of the impoverished city. They are able to locate a clandestine spring that allows them to nurture gardens, giving birth to a thriving oasis within the otherwise arid wasteland created by a hegemonic social order. To attract inhabitants to the refuge, Bird composes a song that goes like this:

> Come all you hungry, all you weary,
>
> All who toil without reward,
>
> Come take the road to the place of Refuge,
>
> Through the way be long and hard.
>
> Find the spring of endless water,
>
> Where all people can be free,
>
> There all debt will be forgiven,
>
> At the hearth and the sacred tree. (pp. 322 – 323)

The song inspires people to join in their dream, to create a temporary autonomous zone (Bey, 2003) within the cultural ruins of a despondent and hopelessly subjugated people. Those inspired by this vision, build it. As was the plan, the subjugated are the ones who create the refuge. They populate it with their dreams and their visions speak most powerfully to the potential of freedom.

It is the dreams that we ourselves generate, that have the greatest potential to serve as templates for personal and social transformation. Utopia, after all, cannot be contained within a singular dimension. It expands fractally, moving towards the goal of social and ecological

integration, yet approaching it from the multitudinous facets of individually embodied

experience, from a limitless amount of directions, from near-infinite centres. As firmly as our

imaginative potentials are situated within our social and ecological networks, they are also

contingent upon what Davis and Sumara (2018) call the "not-yet-imaginable," a space that

contains all potential knowledge, in fact, it contains everything that lies beyond what one may

apprehend within the moment. When the unknown emerges into awareness, it becomes known

and a new unknown is formed at a newly formed and continuously re-forming edge.

      Reaching into the darkness at the edge of knowledge engages our ability to reach beyond

the realized. Our potential to move bodily into new utopias means continuously adapting and

reforming an ever-expanding sphere of awareness. It means reaching towards the unknown, the

formless, and the unknowable, that which will forever elude capture, that which exists beyond

the capacity of human awareness. Bock (2016) suggests that engaging in transformative practice,

the practice of reaching towards the embodiment of our ideal potential, means doing a kind of

taxonomical work, interpreting our everyday experiences within a new network, one of

personalized meanings. It has been my experience that engaging in these kinds of collective

processes has the potential to create a collectiv*ized* sense of meaning and purpose. As a

collective vocabulary of stories, myths, and songs are built up between people, we create a

common language which can aid in creative action. What may be called "peer scaffolding," or a

system of peer support and motivation helps the individual to grow, allowing for

meaning-making to occur while also achieving personal and group actuation (McGeer, 2004).

We buttress each other, both pushing and supporting our stepping into the unknown.

      In Starhawk's (1993; 1998; 2015) trilogy, a central element of the philosophical core of

her vision is the presence of a collective of individuals, free to choose their own destinies. Califia

is a culture where individuals may revoke consent at any time and it is this very freedom that

strengthens their will to collaborate. Their refuge becomes a refuge only because those who live

there are empowered to collectively practice their power of creation. This supportive network of

peers continually redirects the individual towards their agential power (McGeer, 2004).

When we find a supportive community, they continually redirect us towards the

"not-yet-imaginable," where we may challenge ourselves to bring into being what is beyond our

capacity as individuals, continually buoyed by both individual and group processes of hope. It is

through the cultivation of hope, both individually and collectively tethered, that we remain fixed

upon that unknown destination, one that carries with it the constant evolutionary potential of

change. More so than even this, we are also buoyed by the creation of meanings that project

beyond the scope of our individual lives, into the potential futures of our grandchildren and

grandchildren's grandchildren (Bock, 2016). This is told in the Haudenosaunee Seven

Generations teaching by Mohawk (2016). In the story, Peacemaker tells of a hopeful future with

no wars, in which all power would come from righteousness, which he defines "as the result of

the best thinking of collective minds operating from principles which assume that a sane world

requires that we provide a safe environment for our children seven generations into the future"

(p. 80).

Our utopias are never be complete because processes that do not change cannot grow. As

such, holistic utopian processes must continually reformulate a collective concept of the just. As

leaders, teachers, and facilitators of these movements, our role lies in the ability to encourage a

sense of infinite time, moving ever forward into new relations, new hopes, and new worlds.

McCaslin and Kilrea (2019) call teaching, leading, and community building the "potentiating

arts." There are those who are able to gather together the strands that we create, weavers of our

collective visions of the future and while there may be few weavers, we create the threads together.

The Imaginal Machine

We create together what becomes an "imaginal machine…a particular arrangement or composition of desires and creativity as territorialized through and by relations between bodies in motion" (Shukaitis, 2009, p. 13). The embodied imagination is understood as emerging from within a concupiscent frothing of sensation, relating with and against the other. Through this confrontation, a drawing into embodiment occurs which Bock (2016) suggests is a process of activating meanings that were previously only internalized. It is when the imagination comes up against and performs *with* others that it becomes realized. Gibson-Graham (2016) proposes that through these processes of collective imagination,

> … we can work in the conscious realm to devise practices that produce the kind of embodied, affect-imbued pre-thoughts that we want to foster. And in the daily rehearsal of these practices we can hope that they will become part of our makeup, part of a cell memory that will increasingly assert itself without resort to conscious calling. (p. 7)

Even while we engage in a process of collective visioning, practices within the present project into the not-yet-imaginable; our rehearsal of movements suffuse the pre-conscious. Co-creative practice may form a bridge between the conceptual and practical realms, creating space for work that transforms the mind and body, individual and society (McCaslin & Kilrea, 2019). In *The City of Refuge* (Starhawk, 2015), citizens of the refuge must learn how to embody new relationships with each other, with authority, and with their relationships to power, to outsiders, to dissent. They are taught heuristically, through doing. It is in doing that their unconscious assumptions are dredged up. For example, Bird refuses to take on the role of leader because he thinks people are giving him too much importance. The gathered council almost cannot fathom

what to do without a leader. When they ask him what they should do, he suggests that they should learn to lead themselves. In the rejection of the accepted role of *leader,* Bird actuates his theoretical beliefs about power. The agitators Bird and Madrone cannot force people into their vision of the future simply because the transition that they have envisioned necessitates a movement into agency with and through non-hierarchical, collective action.

This process is similar to collective world building through Indigenous theory, which Simpson (2014) states, is "generated from the ground up and its power stems from its living resonance within individuals and collectives" (p. 7). She further explains that such a theory "isn't just an intellectual pursuit–it is woven within kinetics, spiritual presence and emotion, it is contextual and relational. It is intimate and personal, with individuals themselves holding the responsibilities for finding and generating meaning within their own lives" (p. 7). The imposition of theory cannot offer true emancipatory potential. It is only through the meaningful generation of commonly held values that we are able to honestly remake our worlds.

The Space of Imagination

Murray (2018) suggests that in learning, engagement in a mixture of action and emotion is what brings about an environment that supports imaginative work. Critically, he underscores that it is the engagement with the emotions that allows participants to feel safe enough to engage in excursions into the unknown. Dyke et al. (2018) suggest that a radical imagination is one that engages "with alternative, horizontalist modes of study" and that it is the "communizing praxis of visioning and realizing new futures" that may allow "boldly imaginative projections into the unknown void of what-is-to-come" (p. 176). The radical imagination is "a collective practice that arises from within social movements against imaginaries that uphold the status quo" (Dyke et al., 2018, p. 160). It is comprised of practices that actuate the theories upon which they are

established. The radical imagination is one that is open to emotion, that is safe, non-hierarchical, and communal.

It is just this imagination *with* others that constitutes the radical imagination. This is demonstrated in Starhawk's trilogy. She describes the process from the beginning as a process of collective becoming, a process leading from a radical centring of the heart. In the story, their utopia springs from the choice of a small group of old women taking up pickaxes and upending the pavement on a roadway. From there, they were able to collectively build a world in which the elements became the domain of all people. Food grows where once cars dominated, clean drinkable water flows through the streets. It is a world where human life has become entwined with environmental health, where human needs and the needs of the world become synergistically connected. It is this engagement with human needs, the validation of human life, that holds the power to inspire and motivate. If people can *feel* into this potential, they may be inspired to take the first tender steps towards change.

Ecological Futurity and the Practice of Hope

Bell and Russell (1999) contend that, "Working from the understanding that forms of oppression intersect, overlap, and feed on each other … it is a mistake to consider issues of human welfare and justice without regard to nonhuman beings and in isolation from our broader life context" (pp. 68 – 69). They claim that domination is reflected in all forms of oppression, saying that, "The global ecological crisis *is* a social and political crisis" (p. 69). In this way, we may see that efforts towards liberation from oppression, of imagining pathways other than domination, have the potential to reverberate beyond their original contexts.

Brown (2016) in her book, *Emergent Strategy* says that we are currently experiencing what it feels like to be caught up in someone else's imagination. The work of seeking justice for

both the human and the more-than-human world means discarding the oppressive visions we have been sold, replacing them instead with our own dreams, feelings, needs, and desires.

We begin to do so by creating what McCaslin and Kilrea (2019) call a "community of practice," which they describe as "the joint enterprise within a collection of human potentials…that creates a sense of accountability and engagement to the collective's body of knowledge" (Integral Meta-Theory/epistemology, para. 6). The radical imagination takes place in community. The key is that no one vision be given the opportunity to dominate or destroy another. It may be said that "the co-created truth is epistemologically valid because it is co-constructed by the collective experience" (McCaslin & Kilrea, 2019, Locating Transformative Inquiry as a Viable Research Method, para. 7). The openings that we make for individuals to wield their agency, allow for communities to reflect the felt values of their members. In allowing our systems to reflect our hopes and dreams, we instil within our societies a sense of collectively fed hope, which may ground our relations in our collective mental, physical, and ecological health.

Creating social movements impressionable to the needs and desires of their constituents means not only engaging in radical imagination but also practicing those alternatives through mutual respect and collectively held power. As Bock (2016) suggests, "Just as portions of humanity have enforced hierarchies of domination and control on one another in the form of class, race, gender, and nationality, we have also attempted to dominate and control the natural world" (p. 12). The injustices occurring within the human world are replicated both up and down, into the minutiae of our everyday lives and into the macro-interactions of humanity within a global ecosystem.

Gibson-Graham (2016) suggests that our sense of melancholia in thinking about the future is an attachment to past theorization that precludes a sense of potential for "mobilization, alliance, or transformation" (p. 5). in the present moment. Hope has the potential to draw humanity deeper into connection with one another but also with the natural world, by allowing the individual to transcend their paralysis, to open their perception to the potential in each felt moment. Working *with* communities of practice, ones that support and encourage the expression of agency towards justice, peace, and ecological healing, may lead us to what Bock (2016) refers to as "orthopraxy" which is "right living relationally, in immanent context, and with an epistemology that is intensely personal as well as universally connecting" (p. 26). For example, in talking about one of their actions that they call "Black Table Arts", Dyke et al (2018) say,

> … we are not only attempting to announce our love for Black people but announce the possibility of arriving to a new land, one we hold in common and in relation. A land where it doesn't make sense to be capitalist or racist or sexist or transphobic not only because it's not in one's self-interest but because it's not desirable or practical for futurity. (p. 173)

The practice of radical imagination is a process of developing clandestine pockets of new, utopian realities. Lived from one moment to the next, our collective imaginations can exercise our hope, drawing us back into connection with each other and the living world. These practices create an egress from dispossession, meaninglessness, and wanton destruction. It is through our connections, of imagining new worlds *with* each other that we are able to tackle the problems of our current day as they arise in each new moment, in each unfolding potential. Through practices of hopeful futurity, we may learn to make our own way forward, together.

The Potentiating Arts

Third-order, profound ontological and fundamental changes come from the connection to the transpersonal (Bartunek & Moch, 1994). As teachers, researchers, academics, and activists engaged in transformative processes, a process of "deep heuristic research" (McCaslin & Kilrea, 2019). emerges from within embodied experience. Our feelings and experiences engage and potentiate us not only as professionals but also as people. This means that we must take the risk to involve ourselves. We may take inspiration from the life and work of Starhawk herself. Her utopian vision emerges directly from her work in activism. Her approach to non-violence is most evident in *The Fifth Sacred Thing's* characters' nonviolent approach to military occupation when, for example, members of the community say to the soldiers of the invading army, "There is a place set for you at our table, if you will choose to join us" (Starhawk, 1993, p. 234). The soldiers kill some who approach them, and the community decides to "haunt" them with what they called ghosts. These ghosts are the family members and friends of the dead, who follow the soldiers around, telling them stories about their loved ones. It is a bold vision, of a people so committed to their way of life that they would give their own lives rather than participate in violence; as one of their elders, Maya, quoting poet Diane di Prima in their meeting, says, "The only war that counts is the war against the imagination" (p. 238). In the afterward of *City of Refuge* Starhawk (2015) says,

> While I remain personally deeply committed to nonviolence, I believe the job of fiction is not to espouse a position but to deeply explore a question, through the actions and behaviours and realizations of the characters, lived through incidents of the plot. I hope readers will understand that *City of Refuge* is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather, to experiment with possibilities that are easier lived in fiction than in real life. (p. 662)

She mentions how her strict adherence to nonviolence was challenged by the question, "Can our strategy of peaceful resistance work against a truly ruthless opponent" (p. 662)? This emerged from her experiences of police violence, of Palestinian struggles against occupation, of the frustration and struggle to organize amidst great opposition. Thus, her vision is coloured by her immersion in the world, a fully active participant within it, the movements of which move and shape her own imagination as well as her belief in the possibility of change. Thus, for her, community leaders must help to open up those around them to an emergent picture that exists beyond the scope of individual suffering (Bock, 2016).

Exercising our imaginations as engaged processes in and of the world may help us to create connections between larger social and environmental processes. Leaders facilitate extension into the unknown, creating an opening whereby we may transcend the habitual. This, by necessity, implies a means of assessment that allows for the unfolding of unknown potentials (Murray, 2018). There can be no predetermined outcome. Rather, the work must be allowed to run its course. It is a phenomenon that comes into being, radically dependent on the personalities and experiences of those involved. When we are immersed in the work, we cannot shape it from above. Instead, we must surrender ourselves to the process and in that surrender, we find meaning collectively. Doing so changes the purpose of leadership, shifting the role towards one of grounding group processes, inspiring, and participating in collective horizontalism. In working towards a collective vision, the work becomes transformative. In the expression of each unique voice, unfolding in myriad directions, we find the grounding force of our movements.

Hope and the Future Imaginary

Gibson-Graham's (2016) concept of "weak theory" posits there is a tendency to ideologically distance ourselves from power in order to avoid its corrupting influence, consequently setting up a binary in which the powerful may wield influence, being bad, while

the good may not wield power, remaining good. In shifting the locus of power from dominion to cooperation, the process of collective creation serves to undermine this aversion to power, embracing it as a natural right of all people.

Within the community of Reclaiming Witchcraft, there is an exercise called the Iron Pentacle (p. 115), set out in Coyle's (2004) book *Evolutionary Witchcraft*. In the exercise, the five points of a pentacle are named from the top and moving clockwise as: sex, self, passion, pride, and power. One 'runs' the pentacle through the body, starting with the head (sex) and drawing into the body the meaning of the word and invoking depth as expressed through the felt sensations. One moves from the head to the left foot (passion), the right hand (power), the left hand (self) and the right foot (pride). The concepts in the iron pentacle are considered those that are most problematic to the Western mindset and the process of 'running' the iron pentacle is a process of untangling the knots in the Western psyche, to clear these concepts of their negative baggage. In the Reclaiming community, at least in my experience, power is approached as a process, a movement with and through people. As I have run the Iron Pentacle through my own body, I engage with power as alive in the lived moment, neither good nor evil, merely a force to be directed. Thus, I believe that the radical imagination allows us to rebuild notion such as those proposed by the Iron Pentacle, but also of both our pasts and futures (Dyke et al., 2018) through an engagement with radical possibility, giving communities the power to create definitions that situate them at the centre of their own universes, with their own feelings and desires at the fulcrum of a network of felt meaning and purpose.

Efforts towards decolonization engage in the creation of what Bruyneel (2007) calls the "third space." In Indigenous identity, this is one that rejects the settler imaginary of who and what constitutes Indigeneity, pursuing instead a process that Bruyneel describes as defying

superficially applied external boundaries and instead creating space that exists strategically within and outside of settler realities, contingent upon the complex lived realities of real Indigenous people. Habermas' (1987) even broader concept of colonization suggests that modern systems alienate all within them, who are made to feel unable to either move or comprehend their boundaries. While we can recognize the privilege of White naturalized settlers, one can simultaneously recognize the failure of settler cultures to serve even their elect, harming all and serving none. There can be a sense that the individual cannot hope to fathom nor change the machinations of society, which exist far beyond the scope of our individual lived presence. Yet, it is not through navigating oppressive systems, nor in resisting them, where we find freedom. Instead, it may be found by following the advice of Bruyneel (2007), by creating a third space, establishing our own centre.

In the creation of a third space, a new centre is born. The process of fabulation allows for the telling of untruth to arrive at deeper truth (Garoian, 2018). This makes way for "an incipient, storying of political fiction that occurs from an emptying out of the self to allow for ideational encounters and alliances from outside the confines of one's learned understandings" (Garoian, 2018, p. 192). The process of imaginative fabulation gives us the tools to take apart our social imaginaries. Each symbol is a building block that may be rearranged and recontextualized into new meanings. We need not tell the 'truth' as it has been given to us to arrive at the 'truth' we know.

Take, for example, the belief in magic. Starhawk, for one, does not only write utopian fiction. She also publicly expresses her belief in the reality of magic and writes books about the spiritual practice of magic. I have often been told that magic is *not*-real, and yet practitioners of magic are engaging in something that they both feel and experience. Practitioners of magic

engage in something that has been determined to be *not*-real to get at something that is profoundly real, deep spiritual and human truths. This is not a reactive process but rather one that "resists punitive judgments that are driven by social and historical norms. It is a legending process that in falsifying normative, majoritarian predilections affirms thinking and living life as a creative force" (Garoian, 2018, p. 192). Garoian posits that creative processes of fabulation open the door for collective meaning-making in ways that think, say, and do *with* one another. Because this process makes use of traditional symbolic understandings, it may also serve to bring forward perspectives that have experienced less mainstream representation. Much like the "not-yet-imaginable," our desires often lie somewhere beyond the limits of our understanding, nebulous and as yet, unformed. Through fabulation we may put substance to the prefigurative desiring forces that reside within us. Putting form to the formless may require one to step outside of the confines of the strictly rational in favour of a more intuitive form of meaning-making, one that makes use of non-traditional relationships between symbols in the form of pastiche, to express more nuanced meanings, meanings that exist between and beyond symbols, reaching towards and into the unknown.

In Starhawk's (1993; 1998; 2015) trilogy, the markers of Western culture are strategically rearranged into a new symbolic network. The Southlands seem very much like a not-too-distant future for the West and in Othering this society, we are able to identify with the utopic, to stand in the place of the liberated and look back on ourselves. It is through the conceit of the other that we may more clearly examine our own faults and potentials. In this narrative, the expression of power that has become untethered from a purpose dictated from on-high expresses a subversion of the structures of domination we may take for granted in our everyday lives. As such, there is a subtle call to take the meanings that we are given, to rearrange them, restage and restructure

them for our own purposes. We don't need to wholly reject the culture of domination in which

we find ourselves but may construct a third space, neither fully in line nor fully out of line. We

may begin the process of undoing the knots of hegemonic control through the assertion of our

individual and collective will, not just in the mindless consumption of material goods but in the

creation of truly satisfying personal realities.

We may continually turn towards hope, as tied up with the processes of resistance and

creation both, serving as a support during the disentanglment from oppressive structures as well

as in the pursuit of a dream of social and ecological healing. Hope has the potential to extend our

consciousness beyond our individual lives (Bock, 2016), allowing our communities to actualize

change that must, for the sake of global wellbeing, occur on a more-than-human scale. In

cultivating a connection to what Ella Baker describes as "democratic time" (Dyke et al., 2018),

we take into account the need for an organic temporal scope that doesn't respond to the

immediacy of our yearning, but rather, to the space required for processes to take place in their

own ways and according to their own scales. To face issues that exist beyond the limited sense of

one human life, we need to develop a sense of "hope that is deeper than desire, broader than the

individual, and that contains the transformative power to change suffering, injustice, evil, and

apathy into meaning" (Bock, 2016, p. 15). We need a sense of hope that exists beyond even our

capacity to rationally conceptualize the notion of utopia. We must believe, somehow, that there

is a potential reality that exists beyond even our wildest dreams and we must continually orient

ourselves towards its unfathomable realization.

The question remains of how to arrive at this place, especially in the face of an

ever-increasing sense of impending global calamity. Murray (2018) suggests that an emphasis on

meta-cognition, on thinking about thinking or alternately, on an awareness of process may aid in

the development of the imagination. In understanding ourselves and how we are doing the work, we may actuate the theoretical. In addition to meta-cognition, Murray (2018) recommends a sense of fun, playfulness, and risk-taking. These skills all lead towards confidence in venturing into the unknown, where a sense of the ludic may add to the anticipation of positive outcomes. It is through solidarity in the collective mission of expressing and fulfilling our desires within a community of practice, of continually buttressing each other with expressions of hopeful futurity, fun, and pleasure, where we create right relation. In Buber's I-Thou relationship (Blenkinsop & Scott, 2017), he describes a form of non-reductive direct contact where both parties retain their separate and individual essence, coming into relation without one or the other being absorbed. This form of encounter might be described as an opposite to the process of dominion, whereby the 'weak' become absorbed by the 'strong.' In the I-Thou relation, we are given the potential to be changed while keeping touch with both centre and power. It is in this radical realization of the other, one that fails to consume or be consumed, where we may begin to recognize the kind of connections required for a healthy, sound, and mutually integrated lived relation. It is this form of relation that allows for near-infinite centres to act towards a shared goal of mutually held power and agency. We see this relationship in the construction of the refuge. Those who come are asked to imagine a different life and in so doing, to become different, but this process does not erase who they are. In fact, it elevates the individual and their will within a new structure of relations. One may witness the other in motion and align oneself with it, through a will that is free, without coercion, without control or domination.

Conclusion

When facing the complexities of interlocking global systems of life whose realities span across multiple human lifetimes, one must be able to access both hope and imaginaries of the future as a means of connecting individuals across spatio-temporal distances into a community of

relatives spanning the planet, across the eons. It is when we are able to unite our visions, creating meaningful connections within our communities that then extend out into the world, that we can address the disconnection that comes from being trapped inside someone else's imagination. The process of building collective hopeful futurity allows us to own the process of our own becoming, investigating and reaching into the spaces between the known and the unknown, to grow into hopeful visions of what we may become. In the practice of creating meaning collectively, reaching towards and bringing into the world the realization of our deepest desires, we are not only projecting our hopes into the future, but we are also bringing that hoped-for future into our midst.

It is in the practice of justice that we experience justice, in the practice of care that we feel care. The idea of utopia is not just an idea; it is a reality that we must feel in our bones. Thus, utopia itself may not be a place, but a state of being, a practice. In this way, we may begin to live utopia by developing orthopraxy, which is not just a means but also a posture, a stance towards life that is the point of departure from which all of our actions emerge. By looking towards the life forms around us as active agents, capable of defining and acting upon their own sense of internal meaning, we begin to raise those around us to the dignity that comes with agential power. We empower ourselves through engaging in collective processes of mutual respect, of listening to and responding to the needs of those around us, we too may find a place in this world, a lived utopia in the present moment.

Chapter 5: The Transcendent Imaginary
Pedagogies of Wildness and Enchantment in *The Craft*

Does my sexiness upset you?

Does it come as a surprise

That I dance like I've got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs? (Angelou, 1978)

There is something dangerous about eroticism. To know what exactly is dangerous about it, we might need to enter into the mind of the person shielding the eyes of a child from a breast but not from a man tearing into another man's body with a machine gun. We may consider eroticism's latent potential as so freewheeling and connecting that it might also carry within it the capacity to undo the human order altogether, making it into something else entirely.

In the Bacchae, drunk with erotic power, Agaue tears the head off of her son, thinking him a "she-lion." Here, the erotic has the character of a force of electricity, one that resists human attempts at control and conformity. Eroticism has poetic associations with feminine pleasure as expressed through Cixous' (1986) concept of jouissance, which is more like rapture than pleasure, uniting all aspects of the self into an ecstatic union between self and world. This view of feminine pleasure calls into mind the natural and spiritual world, a world that exists as a synthesis between body and earth. Yet, there is a divide, and we see "rationalist traditions that have policed the mind/body, culture/nature divides," and it is here that "thinking has been seen to operate in a register above and separate from untamed bodily sensation" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 1). It is the ordered world that attempts to separate humankind from body and nature in an attempt to transcend the chaotic force of eroticism and to maintain predictability. Yet, the body, as "a locus of freedom, pleasure, connection and creativity" (Shapiro, 2005, xviii) continually reinvents itself. Therefore, any "critical pedagogy of the body means to understand not only how it is socialized into heteronomous relations of control and conformity but is also a site of struggle and possibility for a more liberated and erotic way of being in the world" (Shapiro, 2005, xviii). We cannot approach the healing of the world while we still atomize ourselves as structures outside of the moving, physical, pleasurable, and connected world from which we emerge.

Power, in the sense of a felt force within the body, is linked directly to our ability to channel the wild erotic. Through embracing undercurrents of desire, we are able to access a greater depth to our humanity, one whose dark, incipient flows may awaken us to our connection with nature through an understanding of our shared roots.

When one seeks to uncover the processes of healing justice, towards the health of both human and more-than-human, one must consider need, desire, emotion, and feeling holistically as they operate within the body. "To be rooted," Weil (2003) claims, "is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul" (p. 40). We require the roots of community, kinship, meaning, and pleasure too. It is in the ruptures between mind and body, human and nature–and perhaps also the rupture between mother and child, self and other–that continue to define our alienation, dislocation, and up-rootedness. As Bové (1982) suggests, "Desire for the mother and identification with her oppose the religious belief that such desire is impure, a transgression against the male God and the society built upon his authority" (p. 152). We are alienated from the fundamental source of desire within the body as we are directed away from the purest and immediate expression of that desire. As such, the woman becomes "a powerless, impure body" according to Kristeva, and "patriarchy produces a figure of woman who simultaneously offers life. . .[and] death (she represents a life that is mortal)" (Bové, 1982, p. 154). It is the materiality of the mother that makes her so threatening, the giver of life but also the instigator of death, for in creation there is also destruction.

The world, then, as understood and expressed collectively in human society, is a confabulation. Our roots are severed through the process of disconnection. Habermas's (1987) notion of colonization is of a society that is so distant from the individual that the life world is colonized by an impossibly complex, untouchable, and distant state. Not merely conceptual in

nature, "the productive and restrictive function of the social structures, as well as of the subsequent emotional dispositions, strongly link the emotional habitus to social relations of power" (Leledaki & Brown, 2008, p. 310). The embodied narratives of social order and power become imbued into the flesh and are acted out in the life of the individual. This includes structures of meaning, of what it *is* to be a person.

Firth (2016) believes that modern society puts forth a limited and limiting idea of what it means to be human, which "lays the ground for the production of conformist neoliberal subjects with truncated hopes, dreams and desires" (p. 126). The push towards a visual form of engagement also predisposes one to a passive reception and spectatorship (Lewis, 2000, p. 67). In addition, "the theoretical close of paranoia, the backward-looking political certainty of melancholia and the moralistic skepticism toward power, render the world effectively uncontestable" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 6). There is a tidy kind of closed loop wherein one becomes a passive channel for productive labour and consumption within a systematized, procedural, economic world.

When we become implicated within systems involving reasonings and purposes outside of our own, when we are colonized by the modern social order, we lose touch with the *authentic* core of life, that of one's pursuit of an actualized internal order. We thus are "[n]ever fully responsible for our actions" (Lewis, 2000, p. 68) and this does not satisfy us; in fact, it serves to nullify our desire through the creation of an expected outcome of life, a sense of certainty of result. There is neither fulfilment nor completion; it is a stunted order without release. Yet, the realization of our embodiment carries with it certain implications, namely that "capitalism as a set of economic practices scattered over a landscape, rather than a systemic concentration of power" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 2). We are not untethered signifiers, we are participants within

an embodied social order, who have access to the systemic interactions within each lived moment.

In looking at *The Craft* (Wick, 1996) as a filmic text, I will be approaching it through Ceccarelli's (1998) notion of polysemy, particularly as a gently resistive reading of popular reception of the film during its time, but also as "a political act that involves making ethical choices for one reading or another, for one reality or another, for one set of options or another world of possibility" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 11). Rather than approaching the film through its status in the genre of teen horror, I approach it instead as a revolutionary eco-erotic text that re-situates the narrative of the self, liberating desire, and thus serving as a narrative of re-forging the connection between body and mind, human and nature. It would seem to be that in "fearing implication with those in power" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 6), we simultaneously reject our own connection to the source of our own power, which I argue lies in our connection to natural forces and the pleasure we find in our engagement with them, in our connection with erotic rapture. As such, *The Craft* has the potential to offer a pedagogy of liberation of the erotic through a narrative tethering of both desire and the fulfilment of desire, to the spiritual ground found through contact with the source of life.

We Are the Weirdos, Mister: Reflections on Exile

The Craft (Wick, 1996) is a story about a group of teen outcasts at a Catholic high school in Los Angeles. At the beginning of the film, we see our protagonist, Sarah starting life in a new school. Three other girls notice her and wonder if she may be a potential fourth in their group, completing the circle, Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Occurring almost entirely within the context of a school, we can see the institutional setting as one where

> … one is no longer at the helm, making decisions. No physical effort is required for we
> are now being carried by the modern tide. Self-propulsion, self-determination, freedom

even, have all been left behind or lost. Mental and physical exertion has been superseded

by an all-pervading passivity. (Lewis, 2000, pp. 66 – 67)

The experience of high school portrayed in the film has a reminiscent odour of the mundane,

procedural, and formulaic, a banality that the characters seek to escape.

Each character in the film is revealed to have experienced a form of trauma. Nancy lives

in a trailer park with a stepfather who invades her personal space, crossing her boundaries by

making sexual advances on her. Bonnie was burnt in a house fire and was consequently scarred

over the majority of her body; she covers herself and her classmates tell stories about her

purported disfigurement. Rochelle is one of the only people of colour in a primarily White

environment. Lastly, Sarah lost her mother during childbirth and suffers from psychosis. Having

survived a suicide attempt, Sarah reveals that she suffered from an acute episode in which she

saw all-consuming hallucinations of bugs, snakes, and rodents. The girls seem to bond through a

sense of shared grief, but also through a shared dislocation as the Othered.

In their school, their role as outcasts is culturally constituted, as represented by the

reactions of a group of teen boys to the girls walking down the hallway. The boys pretend to

tremble in fear, crossing themselves, thus encoding the girls as both outcasts but also as carrying

their own symbolic power through their existence on the boundaries of social and religious

norms. There are rumours that the girls are witches, which is the reason behind their mockery but

also, potentially, their fear. Yet, even if the girls pretend not to mind when they are faced with

ridicule, "the cultural constitution of bodily experience may be a particularly effective

mechanism by which a society's meanings are internalized by its citizens" (O'Connor, 2016, p.

6). Their differences torment them and their suffering is seen at various points in the film. As

much as they are inculcated within a social norm, submitting to school uniforms as well as the

THE WITCH

rules of the institution, it is clear that "common points of reference do not necessitate consensual agreement" (O'Connor, 2016, p. 10). The world that they are a part of is not their own.

Jodelet, (1984) in her study of the bodies of the mentally ill, found that "female associations yield a body 'cut up into small pieces' where anatomical elements are juxtaposed" (p. 8). The feminine body is inherently the body of the outcast, alienated not only from the world but also from itself, itemized into parts. Furthermore, the girls' trauma represents "a kind of 'unclaimed experience' in which the wound does not heal, but remains still festering beneath the scar" (Jay, 2002, p. 66). The girls' stories are not unique, but rather encapsulations of various narratives of oppression that exist within society, as bodies of oppressed classes, of the poor, the disabled, the racialized, the ill, and the grieving.

As we are led into the story, we find ourselves at a precipice. Each girl faces a particular socially mediated blockage. Freud, Reich, and Lacan each approached blockages as a cause of dis-ease. Reich believed that the body held blockages within the tissues themselves (Freire & da Mata, 1997), and Lacan that they were held in the "imaginary" (Firth, 2016), of that which lies beneath our conscious experience. Freud thought that these blockages could be the cause of what he called "hysterical paralysis" (Firth, 2016). of shutting down and disconnecting from the world entirely. The reactions of the girls' peers serve as what Shilling and Mellor (2007) call "body pedagogics" which are "the central means through which a culture seeks to transmit its main corporeal techniques, skills, dispositions and beliefs" (p. 533). These pedagogics cause blockages in the girls due to the circumstances of their lives, which situate them within Othered classes. "[T]hey are blocked because of meaning or images which shut them off or exile particular energies or parts of the self, whist separating 'inside' from 'outside' through processes of alienation" (Firth, 2016, p. 130).

Furthermore, each narrative of trauma serves to blind the girls to the potential choices they may have to extricate themselves from the positions they are given by their social context (Niwenshuti, 2008, p. 127). We may see that

> … if an individual has been subjected to continual situations that involve fear or
> insecurity since childhood, the physiological transformations start to crystallise in the
> body. A response that should be specific to certain situations becomes continuous, and
> creates a posture and neuromuscular armour which determine a person's way of being in
> the world; or, in other words, their character. (Freire & da Mata, 1997, p. 6)

As such, each character that we are introduced to is like a bird in a cage, defined by their trauma and existing by way of their socially constituted position as an Other.

> Because *nothing* is secure. Exile is a jealous state. What you achieve is precisely what
> you have no wish to share, and it is in the drawing of lines around you and your
> compatriots that the least attractive aspects of being in exile emerge: an exaggerated
> sense of group solidarity, and a passionate hostility to outsiders, even those who may in
> fact be in the same predicament as you. (Said, 2013, p. 184)

Before Sarah arrives, the three girls have each other, but as they are, they do not have enough power to be able to emerge from their state as exiles, still defining themselves in contrast to what they have lost. In the story, it is said that their group requires a fourth member so that they may each represent a classical element: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Thus, with Sarah's coming they may begin the task of "de-identification," which is "a form of emotional rehabituation" (Leledaki & Brown, 2008, p. 304). As exiles, they are tasked with the necessity of "compensating for disorienting loss by creating a new world to rule" (Said, 2013, p. 187). Their privilege is an

inversion of the privilege located in the centre. Through their exile, they are released to find definitions and values for the new world into which they are thrust.

In one of the most powerful scenes of the film, we see the girls on a bus heading outside of town. As they step off the bus, the bus driver warns them to watch out for "weirdos," to which Nancy replies, "We are the weirdos, mister" (Wick, 1996, 00:28:50). They are heading into the forest to perform a ritual, one in which Sarah will be welcomed into the coven of witches. With them, they take their abject bodies, "the body of base materiality, the body invaded by technology, ravaged by disease and unable to maintain its normal boundaries" (Jay, 2002, p. 62). Their "'abjection' is the simultaneous attraction and repulsion for the body that derives from the moment when the child's symbiosis with the mother is interrupted" (Bové, 1982, p. 151). The mother's body is impure and in their pilgrimage, it is this abjection that they seek to transform. They will unite themselves into a covenant of the blood, symbolized through an act of pricking their fingers, the blood of which filters into a chalice from which they drink. This act is completed directly after they hold a ritual dagger to each other's chests saying, "It is better to rush upon this blade than to enter the circle with fear in your heart" (Wick, 1996, 00:29:00).

The performance of these symbolic acts serves as the creation of a temporary space in which meaning can be encountered, confronted, and shifted. They drink the blood of their 'sisters' as a means of establishing a bond that incorporates the materiality of the other into the self, but that also ritualistically purifies and elevates the feminine body. Of course, "estrangement from the world is to be expected when one is already estranged from one's body" (Lewis, 2000, p. 68). In these acts of symbolic material incorporation, they come up against the physical stuff of nature, thus forced into a confrontation with their "organic nature" (Lewis, 2000, p. 61). We experience an act of creation, of a chosen family coming into being. Embedded

in their creative act is a belief in the power of this connection to raise them above their suffering.

They "draw on the pleasures of friendliness, trust, conviviality, and companionable connection"

(Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 6) to form an emotional link whose immediacy is experienced within

the felt moment. As Gibson-Graham would suggest, "In this utopian atmosphere, distrust,

misrecognition, and judgment are temporarily suspended and a solidarity develops that is based

not on sameness, but on a growing recognition that the other is what makes self possible"

(Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 20). No longer are the girls exclusively defined by their otherness,

they have become *something*. They are part of a coven, part of a newly formed symbolic order,

against the world. Whether this new order will manifest goodness and repair or more evil is not

known and is, perhaps, beside the point. It is through the potential for creation where new

possibilities are magnified, where the marginalized may find opportunities to step into their

power, for good or ill. They become the creators of their world and may do with it what they

will.

Enchantment and the Eco-Spiritual Erotic

We may consider that "on one level, the crisis of modernist class politics is a crisis of

desire" (Gibson-Graham, 2006, p. 13). Unmediated desire may interrupt the smooth functioning

of the capitalist-settler state. We must be inculcated not only into the functioning of the state but

also the multitudinous and perhaps conflicting narratives that give the state its grounding. The

experience of exile, according to Said (2003),

> … is predicated on the existence of, love for, and bond with, one's native place; what is
>
> true of all exile is not that home and love of home are lost, but that loss is inherent in the
>
> very existence of both. (p. 191)

The girls in *The Craft* are not merely motivated by pain and anger, but by a love for a storied

experience of contentment and a lost state of innocence. It is doubtful that a return to such a state

is possible, yet eroticism allows a form of return since it "is related first and foremost to love, rather than sex or calculations of sexual appeal… Eros as sensuality, connection and love has been lost within the dominance of a capitalized market discourse that defined eroticism as sex and erotic as sexy" (Bell & Sinclair, 2014, p. 269). We cannot return to innocence but we can return to an experience of erotic love that has no centre, a love understood through the notion of jouissance, "a state of blissful freedom and pleasure that arises when sexual activity is no longer centred on the genitals" (Bell & Sinclair, 2014, p. 269). So, desire in this context is not the fixation on a certain goal, but rather an opening into a formless sense of the erotic potential of each moment.

In the forest, the girls experience a moment of enchantment, which is defined by Bennet (2001) as "a mood of lively and intense engagement with the world" that consists of "a mixed bodily state of joy and disturbance, a transitory sensuous condition dense and intense enough to stop you in your tracks and toss you onto new terrain, to move you from the actual world to its virtual possibilities" (p. 111). Suddenly, the clearing is full of butterflies. The girls are surrounded and look at the spectacle with wonderment, reaching out to have them land on their hands. They understand this experience to be a direct response from the ground of nature. They refer to this as the deity 'Manon' who is beyond good and evil and who supersedes the Devil and God alike. This event could be considered what Berger (2011) refers to as a "marginal experience," one that "radically challenges *all* socially objectivated definitions of reality – of the world, of others, and of self." There is a shift, from one world into another. All of a sudden, it is apparent to the girls that the spirit of all-being is real and that it has the ability to communicate with them. Their communion with the ground of being is realized through this encounter. This is

a form of eroticism that Bataille refers to as the spiritual erotic, a connection formed between the individual and a "limitless being" (Bataille, 1962, p. 21).

In the pilgrimage to the woods, we can see what Connolly, as referred to by Gibson-Graham (2006), calls "experimental practices that we can employ to re-educate ourselves, to convince our bodies to adopt fundamentally different attitudes 'that we intellectually entertain as belief,' thereby producing new affective relations with the world" (p. 7). When the girls entered the woods, they entered into a mode of expectation and possibility. It is in our "refusal to recognize our relatedness to others [that] makes projections upon them inevitable by making identification with them impossible" (Holler, 1989, p. 82). The moment that nature is able to respond to the girls, through the vehicle of the butterflies, they "become whole" by what may be understood as their "dialogical encounters and relationships with others, whether human or not" (Blenkinsop, 2017, p. 456). Their rootedness is established through a dialogical encounter with nature itself. Their being is confirmed through the acknowledgement of their desire for connection.

In modernity, "as we are severed from the community of diverse being, we are unaware of our own being, and, like Narcissus, we will see that community only in our own image: the image of objects divorced from the being in relation to which they have selfhood and value" (Holler, 1989, p. 83). It is through the dissolution of socially mediated reality that the girls are able to enter into direct relation with the world, and thus to restore their sense of selfhood, a selfhood in relation. In essence, in going to the forest, they are returning home, which is also

> … in a sense recovering or at least becoming aware of life-giving interactions and reclaiming the freshness of what has been lost in our best shared humanity, and allowing it to fill our whole being and life. Going back into the body, (re)inhabiting the body, and

letting the body inhabit us again, involves challenging a discriminatory, boxed-in logic… it

challenges and overcomes the Cartesian dichotomy and anxiety, finding our way through

destructive binaries, alienating dualisms and similar modes of thinking. (Niwenshuti, 2018,

p. 124)

There is a moment, if only a moment, wherein the girls become whole, transfixed by a direct

relation and communication from living nature. This is a recognition of life itself, a sense of

meaning made in erotic dialogue with limitless being. Blenkinsop (2017) says of these

experiences that "What becomes evident is that the self is now open, flexible, and

dynamic–responsive to similarly dynamic others and present to surrounding dynamic ecologies"

(p. 463). In turn, it is the achievement of a state of fluid openness that allows the girls "to

cultivate a potential for choosing to change" what up until this point has been a "habitual

experiencing and enactment of oppression and repression" (Leledai & Brown, 2008, p. 316).

In Jay's discussion of Dewey's notion of aesthetics, the aesthetic experience is spoken of

as a "model of that self-realization…best expressed in the sensually mediated, organically

consummated, formally molded activity" (Jay, 2002, p. 55). What is interesting about this theory

is that Dewey believed that the aesthetic experience could extend beyond the practice of art, into

a felt activation of the democratic social order. Furthermore, he saw in body-art an "insistence

that even the body is a process, not a fixed object in the world," which he thought "powerfully

instantiates the way in which democracy is always in front of us, never fully achieved" (Jay,

2002, p. 65). The experience of a bodily mediated symbolic act performed with others might

constitute a form of self-realization, a democratic process in itself, of reconstituting the body as

an unfixed object, in dialogical relation, both *in* and *of* the world. This calls into question the

fixity of the body but also the fixity of the world from which it emerges. It is what legendary

Chilean filmmaker, Alejandro Jodorowsky (2004) calls "trembling reality."

In the performance of the "poetic act," the act of symbolic completion, we are able to

liberate repressed energy from the body through processing and resolving an internal symbolic

order. In turn, Leledaki and Brown (2008) suggest that "This change of [one's] embodied

perception through physicalisation feels like connecting with the sacred and acquiring a new

sense of belonging and ontological security that we might describe as a sense of empowerment

coming from a state of immanence by connecting to… the 'core self'" (pp. 322 – 323). As the

girls seek the ground upon which they are rooted, we see that "for the exile, habits of life,

expression, or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these

things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual,

occurring together contrapuntally" (Said, 2003, p. 191). We see here, a union of an "early

symbiosis as memory… that early moment of pleasure" (Bovè, 1982, p. 156). We have a return

home, a symbolic reunion with the mother through the girls' direct connection and

communication with nature and, in that reunion, a revolution of the wild erotic that asks us to

look towards the true source of life. It suggests a return to "the origin and essence of our wealth,"

which is given to us through the sun, the earth, and nature, "which dispenses

energy–wealth–without any return" (Bataille, 1991, p. 28).

Sorceress and Hysteric

As Cixous (1986) puts it, the sorceress, "is able to dream Nature and therefore conceive

it, [she] incarnates the reinscription of the traces of paganism that triumphant Christianity

repressed," while "the hysteric, whose body is transformed into a theatre for forgotten scenes,

relives the past, bearing witness to a lost childhood that survives in suffering" (p. 5). When the

girls are in their circle, expressing their desires, each asks for a gift from the spirit. Bonnie asks

for beauty, Rochelle for revenge on a White woman who is being racist towards her, Sarah for

the love of a character named Chris, and Nancy for all the power of Manon. Nancy goes further

than any of the girls towards the realization of her desires; she is also the one who exhibits the

most power. When they collectively decide to "invoke the spirit," Nancy becomes the only one

of them to successfully embody the spirit of Manon. She is consequently able to walk on water,

an obvious allusion to the story of the Christ, as well as catalyze a mass beaching of sea animals,

primarily whales and sharks, which she refers to as her 'gifts,' consequently representing Nancy

as a figure of both creation and destruction.

> Cixous (1986) writes,
>
> This feminine role, the role of sorceress, of hysteric, is ambiguous, antiestablishment…
>
> because the symptoms–the attacks–revolt and shake the public, the group, the men, the
>
> others to whom they are exhibited. The sorceress heals, against the Church's canon; she
>
> performs abortions, favors nonconjugal love, converts the unlivable space of a stifling
>
> Christianity. The hysteric unties familiar bonds, introduces disorder into the
>
> well-regulated unfolding of everyday life, gives rise to magic in ostensible reason. (p. 5)

Nancy represents the power to embrace more than just the healing aspect of direct connection to

power, she represents the total embodiment of aspects of both light and dark, creative and

destructive. She sees beauty in the mass death of sea life, presented as though for her pleasure.

Her pleasure resonates much more to Lacan's reading of jouissance, as existing when one's

desire becomes transfixed on the limits of what one is not, perhaps transforming pleasure into

pain through the pursuit of what may not be obtained, a self with no limit (Feldstein, 1996). Nancy

recognizes no limits to her will, desire, or power, as demonstrated through her wish.

We see in her an embodiment of the chaotic, untethered erotic, like Aguae beheading her son. And yet we also witness her in contemplation, chanting alone by herself in her bedroom, focused and intent. She is willing and able to discipline her body to achieve her desires and as Leledaki and Brown (2008) state, "the cultivation of inner stillness (calm and concentration) is in itself an achieved unified body-mind experience of non-reactive engagement with personal and social life" (p. 316). It is through the power of her conviction that the girls are able to achieve a collective sense of purpose, even though they consider Sarah to be the source of their power since she is a 'natural witch.' Nancy and Sarah are two halves of a coin. Where Nancy is fast, extreme, passionate, and hot, Sarah is slow, considerate, cool, and melancholy. In their dynamic, we see played out "the cultural ethos of self-control" which

> … is enacted in prescriptions to regulate bodily desires regarding sexuality, food and substance use. Restraint in these domains signals discipline and self-mastery, traits which are valorised in developed Western societies. In contrast, yielding to sensory indulgence is represented as a moral failing and serves as a basis on which traditionally stigmatised outgroups – including those who are overweight, sexually atypical or struggling with substance addiction – are derogated. (O'Connor, 2016, p. 9)

Nancy has the ability to discipline herself, to practice the sustained connection with her desire and purpose. However, she also admits to sleeping with the primary male protagonist/antagonist Chris and was punished for it, being labelled a slut. Sarah on the other hand, even though she purports to be in love with Chris and asks for Manon to gift her with his love, she resists Chris' advances and is punished for her resistance through his attempt to rape her. There is no safe way to wield feminine sexuality. The feminine body is not her own and all the girls are punished for the act of succumbing to pleasure as well as the act of denying it.

Yet, in Nancy's response to the attempted rape, we experience a sense of Bahktin's (1984) carnival, an upending of the social order to one of spontaneous creation of, perhaps perverted but nevertheless, immediate orders of sense expression. Nancy uses magic to pose as Sarah, to seduce Chris who is under a love spell towards Sarah. When she first tries to seduce him as herself, we see him reject Nancy and in a moment of uncanny revelation, she instead transforms herself into his love interest. As they are beginning to make love, Sarah bursts into the room, therefore rupturing the fantasy in which they were immersed. Nancy is then able to drive Chris towards the balcony by levitating off of the ground, and in his panic to escape her, he falls to his death. As the sorceress, Nancy is able to upend the order of things. In a sense of the grotesque (Bahktin, 1984), she is able to make right Chris's transgression against both Sarah and herself, driving him into the abyss. In his desire to find union with the object of his desire through sex, he is instead swallowed up by death. Instead of being tragic, his death serves as a kind of catharsis, a righting of a wrong. Despite the fact that death is an inversion of the potentially life-affirming and giving act of sexual love, his death also feels like a renewal.

Yet, Nancy cannot continue to harness the power to which she has gained access. She has gained a sense of liberty through the act of doing, which Foucault (1984) believes requires "exercise." She expresses her freedom and liberty through the pursuit of her desire, and yet she is not capable of expending the energy she has harnessed. As Bataille (1991) believed,

> … the living organism, in a situation determined by the play of energy on the surface of the globe, ordinarily receives more energy than is necessary for maintaining life; the excess energy (wealth) can be used for the growth of a system (e.g., an organism); if the system can no longer grow, or if the excess cannot be completely absorbed in its growth,

it must necessarily be lost without profit; it must be spent, willingly or not, gloriously or

catastrophically. (p. 21)

As we see towards the conclusion of the film, Nancy transforms into the hysteric. She exhibits an

end that Cixous (1985) refers to as "*conservative* because every sorceress ends up being

destroyed, and nothing is registered of her but mythical traces. Every hysteric ends up inuring

others to her symptoms, and the family closes around her again, whether she is curable or

incurable" (p. 5).

Organic Boundaries: The Coalescing of New Orders

We see in Nancy's downfall, "the belatedness of a traumatic event or events that have not

yet been assimilated or reconciled. As such, it brings to the surface these moments of founding

violence that even the most democratic polity has difficulty fully acknowledging" (Jay, 2002, p.

66). Her desires could find no limits because she felt that what she wanted was unlimited power.

As such, she began to erode the sense of connection to the source that had been *collectively*

formed. Because she cannot use the energy she has created constructively, towards her growth as

a person or as pleasure, it is then exerted catastrophically through the destruction of the order

that was created through the pilgrimage and their covenant as sisters. She tries to turn the group

against Sarah, rewriting her as an outcast of the new order. In retaliation, Sarah tries to 'bind'

Nancy as a means of creating a boundary *for* her and out of concern for her well-being. Nancy

cannot condone this restriction of her will towards power and attempts to destroy Sarah. Sarah's

only recourse is to 'invoke the spirit' into herself and to use the power to create a container for

Nancy.

We see Sarah as symbolic of a kind of natural order attempting to exert a limit on

Nancy's untethered expansion. Sarah is the yielding, intuitive *yin* to Nancy's energetic,

expansive *yang*, and thus is forced to act as a container for Nancy's power in order to create

balance. In Sarah's resistance to accepting the gift of the spirit, she faces her own anxiety towards wielding power. It is only in the moment before her death that she is able to muster the courage, after which she embodies what Bataille (1991) calls a "freedom of mind." After she anxiously relives the experiences leading up to her suicide attempt, including the hallucinations of bugs, serpents, and rodents, she pursues Nancy with "an exuberance, a superfluity" that imbues her with "an incomparable force" (Bataille, 1991, pp. 13-14). She has become liberated through the acceptance of her innate gift, her connection to power, so does not kill Nancy, but rather establishes limits to her power. At the end of the film, we see Nancy in a mental institution, restrained and drugged. She claims that she can fly, which in her new state of being will not be believed.

As an audience, how then do we see Nancy's downfall? Do we read it like Cixous, as the sorceress destroyed, with nothing but "mythic traces" left behind? Nancy is indeed institutionalized in a mental asylum, yet there is a lingering impression left from her institutionalization, a nagging concern at the edges of her demise. She is not believed when she says that she can fly because she cannot fly. Her power has been restrained. As Sarah says, she has misused her gift and it has thus been rescinded. As outsiders, however, we know that she is telling the truth. There is a seed of doubt here, a wondering whether the ravings of the 'hysteric' might not connect to a socially dissociated narrative but, rather, might indicate an internally consistent truth, like what Laing (1970) asserts about the ravings of those experiencing psychosis. In addition, we have Sarah who, when visited by Rochelle and Bonnie to ask whether she still has her powers, can summon a lightning bolt out of the sky to strike down a tree branch that then falls in front of them. Sarah retains her power, which suggests to the audience that there

is the ability to retain a gift given by the spirit of Manon, but only if one uses it with respect to its limits and in service of the community.

Transmission of Somatic Realties

In the images and ideologies embedded within this film, we have what may be referred to as "crystallized philosophical fragments, mind bombs that work to expand the universe of thinkable thoughts" (DeLuca & Peeples, 2002, p. 6). We see played out or own internalized desires for connection, a return to innocence, an expression of the repressed libidinal powers of eroticism that we are required to redirect towards the aims of capitalist commodity-driven consumerism. It may be that "a thought, either formulated to oneself or not formulated at all, works secretly on the mind and yet has but little direct influence over it" (Weil, 2003, p. 186). Whether one has direct experience of knowledge of the deeper themes contained within this film, it plants a seed in the psyche that may become activated. There is created a question of, "what if?" This question only needs to come into contact with fertile soil in order to grow.

Shutten (2006) offers that "media can offer covert access to [a] movement's ideologies" (p. 349), in this instance, the movements of Neo-Paganism, Wicca, Witchcraft, or the Occult, alongside other movements that share an ideological core in their reverence for nature or a radical belief in the power of the individual to shape reality. One may contend that "popular culture is always contradictory and will include traces of the struggle between dominant and resistant ideologies in order to increase its 'popular' appeal" (Schutten, 2006, p. 349). In an appeal towards authenticity, *The Craft* serves as a covert revolutionary text, a narrative that performs what one may refer to as "consciousness-raising… [of] validating submerged realities and constructing voice within safe space as a basis for affective transformation" (Firth 2016, p. 128).

THE WITCH

Conclusion

The erotic is not limited to the act of sexual congress but rather is an effusive energy that links one within limitless being. When one is in contact with the wild erotic, there is a sense of continuity of all-pervasive being and doing within a collective whole. Yet, this force cannot be properly contained within the social imaginary as a limitless force; it cannot be contained at all. As such, there is need for an ability to escape, to walk outside of the limits of order, to touch upon the ground of being, to undo the social order and re-enter into it as newly baptized, as one aware of the order *as* an order, as a created text in which we live and breathe. Through media like *The Craft* (Wick, 1996)*,* we see an example of a narrative that not only sets out a philosophical framework for such a journey, but that also exemplifies some of the practices that might take one there. We needn't experience the overt and instantaneous magic that is exhibited in the film to be able to open ourselves to the raw intensity of direct contact with nature as both a test and a home to our mortality and life as human beings. There is more to the world than what is constituted in the habitus. It is for witches and adventurers to go out and bring back knowledge from the beyond.

Chapter 6: Witches, Wolves, and Cyborgs

A Minor Literature of Immanence

You Ready? [Digital image] (2020)

The world exists as a flow, between nature and human, human and technology, nature and technology. As Hung (2014) suggests, "The natural plane does not seek to distinguish between natural and human, but to think about how people enter a diverse relationship with other beings" (p. 155). As desire emerges into being, the act touches upon and through the boundaries of the other. Humanity is suffused with nature, touching upon and by it. Without the definitions, words, and concepts from which the world is built, the divisions between objects and beings of the world exist within a state of flux. What stops one from seeing human technology as a natural object? Would it change how we build our technology to see it as emergent from nature? Perhaps if we saw our houses, cars, and clothes as pieces of the world that are continuous with it, we might inevitably feel into an understanding of return, where created objects may emerge from an return to the Earth. We might begin to feel that even our stuff belongs to the Earth and thus exists within a cycle of perpetual regeneration and decay.

In the 1973 film, *Fantastic Planet* (Laloux, 1973), the human race (Oms) are bought and sold as pets to a species of giant robotic aliens (Draags). In the story, the Oms eventually learn secret knowledge from the Draags and use it to throw over their captors, installing themselves on a satellite to their planet. We see in this story an inversion of human exceptionalism and with it an invitation towards empathy with the dispossessed. Becoming closer to the beings of the more-than-human world expands the potential of identity. What might it mean to see oneself as prey, as in Plumwood's (1999) meditations on being nearly eaten by a crocodile? What about as a pet? What about as a witch? A robot? A chair? Through the means of simulating and experimenting via technology, we are increasingly able to opt into or out of identities that also open the imaginal to new possibilities. We have a proliferating storying of the self, the potential of intentionality in crafting an ego. Freud (1960) says,

> It is to this ego that consciousness is attached; the ego controls the approaches to motility–that is, to the discharge of excitations into the external world; it is the mental agency which supervises all its own constituent processes, and which goes to sleep at night, though even then it exercises the censorship on dreams. (p. 8)

Our outer presentation exists as a site of sensual contact with the world, but not only sensual, it is the site of imaginal contact as well. If the ego has the potential to release or repress our very dreams, what might be possible if one were able to mediate the ego, to recast it through a redrawing of the boundary between self and other? If we wish to harness this potential to further embody emancipatory narratives, to bring them into practice in the present moment, especially in healing the divide between human and nature, we must not reject human invention. Instead, it may be fruitful to seek out a balance between the romantic narrative of past communion with

nature and the transcendence of limits within the imaginal, which are facilitated through technology.

Witches are able to create a tether between these two radically different realities. I examine this link through the literary tradition of internet memes as artifacts of this synthesis. I argue that memes may encompass the identificatory possibilities of Witchcraft and have the potential to exemplify a flattening of difference between human and nature through the possibilities of technology and its ability to radically expand the imaginal space of human potentiality. I examine Witchcraft memes as a form of what Deleuze and Guattari (1983) call a "minor literature," a literature within a literature, a form of recontextualized symbolic order formed from the pieces of a larger ideational structure. I provide a set of tantalizing examples that demonstrate the potential of memes as a literary form, as well as pointing towards the latent organic power of internet communication to spark the imagination as well as to spur the creation of new forms of social organization.

I ground this theoretical exploration in Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the plane of immanence, triangulated with Haraway's (1990; 2016) concept of the cyborg in *The Cyborg Manifesto* and the image of the wolf in Raphael's (1997) article, "Theology, Redemption and the Call of the Wild." Each of these cases provides a balance in the creation of new forms of identity. It is through the liminal where subjects may take up the tools necessary to confront the patriarchal drive to consume or destroy the natural world while also embracing humanity's creative potential, the pursuit of human comfort, joy, and pleasure in harmony with total ecological health.

A Minor Literature Through Memes

Brown (2013) asserts that "Memes are not only funny cat photos; they are the way people think about their culture." (p. 190). When we connect to memes, it is because they express

something that feels true about the way we live our lives or how we see the world. If we decide

to put something on our Facebook feeds, it reflects Dennet's (1990) assertion that our esteem for

particular memes makes them the more replicable. We share what we feel too be true. Memes are

replicable for myriad reasons. Their quality as amusements orient them towards expressions of

fun, yet, they also carry within them discreet packages, bundles, perspectives. The purview of a

meme carries within it a position and from this perspective, one might understand memes as

what Deleuze, Guattari, and Brinkley (1983) call a minor literature, "the literature a minority

makes in a major language" (p. 16). They turn the true on its head, making it funny. They

express something that was unspoken, bringing it into the real with all its complexities,

contradictions, celebrations and negations.

Broadcasting memes that appeal to a subculture, in this instance, those attached to the

aesthetic of Witchcraft, present a particular reading of the host culture inscribed with alternative

modes of morality using an altered version of a dominant language. Hebdige (1987) says,

"ideology by definition thrives *beneath* consciousness. It is here, at the level of 'normal common

sense,' that the ideological frames of reference are most firmly sedimented and most effective

because it is here that their ideological nature is most effectively concealed" (p. 11). Bringing an

ideological reframing of the mundane world onto the internet is a probing of that sediment, a

testing of the permeability of one's ideological perspective. If I laugh at a meme, does that mean

that it is true? It may be that, "The struggle between different discourses, different definitions

and meanings within ideology is… a struggle within signification a struggle for possession of the

sign which extends to even the most mundane areas of everyday life" (p. 17). If a meme can

successfully communicate and replicate itself, it can begin to wrest away control over the

meaning of things and in the case of the ideology like Witchcraft, putting that control directly into the hands of the individual.

The reflexive act of absorbing, adopting, or transforming, and then sharing is the foundation of what Shifman (2014) calls "participatory culture" (p. 4). The internet is a place where ideas proliferate and the territory of the internet, as much as it is relegated to cyberspace, also touches down upon our embodied worlds. The concept of sharing is anchored in ways that suggest that "sharing is not only a buzzword" but "has emerged as a central cultural logic, encompassing realms such as 'sharing economies' and sharing emotions in intimate relationships" (Shifman, 2014, p. 19). The internet becomes a place of reciprocity, where we may share and be shared, where we make take in as we produce, where meaning may become tethered and transformed and then actuated in the world through our identities, beliefs, and actions. Indeed, one may argue that the internet has revealed a latent human drive towards sharing, collaboration, and communication.

Yet, the internet also serves as a kind of shadow, revealing the deep, hidden, and turbulent divisions in our cultural psyche. The implicit moral realities embedded in memes act as forms of emotional and cultural expression that may, in turn, take root in minds that are susceptible to their communications (Knobell & Lankshear, 2005). In truth, even though memes are relegated to cyberspace, they still need to pass through the realm of the senses to be both processed and passed along (Shifman, 2014) and they do so by wielding the lived significations of the everyday. There is a larger cultural process happening here, of sifting through, sharing, and discarding cultural baggage in order to find a proper mirror of the self. In Dawkins's (1989) broader sense of the meme as a replicable cultural form, each meme carries within it a set of interlocking values and logics that extend beyond the immediate signification. For example, style

THE WITCH

can have embedded deep-set social, cultural, or religious meanings. Hebdige (1987) says, "Style

in subculture is… pregnant with significance. Its transformations go 'against nature,' interrupting

the process of 'normalization" (p. 18). In contemporary society, we are more able "to make

choices about what we do with the cultural baggage that previous generations have left us: to use

our capacity for meta-representation in order to collate and evaluate it" (Distin, 2005, p. 194).

Through an ever-increasing capacity to both share and re-mix, we develop tools that enable us to

pick and choose our very identities, creating channels for the expression of new perspectives.

Identificatory Pastiche, a Minor Literature of Self

Laing (1967) asserts that in the attempt to find an authentic form of expression, "No one

can begin to think, feel or act now except from the starting point of his or her own alienation" (p.

12). To discover one's unique voice, one must begin to undo the cultural baggage of one's

predecessors, by examining and understanding them and then, potentially, by undoing or perhaps

reinscribing them. Seibt and Norksov (2012) suggest, "personal identity is best represented by a

selection function that generates identificatory narratives" (p. 286). They assert that identity is a

process of sifting wherein we attach ourselves to those things with which we find identification,

and from that assemblage we construct a self. We can see this also in the Bruyneel's (2007)

"third space" where identity under settler culture becomes a selection of momentary instances of

identification that emerge from the individual centre rather than an outer ideological or cultural

center. This is not just a shallow sifting process, but rather a search for identificatory meaning in

the world.

Through the internet, we have a space much like the imaginary, where we are able to try

on identities ungrounded from the physical body, exploring instead the body without organs, a

body without substance and therefore with limitless potential (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003). In this

way, there is the possibility of gaining access to parts of the self that would have otherwise been

denied or repressed by cultural forces that place meaning upon one particular configuration of

the body or another, through gender, through appearance, through race. On the internet, we can

be any gender, culture, or species. Turkle (2011) suggests that "when identity is multiple in this

way, people feel 'whole' not because they are *one*, but because relationships between aspects of

self are fluid and undefensive" (p. 194). So, while Winczewski (2010) argues that the pastiche as

applied to identity may result in egolessness, there is more to the story than just that. In a minor

literature, we take the larger narrative and remix it in order to bring out themes that may

otherwise be buried or suppressed. In this form of the pastiche, we are able to express an ego that

may otherwise have become decimated by the dominant narrative.

In identifying with archetypes and symbols that are represented in our culture, we may

effectively remix our identities in ways that liberate repressed energies. For example, as Raphael

(1997) depicts it, "The call of the wild is at least a call to remember the unbounded self; a self

that is not exhausted or defined by its occupations" (p. 59). Within Western epistemologies, the

self may easily become identified with one's occupation, thus one's identification with such roles

may become prescriptive and stultified. In identifying with a narrative construct like the call of

the wild, or identification with a figure of the wolf, we instead may be able to draw upon cultural

narratives that undo or work against the very restrictions that bind the full expression of our

libidinal energies. Furthermore, "the phrase 'the call of the wild' reminds us that nature is

conscious, that the boundaries between human, animal, and plant life are fluid, and that we must

listen to nature's invitation to biophilic, ecological living" (Raphael, 1997, p. 62). In re-mixing

human identity, the place and meaning of all other living and non-living things of the world are

also shifted. The process thus becomes a total reordering of the narrative matrix of the

imaginary. It is our interpretation of the real that is being undone and rewritten.

I'm a Witch [digital image] (2020)

In the "I'm a witch" meme, we see the rejection of externally imposed identities. We see a girl, addressing another person in an instructional tone, explaining that she is not, in fact, a girl but is instead, a witch. Her image does not encapsulate her being, rather the image represents a declaration of being that becomes a storying of the self. One may choose one's identity despite, and even in contrast to, the social construct that is suggested by one's image. In Haraway's (2016) notion of the cyborg, there exists as "a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centers structuring any possibility of historical transformation" (p. 7). We can see this at play in the pastoral reimagining of "wild" humanity, in the rejection of socially mediated concepts of the self. We may become a human that runs with the wolves like those documented in Estés' (1992) survey of the wild woman archetype or we may become witches complicated by contemporary technological realities.

In the present moment, we are confronted by the need to make sense of a world that our narrative order can no longer contain. We must contend with the fact that within the chaos of the new, we are ever more tempted into a posture that accepts the fact that, "Every encounter,

contagion, or assemblage generates and brings about another difference and genesis" (Hung, 2014, p. 150). The future of the cyborg embraces a reality wherein we engage in the uncovering of our identities within the shifting and contingent potential of each moment. We each become a "naïve ontologist" (Laing, 1967, p. 142). attempting to contend with a potentially toxic intermix of conflicting and potentially disastrous narratives of human identity while also trying to preserve and activate our own unique desires within that same world.

As we witness greater and greater levels of global environmental destruction, it is becoming increasingly clear that "in order to survive humans must constitute a new form of allying and combining with extra-territorial relations" (Hung, 2014, p. 156). Yet, how is it that we may accomplish this? We may see that "when people go beyond their limited physical form, or beyond the 'Human' form regulated by ontology" that they may "constitute and create their own life." (Hung, 2014, p. 156). We have the challenge of recasting humanity within a narrative that sets both our collective and individual identities within a structure of inter-being, where we may constitute each other within a web of relationships. It may seem counter-intuitive to look to the internet as a place to engage in such a task, but it may very well be one of the best places for an ideological, narrative revolution to take place. For the internet is both 'out there' in the ephemeral space of the imaginal as much as it is 'in here' in the situated space of the body.

As we engage in affinity spaces on the internet, where we may explore and experiment with identity, Bommarito (2014) points out that these spaces extend themselves to the desks and offices, kitchen tables, and cafes of the world. McNeil (2009) challenges the distinction between real and digital, saying, "Distinguishing these virtual spaces from 'real life is actually inaccurate – they *are* real life to the people who use them" (p. 84). Distinctions that become drawn around 'the real' reflect Laing's (1967) frustration around what society labels as real and what is

relegated to the unreal. He contends that it is an act of oppression to situate a person's experience

in the place of the unreal, rejected by the collective real and thus banished from the centre from

which meaning is produced. Thus, when we encounter narratives that seek to elevate, or in the

very least, to validate a facet of one's actual experience that has been otherwise rejected by a

collective narrative, what Binning (2014) calls "consensual reality," or what Engels (1949)

would refer to as "false consciousness" (p. 451), we may find a new sense of shared affinity.
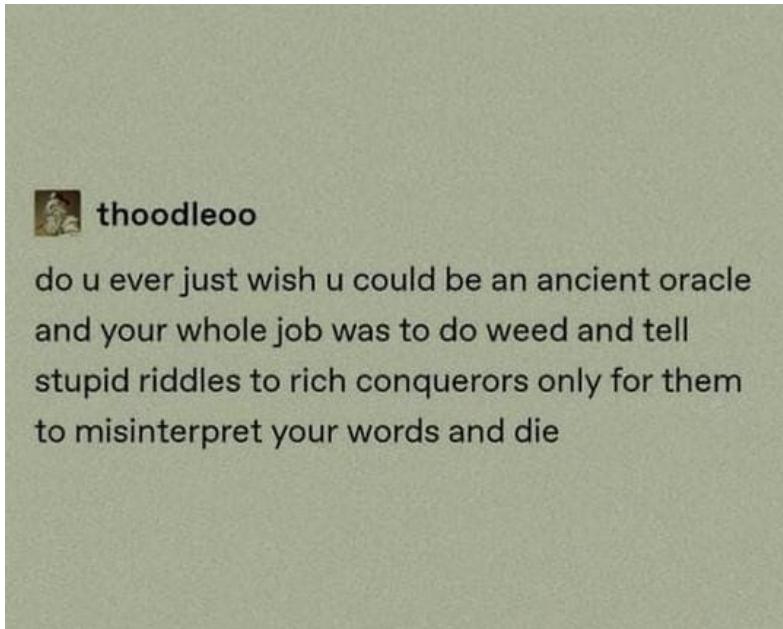
Ancient Oracle [digital image] (2020)

Broader narratives of oppression rely on the complicity of a community participating in a

collective understanding that normalizes which realities will be accepted and which rejected. In

the ancient oracle meme, an image taken of a tweet by user thoodleoo, we see a kind of wistful

reference to the oracles archetype, a figure that could engage in mind-altering substances in order

to see visions and who would be approached by those in power for advice. It is implied here that

oracles, due to the nature of their gift and office, might offer cryptic advice that would lead to the

ultimate downfall of those seeking prophesy. There is a harkening to an imagined past, of an

archaic social role that invokes a kind of chaotic influence able to touch upon those at the highest

echelons of power. In the meme, we see an appeal to countercultural use of substances as seen

through the lens of mystic or ritual use as well as an appeal to a counter-narrative to order and

progress, a playful imaginary wherein progress is put to a halt by a social order that gives

privileged place to the a-rational. We also see a latent sense of dis-ease with the current social

order, a sense of malaise or discontent with the responsibilities and social roles of a modern

imaginary. Here in this small packet are hidden the seeds of a deep, sensual rebellion against

sense, against progress, against work. Memes are potent texts, alive with liberatory potential.

When we look to our environments, both online and in the flesh, Caine (2011) asserts that

our attitudes to all forms of social realities such as "violence, drug use, and sex, as well as

kindness, compassion, and even a love for reading, are 'picked up' by what important people do

in a child's life" (p. 162). Who is an important person? A child may just as easily attach to a

figure who validates and solidifies their own sense of identity than to a parent or other authority

figure who does not. Alan Watts (1966) observes that

> … our most private thoughts and emotions are not actually our own. For we think in
>
> terms of languages and images which we did not invent, but which were given to us by
>
> our society…. Our social environment has this power just because we do not exist apart
>
> from a society. Society is our extended mind and body. (pp. 64 – 65)

We are given our oppression by our social world, and it is through our social world that we will

rise above it. We are looking not only to those around us to take our cues, but increasingly, as

technology use becomes a part of the everyday flows of life (DeGennaro, 2008), the people who

populate our lives are part flesh, part machine, just as we are. Increasingly, the machinic world of

the internet becomes another kind of social mind, an imaginal space where mind and machine

become one in an ordinary flow and where boundaries between individual and self, individual

and community, and individual and world become both flexible and permeable. It is in this

shifting world that we enter into a space wherein we may seek forms of identity that look beyond

those given to us, reaching into forms of emancipatory identity that emerge from ecologies of the

machinic synthesis.

Real Beliefs [Digital Image] (2019)

In the "real beliefs" meme, we see a man dressed in formal wear standing in front of a

mirror. Behind him, it is seen that his outfit lacks a back and he is wearing black lingerie

underneath. In front of him it says, "My spiritual beliefs that I discuss with my family" and

behind is "My actual spiritual beliefs." There is a doubling of self that occurs when acceptance

of the authentic, or even an attempt to locate the authentic, clashes with an overarching cultural

expectation. Here, the front-facing presentation is respectable and it is only when we see

reflected the hidden aspect of the figure, the shadow dimension or unknown, that we can see a

depth to the character that is hidden from the social world but that nonetheless serves as an

important part of that person, as two sides to a coin. When we cannot adequately exist in the

spaces we are given, with the community we are born into, we may seek other forms of

expression that allow for the fullness of our being to manifest. It is in this way that memes such

as this offer a kind of validation for queer, atypical identities to exist, as though saying that

reality of the interiority of a person is just as valid as their social expression.

Transcendence Through Immanence

Laing (1967) declares, "perception, imagination, fantasy, reverie, dreams, memory, are

simply *modalities of experience*, none more 'inner' or 'outer' than any other" (p. 20). His

analysis of the political aspects of what is considered 'real' is an attempt to include the subjective

nature of reality as something to be considered as true, if only true for the individual. In this

flattening of distinction, we must accept a more radical notion of the real as something bordering

on what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to as the plane of immanence in which, "There are

only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least

between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules and particles of all kinds" (p. 266). In

this, there is a levelling between human, nature, and technology as they say that on the plane of

Nature "there is no distinction between the natural and the artificial" (p. 266). Nature becomes a

category that contains all. It is the immanent, that which houses all and from which nothing may

truly distinguish itself. It is a sensual category, a feeling rather than a notion, a way of being with

the world in the present moment awareness of it. In this way, the world becomes, as Hung (2014)

would suggest, "a world without rules, rather than the actual and striated world as it is now. This

does not suggest that the world is nihilistic and chaotic, but that the world is breaking out of the

rules that constrain it from further expressing itself. By doing so, the world becomes an infinite

singularity" (Hung, 2014, p. 147). There is not a human world and a natural world, but instead

the human world may be considered an extension of a natural world that is a container for all

activities and things of all worlds. We may further seek out an expanded sense of the ecological

as striving "to ensure that all existents thrive in and are sustained by their habitats, that they maintain vitality, activity, and creativity" (Hung, 2014, p. 149). This suggests that as beings of nature, we may have our particularities addressed by the notion of the ecological. Technology, including the internet, is an ecological force, a habitus exhibited by human entities within nature.

Thus, when we begin to think about a form of identity that emerges from an immanent reality, we see that, "Becoming aims not at reaching a form, but at discovering adjacent, indiscernible or non-distinctive zones" (Hung, 2014, p. 151). This reflects the pastiche of identity, or of trying-out or remixing that happens on a disembodied internet that may then be drawn down into embodiment through revisions to the individual's narrative of self, such as through identification as a witch or the wolf, the wild-woman, the cyborg. Among the community referred to as "Otherkin," members lay claim to identities other than human. Here, "there are a variety of types of self-knowledge supported within the community, including such constructions of the individual as: a human body with a non-human soul; multiple souls within the one body, a human who is a reincarnated non-human and even, occasionally, those who claim physical status as non-human" (Kirby, 2012, p. 276). It may seem bizarre at first glance, but consider that "Shamans' ritual activities and experiences (e.g., soul flight, guardian spirit quest, death and rebirth) involve fundamental structures of cognition and consciousness and representations of psyche, self, and other" (Winkelman, 2004, p. 194). What might we as Otherkin or Shamans be reaching for, trying to investigate, integrate, revitalize?

Hung explores Deleuze's notion of the physical body as being something that is both grounded in the reality of the physical but that also transcends it in "the body without organs." There is the body that expresses itself through form and sensation and there is the body as self, as identity. This is contingent upon not only the physical reality of the body but also of fantasy, of

the imaginal realm that is complicated by the fact that, as Laing (1967) suggests, "The relation of experience to behaviour is not that of inner to outer. My experience is not inside my head. My experience of this room is out there in the room" (p. 21). There is no strict distinction or line between my inner or imaginal world and my outer, physical reality just as there is no clear delineation between nature, human, and technology beyond that which we create within our words and stories. There may very well be an *out there* to which we react, but as to what that *means* or how it relates with or between humans and other beings and objects in the world is anyone's guess. We are forever living in the interstice between language and form. While we may be able to replicate material interactions in science, we cannot nail down the infinite into words, nor replicate the experience of ecstasy, fulfilment, pleasure, or happiness.

What we are doing then, as writers and readers of a minor literature is "freeing life wherever it is imprisoned, or tempting it into an uncertain combat" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 171). By toying with the narrative constructions of a world that is oppressing us, we may confront that very same world by reordering its sense of meaning, to use its own worlds and symbolic structures to create new meanings, either obvious or discreet.

For each and every one of us must accomplish "an intensive discipline of unlearning" which may become "necessary for *anyone* before one can begin to experience the world afresh, with innocence truth and love" (Laing, 1967, p. 26). Laing believed that we live in an insane world and that we each have our own reactions to it. Those of us who react with insanity are not necessarily unwell, but rather, we are within a cultural process that touches upon our bodies and minds in unique ways. Furthermore, the sane are not necessarily well, for the ability to thrive under oppression requires extraordinary configurations. Laing (1967) says,

From the moment of birth, when the Stone Age baby confronts the twentieth-century

mother, the baby is subjected to these forces of violence, called love, as its mother and

father, and their parents and their parents before them, have been. These forces are

mainly concerned with destroying most of its potentialities, and on the whole this

enterprise is successful. By the time the new human is fifteen or so, we are left with a

half-crazed creature more or less adjusted to a mad world. (p. 58)

Laing is suggesting that enculturation, the process by which we formed to confront the prevailing

conditions of the world into which we are brought, considering our historical inheritance of

violence, trauma, and despair, must therefore be approached with reasonable scepticism. We

must consider, as Haraway (2016) suggests, "The dichotomies between mind and body, animal

and human, organism and machine… public and private, nature and culture, men and women,

primitive and civilized" (p. 32). to understand more about the ground upon which they have been

established and promoted. Seibt and Norskov (2012) describe the notion of "strong

disintegration" that they say "involves a transition from static unity to dynamic unity, where

internal coherence or the compatibility of parts is no longer required" (p. 292). Whereas

Winczewski (2010) warns us of the dangers of decoherence, which may engender a lack of

centre, in their idea of strong disintegration we can see how the transgression of boundaries

might also bring about a centre that did not exist before, that was unreachable due to social and

cultural conditions of violence and suppression.

Interviewee Griselda Rodriguez Solomon states, In Galer's (2020) documentary *The

Instagram Witches of Brooklyn*, that the word bruja (or witch) "has been used to demonize

powerful women . . . . Unfortunately, because of patriarchy that type of woman is a bit too

powerful so that's been an identity that has been repressed" (0:04:20). There is a perception of

THE WITCH

the witch as a person of power who is demonized specifically *because* of her power. Thus, the witch becomes a source of symbolic power, a means to identity in defiance of patriarchal norms. Yet, the witch is also a dark figure, one of taboo. Raphael (1997) says that taboo acts "are inauspicious and that violations are attended by sickness, chaos and misfortune" but she also goes on to say that the transgression of patriarchal limits is not the same as a transgression against taboo in the original sense. For, she asserts, patriarchy itself was always a violation and that by crossing over its boundaries, one is only taking back what was once stolen. So, to establish an authentic individual centre that reflects the reality of one's experiences as a woman or as another marginalized identitiy like a witch, one must take steps to establish new limits by violating the violation, by transgressing upon the transgression.

As a warning, Haraway (2016) points out that the desire for a "common language" (p. 52) in feminism may establish new forms of oppression, as it is in the limiting and static delineations of identity within which we become trapped. Instead of creating a new normativity, we may instead establish a non-normative normativity. We can create a centre of centres, one where a multiplicity of shifting meanings becomes the new norm. There are not two genders, or three, or 20, but an infinite number of configurations. As Haraway (2016) posits, "There is no drive in cyborgs to produce total theory, but there is an intimate experience of boundaries, their construction and deconstruction. There is a myth system waiting to become a political language to ground one way of looking at science and technology and challenging the informatics of dominations–in order to act potently" (p. 66).

It is the lack of a central totalizing definition that gives this form of meaning-making its power. It is power in the flexibility to pivot, to mean many things and to shift this meaning in ways that respond to the needs of the moment. Gore (2019) states in the introduction to *Hexing*

the Patriarchy, "we will use every tool in our arsenal–from the everyday to the otherworldly–to undermine them and ultimately remove [the patriarchy]" (Introduction: Magical Letters, para. 60). In letting go of the need to assert a materialist rationalistic paradigm, the witch becomes able to mobilize techniques that lie in the a-rational. One rejects the reality under which magic cannot be wielded against the oppressor and thus, one may create new modes of potential for political action. Because the state of magic cannot be captured, defined, or systematized, it exemplifies a form of shifting reality that asserts itself through changeability.

In a world where there is an ever-shrinking sense of *away*, of places that may exist outside of the patriarchal order, the witch, and by association the magician, sorceress, or oracle, provides a means by which one may recast oneself within the patriarchal order as the very person who it most fears and thus create a sense of *away*, within. The witch, as an almost mythological figure, does not have definitive edges. There is no holy scripture, manual, or dictionary of Witchcraft recognized as canonical. Rather, Witchcraft presents itself as a way for the disenfranchised to "'de-code or deterritorialize' as a means of affirming a perspective that is other than the normative cultural narrative to which they are subjected" (Delezue, Guattari, & Brinkley, 1983, p. 13).

COWORKER: What you doing this weekend?
ME: Just hanging with some friends

@unitedsoultribe

It's Friday Bitches [Digital image] (2020)

In the "It's Friday Bitches" meme, we see what is typically characterized a casual conversation about plans for the weekend juxtaposed against an image of a nude woman levitating in the centre of a circle of other nude women reading books. Its caption reads, "It's Friday Bitches," which similarly acts as another level of juxtaposition. Invoked is a sense of the uncanny but also the socially transgressive, of gathering in nature, of collectively practicing magic in the nude, of women holding in their hands sources of knowledge and wisdom and gathering to investigate it. The body and its transgressions are casually invoked as a normal part of recreation, thus hinting at the possibility that outside of the confines of the modern work world, there is the possibility to engage in deeply transgressive practices as an everyday part of one's function.

I would contend that the existence of memes such as those cited in this chapter, are able to create a shifting sense of solidarity and community without closure or definition (Delezue, Guattari, & Brinkley, 1983, p. 17). They invoke a sense of the possible through a making ordinary of the extraordinary. They challenge the normative in their light treatment of the transgressive as though saying, but of course, our entire lives are illegal.

The Power of Reformation

In Galer's (2020) documentary @chiquitabrujita says,

When I think about what makes life worth living, I think about all of the moments I am with others, right? That provides me with access to a well of energetic capital that I can then use in the moments where I encounter micro-aggressions and I encounter explicit macro-aggressions, right? When I encounter structural systems, policies, laws, patriarchy. (0:08:30)

The being-with-others that she is referring to is one that came together for her through interactions primarily through Instagram and through identification with the archetype of the *bruja*. Through the process of reclaiming an ancestral archetype in the form of the witch*,* people like her create for themselves new tools of resistance that they may assert within acts of ordinary aggression. They are creating identities that allow for new forms of solidarity and practice. As such, we see reflected the reality that formal processes of organization are being replaced by fluid networks (Shifman, 2014). One may gather with others who define themselves using the same pieces, as witches or brujas, wolves, mermaids, dragons. These are fluid networks that form organically and that may respond organically to the mundane and lived oppressions of the everyday. Not only do the memes passed around by these groups form a literature encompassing new social realities but they also hint towards a new vision of how "the world should look and the best way to get there" (Shifman, 2014, p. 120). In a clever reframing of patriarchal norms, we

see hints of the world that may be. Even in the limited scope of those images presented here, we see a language reaching towards the non-normative, towards ancient occupations, towards illegal*ized* and a-moral realities that they are remixed and passed along as a form of cultural resistance.

Implicit within the memes that we encounter is a subtle but pervasive questioning of given definitions, a complication of binary designations, and structures of power. Haraway (2016) asserts, "Liberation rests on the construction of the consciousness, the imaginative apprehension, of oppression, and so of possibility" (p. 6). Is it enough to introduce a question of "what if" to spur one to curiosity, to seek out the limits of the given narrative of our social world? This

"what if" then becomes comingled with, as Seibt and Norskov (2012) suggest,

> Our new cultural (*qua* technological) capacity of mixing up our real and virtual lives 'on the go,' continuously as we please, creating a 'mash-up' of several lives or a 'life-mix'… allows us to vary the degree of coherence in our self-understanding–we can consciously split our personal identificatory narrative into two or more, living parallel lives guided by incompatible personal narratives. (p. 292)

This newly forming capacity allows one to bring that 'what if' into our bodies, to play with the notion of 'what if' I wasn't oppressed, victimized, worthless? What if, in fact, deep down under layers of cultural conditioning, I am a wild animal, a force of nature?

Within this process of questioning and remixing we find that, as Gore suggests, "Women recover their wildness by blowing up in the face of patriarchy–a massive dramatic release of volcanic rage and defiant joy that at once blasts or curses patriarchy and blasts open the carapace of femininity, releasing the natural (that is, powerful) woman within" (Raphael, 1997, p. 57). As

the boundaries between oppressor and oppressed, victimizer and victim and blurred, we may then see the release of hitherto suppressed energies that become properly directed at the forces that have been imprisoning them. By utilizing the simultaneous embrace of the imaginative potential of the internet with the identificatory process of re-mixing our personal narratives, we may find ways to honour the past "by *not* repeating their hurtful mistakes–and by being thoughtful about how we can best serve our changing communities here and now" (Gore, 2019, Introduction: Magical Letters, para. 50). Undoing the feminine archetype and attaching it to that of the witch, or the wild-woman, priestess, oracle, or magician, we recast ourselves in a role with power.
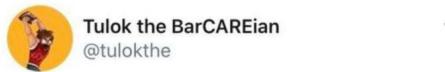
> **Tulok the BarCAREian**
> @tulokthe
>
> Town Priest: The witches that control the woods are evil.
>
> Girl: What do they do?
>
> Priest: They aren't heteronormative or patriarchal, do lots of drugs and have sex with each other.
>
> Girl: Omg, what specific parts of the woods are they in, so I can avoid them extra hard?
>
> 3:24 PM · 2/22/20 · Twitter for Android

The Woods [Digital image] (2020)

In "The Woods" meme, we see a conversation happening between a girl and a priest in which the priest is describing the evils of witches living in the woods. The humour comes from the girl's response, veiled curiosity rather than revulsion. Embedded in the joke is a rejection of the ideals of the church as placed upon the feminine, an embrace of queer sexuality, pleasure, drug use as an alternative mode of being, an embrace of the 'evil' as a liberatory transgression. Through our

embrace of the liberatory potential of recasting ourselves within our own stories, we open the potential to create a present moment wherein a human being may live in harmony with the more-than-human world. We find ourselves moving closer to the acknowledgement that, as Hung (2014) suggests, "The power of self-preservation does not come from the destruction of nature, but from the power of enabling us to be more capable of maintaining relationships with other species, which increases our dynamic loading in order to fulfill our own self-preservation" (pp. 156 – 157). Thus, in a seemingly contradictory way, by disrupting the order of the world, we may invoke a sense of evolving orders, ones that may respond to the dynamic processes of life and liveliness within the present moment. By playing in the 'what if' we may open our narratives to a greater interconnected order that asserts itself in a sense of nature that permeates through all things. This is not a nature that is relegated to the shrinking forests but one that emerges through computers, tsunamis, automobiles, cell-phones, thunderstorms, chipmunks, sunshine, and perhaps most pertinent to our purposes, us.

Conclusion

Memes, and the networked realities to which they are tethered, have the ability to subtly prod at reality through their identificatory potential. In memes, we see the witch as one who may undo and redo the order of things, who may question and then volcanically upend the oppressions to which one is subjected to through the patriarchal order. Gore (2019) says that magic is what allows her to take back the power that was first taken away by patriarchy. There is a latent seething potential for transformation that is activated through the revolutionary pastiche of identity that exists in disembodied online platforms. Through this, we can see the example of the body without organs, tethered in the physical body but also reaching beyond it into a space of flux (Hung, 2014). Haraway's (2016) cyborg is less an archetype than a mechanism, a potentiality of "possible bodies" (p. 33) that is a constitution of the interaction between our tools

and our myths. We can see in these new mythological formations that, in Raphael's (1997) words,

> To speak in the language of animals is to transgress the God-given ontological
>
> boundaries between humans and other animals and, as such, it is intended as a *monstrum*
>
> or warning; an inauspicious sign to patriarchy that the female human animal has joined
>
> forces not only with the economically oppressed, but also with the ecologically
>
> oppressed. (p. 58, italics in original)

 It is a warning, an invocation of terror that stands in the face of patriarchal oppression and derives power from that terror. Wildness is not merely something that we derive from nature, it also has its own network of meanings that may exist in relation to hierarchies, of oppression and hegemony as another literature that may make its own sense of chaotic coherence.

Chapter 7: Conclusion
Living in Immanence

Religious scholar Streng (1985) says, "Myth is more than a story about supernatural beings. It is a story whose symbolic creative force orders a person's existence into a meaningful world" (p. 44). Our stories contain an infinite and indivisible unity into understandable packets, using symbols, archetypes, and characters, to embody and order our sensual experience. Yet, at times, these stories fail to properly capture the now, or else they fail to inspire the hearts of those in the now. In one story, I may become a character who does nothing but serve, my entire existence placed within an order in which I become an appendage of someone else rather than a being in and of myself. In contrast, Bosker (2020) says,

> The latest witch renaissance coincides with a growing fascination with astrology,
>
> crystals, and tarot, which, like magic, practitioners consider ways to tap into unseen,
>
> unconventional sources of power—and which can be especially appealing for people who

feel disenfranchised or who have grown weary of trying to enact change by working

within the system. (para. 11)

The world is at times yielding and at times cruel, it affords us with bounty and also challenge and

misery. Yet, the system that we have created adds another layer to both the grace and the cruelty

of the world and at times, that system may run afoul of its creators. We have systems of power

twisted to create entire underclasses of people. We create a story saying that some people are

supposed to spend their entire lives in service to other people, with dreams that limit them to the

notion of someday joining the class of their oppressors.

Yet, there is a choice, a wildness that lies under the stories that we are told by our

bedsides as children. This wildness beckons us into communion with a greater reality and a

greater source of strength, what Streng (1985) calls the sacred, "an original order before all

worlds, and a transcendent source of all power and knowledge" (p. 47). One might think of this

as a transcendent realm of flux within which we find ourselves, yet it is also manifest in the

world. We can see this in the story of Kwezens in Simpson's (2014) telling of Nisshnaabeg

intelligence. Kwezens is able to learn about the origin of maple sugar from her observations of

squirrels nibbling on the branches of the maple tree in the spring, which she communicates to her

family. We can understand in this story the power of observation, of connection to the world, and

also of connection to community. We are able to see the power of the sacred manifest through

the world and through community, if our orientation allows for it. Simpson (2014) says, "To

re-create the world that compelled Kwezens to learn how to make maple sugar, we should be

concerned with re-creating the conditions which this learning occurred, nor merely the content of

the practice itself" (p. 9). So, while we may continue to produce maple syrup, we cannot enter

into the discovery of ways of living through an engaged, open, and reciprocal relationship to land, living beings, and each other without re-creating the conditions which gave rise to it.

Streng (1985) says, "Human beings have no choice of whether they will construct a symbolic order; they must decide, however, if that symbolic order accurately reflects the Sacred Realm (Being)" (p. 48). Thus, we are given the heavy task of evaluation. It is incumbent upon us to look at the world that we have created with all of its destructive potentials and ask ourselves: Is this the highest order of life that humans may achieve? Bosker (2020) suggests, "Witchcraft beckons with the promise of a spirituality that is self-determined, antipatriarchal, and flexible enough to incorporate varied cultural traditions" (para 14). Yet, it is merely one of the means of engaging with the baggage of our collective inheritance.

As settlers but also as the wounded, as those who have born the burden of a destructive legacy and who live within the tattered fragments of an oppressive social order, can we truly believe that the wealthiest among us are able to transcend the milieu of insecurity, misery, and environmental destruction that lies all around them? Why do the wealthy build such high walls around their compounds if they find themselves at peace? Surely, material goods are not the only requirement of satisfaction and yet the myth of wealth as equal to happiness, to fulfillment, to moral good and rightness in the world remains persistent. Streng (1985) notes, "Myths… are always true within their communal boundaries" (p. 49). We are fed the stories of capitalism, hegemony, patriarchy. It is these stories and their incipient values that permeate the depths of our imaginary.

In the folk song "The Big Rock Candy Mountain" (McClintock, 1928), a traveller recounts his image of heaven. He talks about cigarettes growing on trees, cops having wooden legs, alcohol running down the rocks. In its humour, it points to an imaginary that becomes

wedged within the injustices of the world, thinking of heaven as requiring the pleasure derived

through cigarettes and alcohol and there still being police who arrest you but aren't as good at it.

To some extent, we are all limited by the scope of our imaginary to allow ourselves to think *out*

of the confines of our own mythologies.

Symbolic actions or rituals are a means of transforming the symbols of the everyday. The

Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell chose the acronym W.I.T.C.H as part of

their creating attention-grabbing actions throughout the late '60s (Schweigert, 2018, p. 2) and has

inspired new groups that have brought the theatrical aspects of the former movement into

alignment with spiritual values and practices, using public hexing as a means of political

activism. The notorious Satanic Temple has, in recent years, been using symbolic acts to

challenge restrictions around the practice of religion in the United States (Laycock, 2020). Of

specific note was their attempt to install a statue of Baphomet at the State Capitol in Oklahoma,

meant as a challenge to an existing monument to the biblical ten-commandments. We can

understand actions such as these to be related to an increasing understanding of the symbolic

order and its uses, which can be harnessed in the service of the creation of many things, of justice

and also of hate. In the cooption of symbols by the alt-right and white supremacist groups such

as milk, the rainbow flag, or the okay hand symbol (Ellis, 2017), we can see the shadow side to

the creative pursuit of biophilia. The tools to tweak and alter our collective reality are becoming

more transparent, and as such, we may begin to ask ourselves: If we don't use them, who else

will? And to what ends?

Recently, there was a sensation created when users of WitchTok, not a group but a loose

subculture of witches using the popular app TikTok, claimed to have "hexed the moon" (Martin,

2020). The most notable feature of the entire brouhaha, was that the authors of numerous articles

felt the need to assure people that, on a scientific level, the moon would be fine (Panecasio, 2020; Martin, 2020). What is happening in a culture that teenaged witches using an online app might be able to call into question one's confidence in the stability of the moon? Cosmopolitan talked to a Twitter user, @RodneyStubbs who was one of the people who performed the ritual and who said that he wanted to see if he could do it because people said it couldn't be done (Smith, 2020). He wanted to prove whether he had the power to hex the moon. Is it not telling to note the reaction of the internet to the very notion or idea of doing such a thing? Witchcraft, as a practice, holds less to a strict standard of morality. Rather, it allows individuals to pursue their own sense of connection to natural forces and in so doing, to use it as they will.

Cisneros (1991) says in her short story, "Eyes of Zapata" that "words can hold their own magic. How a word can charm, and how a word can kill." Our words are how we create our worlds; they make up the symbolic mythos in which we live. That is their power. Cisneros (1991) says, "The wars begin here, in our hearts and in our beds." If we are to think of ourselves as continuous with the world, as immanent manifestations of it, then we cannot consider ourselves somehow separate from the horror and oppression of it. We must consider how the implicit beliefs, relationships, and values that we hold dear are exactly what give rise to the world as we see it and if we truly wish to see a different world, we ourselves have to change. We must live through and with that change in and of the world as we wish it to be. Cisneros (1991) lures us with her poetry, saying, "If I am a witch, then so be it, I said. And I took to eating black things—*huitlacoche* the corn mushroom, coffee, dark chiles, the bruised part of fruit, the darkest, blackest things to make me hard and strong." We are able to remake ourselves as a revolutionary process, of stepping through the veil and into a world that is remade, out of words that are as familiar as our own breath and yet made into a new whole, with a new purpose.

THE WITCH

The purpose to which all of this is leading is to a revolution of the body, in which pleasure may be set free of the shackles we place around it, shackles that tie us to the maintenance of a system that satisfies only the most basic longings of our spirits. In order to be just, the world must be made just *by* us, but not only *for* us because that kind of solipsism has gotten us where we are today and is born of a sickness that separates us from the world. If we are to remake ourselves into the image of the wealthy landowner who surrounds their property with high walls, we can never be truly at peace within the world as it is. Instead, we must live as a part of that world, as emergent from it. Our happiness, comfort, health, and happiness depend upon the health of the natural world and it to this world that we owe our true allegiance. If we can begin to accept the animal within the human, we may be able to understand that the very foundations of a way of life that sets us apart from the physical truth of the world, is a lie.

We may choose to integrate our dwellings into the landscape, to wear biodegradable fibres, to eat food grown locally and without chemicals, to bathe naked under the stars. When I am talking to my peers, I often get a sense from them that nature is yucky, uncomfortable, and dirty. If I don't' shower everyday, my body is gross. Indeed, many women I have spoken to have told me that they feel *cleaner* when they shave their legs. We have products in our homes that purport to kill 99.9% of bacteria, both good and bad. Yet, if we take away the animality out of humankind, what do we have left? Where does the pleasure in the body come from but from the physical self in relation to the world, and without pleasure what joy is there to life, what purpose?

I believe that Witchcraft can lead us back into connection with the Earth for the main reason that it places the locus of power back into the centre of the self, to the core of desire, and to feelings of fulfillment and pleasure. If one becomes tuned in, it becomes increasingly difficult

to tune out the world around us and one may, perhaps, become sensitized resonance to the more-than-human. In Witchcraft, the moon is a central symbolic power, as are the other celestial bodies. There is a deep tradition of nature worship in practices of Witchcraft. Many spells require one to source ingredients from the natural world or to attune oneself to cycles in nature such as the seasons and the movements of the stars and planets. The practice itself is deeply embedded within the world and the power that one might derive from it comes from that same world, not merely the human world, but the world that moves from *out there* to *in here*.

The pedagogy of immanence that emerges from this work has yet to develop a solid definition, yet it is found in those practices that bring us into connection with the self through the body, practices intimately tied up within the practice of witchcraft. One can find immanence in sitting meditation, in forest bathing (Fitzgerald, 2019), dance, or anything that might draw one into connection with the body, but I would argue particularly the body *in* a place, *this* place. It seems that the literature and practices of witchcraft, even on the internet, have a seductive quality that even in a disembodied form, entices one into connection. It is where oppression touches down upon our bodies that the destruction seen in the natural world takes root within our own lives. If we just had the time, space, and energy, what could we accomplish? How many of us might take up gardening, or permaculture, handicrafts, or talking to our neighbours if only we had the time? In the flurry of the world we have created for ourselves, achievement and work are held up like ends in and of themselves and it is into this story of work that we pour out our very lives. If we could take a step back without starving or losing our homes, what kind of perspective might we be able to form? It is not enough to develop the self or to connect to the more-than-human world. It must be done in tandem with dismantling the systems of oppression that have taken root within the depths of our imaginary.

THE WITCH

      In 2008, in Montréal, I attended my first Soma Therapy Workshop. Soma is a methodology invented by Roberto Friere. It is a form of group therapy meant to uproot the structures of capitalism in order to experience the freedom that would need to be lived through a true anarchist ideal (Ogo & Dejerk, 2008). There was a moment when we were asked to walk around the room with our eyes closed. Whenever you would brush up against another person, you would melt into an embrace with them, stay there for a moment, then let go. I walked around the room, melting in the arms of unknown strangers again and again. Many cried during the exercise. There was a feeling of breaking apart, of letting down the walls and allowing in the world, of letting in the love that lies right beyond the ends of our fingers. The way isn't only through witchcraft, though witchcraft is certainly one of those ways. There are thousands of voices, linked together in the love of the world, who are fighting daily for its life. We may join this chorus, raising our voices in the love of our bodies, our communities, and our land. It is in the deepest sense of love that we may begin to heal our inheritance from the ancestors.

      It won't be easy to unleash the trapped energy of so many generations of harm. There has been suffering and trauma that has been passed down though our blood and we will have to face that as we move forward. It is a difficult path, but it is the only path that we have. We must face up to the reality of our lives here upon the Earth. As we seek the answers to our questions it may be important to remember that we cannot *create* a sense of connection with nature. We are inextricably linked and always have been. We must only *remember*.

References

@lanaskittens. (2020, July 15). I'm not jealous [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/lanaskittens/status/1283332267205627904

Abram, D. (1996). *The spell of the sensuous: Perception and language in a more-than-human world*. Pantheon Books.

Absolon, K., & Willett, C. (2005). Putting ourselves forward: Location in Aboriginal research. In L. Brown & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Critical, Indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches* (pp. 97-126). Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.

Anderson, R. (2001). Embodied writing and reflections on embodiment. *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, *33*(2), 83–98.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. (2015, December 27). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://web.archive.org/web/20151227092712/http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html

Ancient oracle [Digital image]. (2020). Ancient oracle. https://www.instagram.com/p/B_kccYEnLhi/

Angelou, M. (1978). Still I rise. https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46446/still-i-rise

Bakhtin, M. (1984). *Rabelias and his world* (H. Iswolsky, Trans.). Indiana University Press.

Bandura, A. (1971). *Social learning theory*. Stanford University. https://web.archive.org/web/20131024214846/http://www.jku.at/org/content/e54521/e54528/e54529/e178059/Bandura_SocialLearningTheory_ger.pdf

Barker, A. J. (2014). "A direct act of resurgence, a direct act of sovereignty": Reflections on Idle No More, Indigenous activism, and Canadian settler colonialism. *Globalizations*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2014.971531

Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies* (A. Lavers, Trans.). The Noonday Press.

Bartunek, J. M., & Moch, M. K. (1994). Third-order organizational change and the Western mystical tradition. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *7*(1), 24–41.

Bataille, G. (1991). *The accursed share: An essay on general economy (volume I - consumption)*. Zone Books.

Bell, J. A. (2007). Preventing post-traumatic stress disorder or pathologizing bad memories? *The American Jounral of Bioethics*, *7*(9), 29–30.

Bell, A. C., & Russell, C. L. (1999). Life ties: Disrupting anthropocentrism in language arts education. In J. P. Robertson (Ed.), *Teaching for a tolerant world, grades K-6: Essays and resources* (pp. 68–89). National Council of Teachers of English.

Bell, E., & Sinclair, A. (2014). Reclaiming eroticism in the academy. *Organization*, *21*(2), 268–280. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508413493084

Benjamin, J. (1986). A desire of one's own: Psychoanalytic feminism and intersubjective space. In T. de Lauretis (Ed.), *Feminist studies/critical studies* (pp. 78–101). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-18997-7_6

Bennett, J. (2001). *The enchantment of modern life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics*. https://books.google.ca/books?id=WXtxenlNMXcC

Berger, P. L. (2011). Religion and world construction. *The sacred canopy: Elements of a sociological theory of religion*. Retrieved from https://books.google.ca/books?id=WcC-AYOq6Q4C

Van der Kolk, B. A. (2014). The **body keeps the score**: Brain, mind, and **body** in the healing of trauma. New York: Viking.

Bey, H. (2003). *T.A.Z.: The temporary autonomous zone, ontological anarchy, poetic terrorism*. Autonomedia,

Bietti, L. M., Tilston, O., & Bangerter, A. (2018). Storytelling as adaptive collective sensemaking. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, *114*, 710–732. https://doi.org/10.1111/tops.12358

Binning, K. R. (2014). Consensual reality. In *Encyclopedia of deception* (Vol. 1–2, pp. 199–200). SAGE. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483306902

BIRCH council. (2018, February 28). Principles of Unity. *Reclaiming*. https://reclaimingcollective.wordpress.com/principles-of-unity/

Blenkinsop, S., & Scott, C. (2017). Becoming teacher/tree and bringing the natural world to students: An educational examination of the influence of the other-than-human world and the great actor on Martin Buber's concept of the I/Thou. *Educational Theory*, *67*(4), 453–469. https://doi.org/10.1111/edth.12258

Bock, C. (2016). Climatologists, theologians, and prophets: Toward an ecotheology of critical hope. *Cross Currents*, *66*(1), 8–34. https://doi.org/10.1111/cros.12171

Bommarito, D. (2014). Tending to change: Toward a situated model of affinity spaces. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, *11*(4), 406–418. https://doi.org/10.2304/elea.2014.11.4.406

Bordieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice* (R. Nice, Trans.). Cambridge University Press.

Bosker, B. (2020, February 14). Why witchcraft is on the rise. *The Atlantic*. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/03/witchcraft-juliet-diaz/605518/

Bové, C. M. (1988). "The twin faces of the mother's mask": Julia Kristeva's "Powers of horror: An essay on abjection" (book review). *Discourse: Detroit*, *11*(1), 151–156.

Brown, A. M. (2017). *Emergent strategy: Shaping change and changing worlds*. AK Press.

Brown, A. M. (2019). *Pleasure activism: The politics of feeling good*. AK Press.

Brown, G. (2013). Web culture using memes to spread and manipulate ideas on a massive scale. *Interface: The Journal of Education, Community and Values*, *13*, 187-193.

Brownlee, K. (2018). Collaborative imagination: Earning activism through literacy education. *International Journal of Communication (Online)*, .

Bruyneel, K. (2007). *The third space of sovereignty: The postcolonial politics of U.S.-Indigenous relations*. University of Minnesota Press.

Caine, R. N. (2011). *Natural learning for a connected world: Education, technology, and the human brain*. Teachers College Press.

Ceccarelli, L. (1998). Polysemy: Multiple meanings in rhetorical criticism. *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 84*. 395-415.

Cisneros, S. (1991). Eyes of Zapata. In *Woman hollering creek and other stories*. Vintage Contemporaries.

Cixous, H. (1986). *The newly born woman*. Univeristy of Minnesota Press.

Clark, L. S. (2003). *From angels to aliens*. Oxford University Press.

Coyle, T. T. (2004) *Evolutionary witchcraftI. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin.*

Csikszentimihliyi, M. (2008). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper Collins.

Damiani, S., Dauman, A., & Valio-Cavaglione, A. (Producers), & Laloux, R. (Director). (1973). *Fantastic planet* [Motion picture]. Czechoslovakia & France: Les Films Armorial Ceskoslovenský & Filmexport.

Davis, B., & Sumara, D. (2007). Complexity science and education: Reconceptualizing the teacher's role in learning. *Interchange: A Quarterly Review of Education*, *38*(1), 53–67.

Davis, J. (2003). An overview of transpersonal psychology. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, *31*(2/3), 6–21.

De Block, A., & Adriaens, P. R. (2013). Pathologizing sexual deviance: A history. *The Journal of Sex Research*, *50*(3/4), 276–298. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2012.738259

DeGennaro, D. (2008). Learning designs. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *41*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2008.10782520

Deleuze, G., Guattari, F., & Brinkley, R. (1983). What is a minor literature? *Mississippi Review*, *11*(3), 13–33.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (B. Massumi, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1994). *What is philosophy?* Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (2003). *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Continuum.

DeLuca, K., & Peeples, J. (n.d.). From public sphere to public screen: Democracy, activism, and the "violence" of Seattle. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *19*(2), 125–151.

DeMallie, R. J. (1982). The Lakota ghost dance: An ethnohistorical account. *Pacific Historical Review*, *51*(4).

Dennet, D. C. (1990). Memes and the exploitation of imagination. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism.* 48(2), p. 127-135

Distin, K. (2005). *The selfish meme: A critical reassessment*. Cambridge University Press.

Dyke, E., Meyerhoff, E., & Evol, K. (2018). Radical imagination as pedagogy: Cultivating collective study from within, on the edge, and beyond education. *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship & Pedagogy*, *28*(2), 160–180. https://doi.org/10.1353/tnf.2018.0010

Elias, N. (2001). *The loneliness of dying* (E. Jephcott, Trans.). Continuum International Publishing Group.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography.* Alta Mira Press.

Ellis, C., Bochner, A., Denzin, N., Goodall, H. L., Pelias, R., & Richardson, L. (2008). Let's get personal: First-generational autoethnographers reflect on writing personal narratives. In N. K. Denzin & M. D. Giardina (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry and the politics of evidence* (pp. 309-333). Left Coast Press.

Ellis, E. G. (2017, May 10). The alt-right's newest ploy? Trolling with false symbols. *Wired*. https://www.wired.com/2017/05/alt-rights-newest-ploy-trolling-false-symbols/

Ellis, E. G. (2019, October 30). Trump's presidency has spawned a new generation of witches. *WIRED*. https://www.wired.com/story/trump-witches/

Estés, C. (1992). *Women who run with the wolves: Myths and stories of the wild woman archetype* (1st ed.). Ballantine Books.

Euripides. (1905). *The Bacchae of Euripides* (G. Murray, Trans.). https://gutenberg.ca/ebooks/murrayeuripides-bacchae/murrayeuripides-bacchae-00-h-dir/murrayeuripides-bacchae-00-h.html

Ezzy, D. (1998). Theorizing narrative identity: *The Sociological Quarterly*, *39*(2), 239–252. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1998.tb00502.x

Feldstein, R., Fink, B., & Jaanus, M. (1996). *Reading seminars I and II: Lacan's return to Freud*. The University of New York Press.

Fitzgerald, S. (2019, October 18). The secret to mindful travel? A walk in the woods. *Travel*. https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/lists/forest-bathing-nature-walk-health/

Foucault, M. (1984). *The Foucault reader* (P. Rabnow, Ed.). Pantheon Books.

Freire, P. (1990). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Bergman Ramos, Trans.). Continuum.Freire, P., & Freire, A. M. A. (1997). *Pedagogy of the heart*. New York: Continuum.

Freire, R., & da Mata, J. (1997). *Soma: An anarchist therapy Volume III: Body to body*. Trans. C. Buckmaster.
http://www.scribd.com/doc/127312160/Soma-An-Anarchist-Therapy-Vol-III-Body-to-Body.

Freud, S. (1960). *The ego and the id* (J. Strachey, Trans.). W. W. Norton.

Galer, S. S. (2020, April 1). The Instagram witches of Brooklyn. *BBC World Service*. https://www.instagram.com/tv/B-byAHOgalen8n5/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Gallagher, M. W., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.). (2018). *The Oxford handbook of hope*. Oxford University Press.

Garoian, C. R. (2018). Performing art and its pedagogy of the false. *Studies in Art Education*, *59*(3), 185–200. https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2018.1476950

Gender reveal [Digital image]. (2020) Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/B_lASVEH7JX/

Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2006). Affects and emotions for a postcapitalist politics. In *A postcapitalist politics* (pp. 40–59). University of Minnestoa Press.

Goffman, E. (1961). *Asylums: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. Anchor Books.

Gómez, J. (2017). *An analysis of Roland Barthes's mythologies*. CRC Press.

Gore, A. (2019). *Hexing the patriarchy: 26 potions, spells, and magical elixirs to embolden the resistance*. Basic Books.

Hall, S. (2001). Encoding/decoding. In M. G. Durham & D. M. Kellner (Eds.), *Media and cultural studies: Keyworks* (revised edition). Blackwell.

Habermas, J. (1987). *The theory of communicative action, lifeworld and system: A critique of functionalist reason* (volume 2; T. McCarthy, Trans.). https://uniteyouthdublin.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/4421-the_theory_of_communicative.pdf

Hamilton, M. J. (2017). Ruptures in reformation: Embodiment revealed. *Indian Theatre Journal*, *1*(2), 123-133.

Haraway, D. J. (1990). A manifesto for cyborgs: Science, technology, and socialist feminism in the 1980s. In L. J. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/postmodernism*. Routledge.

Haraway, D. J. (2016). *A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century*. University of Minnesota Press.

Hebdige, D. 9187). *Subculture: The meaning of style*. Routledge.

Heidegger, M. (1953). *Being and time* (J. Strambaugh, Trans.). State University of New York Press.

Hoechsmann, M., & Poyntz, S. R. (2012). *Media literacies: A critical introduction*. Wiley Blackwell.

Holler, L. (1989). Is there a thou "within" nature? A dialogue with H. Richard Niebuhr. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, *17*(1), 81–102.

Hung, S.C. (2014). Deleuze's ethology: Plane of immanence and the impersonal. *Tamkang Review*, *44*(2), 147-.

I'm a witch [Digital image]. (2020). https://www.instagram.com/p/B-g8q9VHIcP/

It's friday, bitches! [Digital image]. (2018) https://www.instagram.com/p/BmTGAIEn5Bn/

Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism: Or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Duke University Press.

Jay, M. (2002). Somaesthetics and democracy: Dewey and contemporary body art. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, *36*(4), 55–69. https://doi.org/10.2307/3301568

Jodelet, D. (1984). The representation of the body and its transformations (L. Hodson, Trans.).

Jodorowsky, A. (2004). *Psychomagic: The transformative power of shamanic psychotherapy*. Inner Traditions.

Johnson, M. (1987). *The body in the mind: The bodily basis of meaning, imagination, and reason*. The University of Chicago Press.

Jung, C. G. (1981.). *The archetypes and the collective unconscious* (H. Read, M. Fordham, & G. Adler, Eds.; R. F. C. Hull, Trans.; 2nd ed., Vol. 9). Routledge.

Kahn, R. V. (2010). Ecopedagogy: An introduction. In *Critical pedagogy, ecoliteracy, and planetary crisis: The ecopedagogy movement* (pp. 1–33). Peter Lang.

King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories : a native narrative* . House of Anansi Press.

Kirby, D. (2012). *Alternative worlds: Metaphysical questing and virtual community amongst the otherkin* (pp. 129–140). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004226944_008

Konecki, K. (2019). Creative thinking in qualitative research and analysis. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, *15*(3), 6–25. https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8077.15.3.01

Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2005). *Memes and affinities: Cultural replication and literacy education*. Annual NRC, Miami.

Laing, R. D. (1967). *The politics of experience*. Ballantine Books.

Laing, R. D. (1970). *The divided self: An existential study in sanity and madness*. Penguin.

Laycock, J. P. (2020, March 5). What the Satanic Temple is and why it's opening a debate about religion. *The Conversation*. Retrieved 30 July 2020, from http://theconversation.com/what-the-satanic-temple-is-and-why-its-opening-a-debate-about-religion-131283

Leledaki, A., & Brown, D. (2008). "Physicalisation": A pedagogy of body-mind cultivation for liberation in modern yoga and meditation methods. *Asian Medicine*, *4*(2). https://brill.com/vsaidiew/journals/asme/4/2/article-p303_4.xml

Martin, R. (2020, July 22). *Novice witches hexed the moon, upsetting others on WitchTok*. NPR.Org. https://www.npr.org/2020/07/22/894074602/novice-witches-hexed-the-moon-upsetting-others-on-witchtok

Maier, S. F., & Seligman, M. E. (1976). Learned helplessness: Theory and evidence. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *105*(1), 3-46. https//doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.105.1.3

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1949). Letter to F. Mehring. In *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Selected works in two volumes: Volume II*. Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Maslow, A. H. (1959). Critique of self-actualization. I. Some dangers of being cognition. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, *15*(1), 24.

Matute, H. (1994). Learned helplessness and superstitious behaviour as opposite effects of uncontrollable reinforcement in humans. *Learning and Motivation*, 25, 216-232.

McCaslin, M. L., & Kilrea, K. A. (2019). An introduction to transformative inquiry: Understanding compelling and significant relationships for personal and societal transformation. *The Qualitative Report*. http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A588342545/AONE?sid=lms

McGeer, V. (2004). The art of good hope. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *592*, 100–127.

McIvor, O. (2010). I am my subject: Blending Indigenous research methodology and autoethnography through integrity-based, spirit-based research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *33*(1), 137–155.

McClintock, H. K. (1928). The big rock candy mountains. In *Discography of American historical recordings*. Retrieved

from https://adp.library.ucsb.edu/index.php/matrix/detail/800020447/BVE-46454-The_Big_Rock_Candy_Mountains

McNeill, L. S. (2009). The end of the internet: A folk response to the provision of infinite choice. In T. J. Blank (Ed.), *Folklore and the internet* (pp. 80–97). University Press of Colorado. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgrx5.7

Mohawk, J. (2016). Origins of Iriquois political thought. In S. Lobo, S. Talbot, & T. L. Morris (Eds.), *Native American voices: A reader*. Routledge.

Morton, T. (2007). *Ecology without nature: Rethinking environmental aesthetics*. Harvard University Press.

Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and ecology after the end of the world*. Univeristy of Minnesota Press.

Murray, G. (2013). Pedagogy of the possible: Imagination, autonomy, and space. *Studies in Second Language Learning & Teaching*, *3*(3), 377–396.

Niwenshuti, T. (2018). A critique of embodiment. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, *40*(1), 117-.

O'Connor, C. (2017). Embodiment and the construction of social knowledge: Towards an integration of embodiment and social representations theory. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, *47*(1), 2–24. https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12110

Ogo, G., & Dejerk, D. (2008). Soma: An anarchist play therapy. *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*, *26*(2), 42-47.

Oliver, C. (2012). Critical realist grounded theory: A new approach for social work research. *British Journal of Social Work*, *42*(2), 371–387. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcr064

Ott, B. L. (2004). (Re)locating pleasure in media studies: Toward an erotics of reading. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, *1*(2), 194–212. https://doi.org/10.1080/14791420410001685386

Panecasio, S. (2020, July 19). *Witches on TikTok have apparently tried to 'hex' the moon*. CNET. Retrieved 23 November 2020, from https://www.cnet.com/news/witches-on-tiktok-have-apparently-tried-to-hex-the-moon/

Plumwood, V. (1999). Being prey. In D. Rothenberg & M. Ulvaeus (Eds.), *The new earth reader: The best of Terra Nova* (pp. 76-92). MIT Press

Pupavac, V. (2002). Pathologizing populations and colonizing minds: International psychosocial programs in Kosovo. *Alternatives*, *27*(4), 489–511.

Raab, D. (2013). Transpersonal approaches to autoethnographic research and writing. *The Qualitative Report*, *18*(21), 1–18.

Raphael, M. (1997). Theology, redemption and the call of the wild. *Feminist Theology*, *5*(15), 55–72.

Real Beliefs [Digital Image]. (2019). https://www.instagram.com/p/B0bsSwvnTHG/?igshid=1qrrfbgfkb3lo

Ricoeur, P. (1983). *Time and narrative* (K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer, Trans.; Vol. 1). University of Chicago Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1991, February 1). Narrative identity. *Philosophy Today, 35*(1), 73-81. https://doi.org/10.5840/philtoday199135136

Robbie Robertson. (2010, July 21). *Ghost Dance*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eA0zpemMUow

Rubin, E. L. (2018). Phenomenology, colonialism, and the administrative state. *Washington University Law Review*, *95*, 1097-1113.

Said, E. (2013). Reflections on exile. In *Reflections on exile: And other literary and cultural essays* (pp. 180–192). http://www.mcrg.ac.in/RLS_Migration/Reading_List/Module_A/65.Said,%20Edward,%20Reflections_on_Exile_and_Other_Essay(BookFi).pdf

Sameshima, P., Wiebe, S., & Hayes, M. (2019, April). Imagination: The generation of possibility. In B. Andrews (Ed.), *Perspectives on arts education research in Canada, Volume 1: Surveying the landscape* (pp. 19-35). Brill Sense.

Schutten, J. K. (2006). Invoking practical magic: New social movements, hidden populations, and the public screen. *Western Journal of Communication*, *70*(4), 331–354. https://doi.org/10.1080/10570310600992137

Schweigert, L. (2018). *W.I.T.C.H. and witchcraft in radical feminist activism*. Arizona State University.

Seibt, J., & Norskov, M. (2012). "Embodying" the internet: Towards the moral self via communication robots? *Philosophy & Technology*, *25*(3), 285–307. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-012-0064-9

Shapiro, S. (2005). *Pedagogy and the politics of the body: A critical praxis*, Routledge.

Shifman, L. (2014). *Memes in digital culture*. MIT Press.

Shilling, C., & Mellor, P. A. (2007). Cultures of embodied experience: Technology, religion and body pedagogics. *Sociological Review*, *55*(3), 531–549. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2007.00721.x

Shukaitis, S. (2009). *Imaginal machines: Autonomy and self-organization in the revolutions of everyday life*. www.minorcompositions.info/wp-content/uploads/2009/ImaginalMachines-web.pdf

Simpson, L. (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society, 3*(3), 1-25.

Smith, E. W. (2020, July 20). Did TikTok witches really hex the moon, and more importantly, should we be worried? *Cosmopolitan*. https://www.cosmopolitan.com/lifestyle/a33370477/witch-hex-moon-tiktok-twitter-witchtok/

Sprenger, J. (2009/1487). *The hammer of witches: A complete translation of the malleus Maleficarum* (C. S. Mackay, Trans.). Cambridge University Press.

Starhawk. (1993). *The fifth sacred thing*. Bantam Books.

Starhawk. (1998). *Walking to mercury*. Bantam Books.

Starhawk. (2015). *City of refuge*. Califa Press.

Starhawk. (2020). *Biography: About Starhawk*. https://starhawk.org/about/biography/

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, *17*(1), 273–285.

Streng, F. J. (1985). Creation of community through sacred symbols. In F. J. Streng (Ed.), *Understanding religious life* (3rd ed.) (pp. 43–62). Wadsworth.

Strengers, I. (2012). Reclaiming animism. *E-Flux*, *36*. https://www.e-flux.com/journal/36/61245/reclaiming-animism/

Taylor, C. (1995). Two theories of modernity. *The Hastings Center Report*, *25*(2), 24–33. https://doi.org/10.2307/3562863

Taylor, C. (2004). *Modern social imaginaries*. Duke University Press.

Thanasoulas, D. (1999). Intellect or affect? *Radical Pegagoy*. https://radicalpedagogy.icaap.org/content/issue1_2/04thanasoulas1_2.html

Kahnawake Mohawk Elders. (2006). *The eagle and the condor*. Montreal, QC.

The woods [Digital image]. (2020). https://i.chzbgr.com/full/9445901568/hC558B1BF/omg-specific-parts-woods-are-they-so-can-avoid-them-extra-hard-324-pm-22-feb-20-twitter-android

Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone together: Why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. Basic Books.

United States Select Committee on Indian Affairs. (1988). H. Con. Res. 331.

Wagner, D. (1994). Beyond the pathologizing of nonwork: Alternative activities in a street community. *Social Work*, *39*(6), 718–727. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/39.6.718

Watts, A. (1966). *The book: On the taboo against knowing who you are*. Collier Books.

Weil, S. (2003). *The need for roots: Prelude to a declaration of duties towards mankind*. Routledge.

Wick, D. (Producer), & Fleming, A. (Director). (1996). *The craft* [Motion Picture]. Columbia Pictures.

Winczewski, M. J. (2010). *Consumption, pastiche and identity in postmodern visual culture* [Dissertation, University of Pretoria]. https://doi.org/F10/153/gm

Winkelman, M. (2004). Shamanism as the original neurotheology. *Journal of Religion and Science*, *39*(1), 193–217.

You ready? [Digital image]. (2020). https://www.instagram.com/p/B-csKcwD39X/