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Nomadic Becomings:
Narrative Accounts of Predictive Genetic Testing for Huntington's Disease

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Matthew Joseph Kean

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Abstract

This thesis constructs three narratives of my experiences of Predictive Genetic Testing (PGT) for Huntington's Disease. Not content with ideals of normative thought, illustrating the unitary subject of representation navigating the challenges of a testing process, I write how one might undertake the PGT process, if only to provide further possibilities unimaginable to me outside the limits of this thesis. Informed with Rosi Braidotti's nomadic theory, the narratives are written with a multiplicity of dispersed selves forming with the molecular possibilities of human, non-human, and more-than-human forces and flows, tracing non-normative subjectivities of becoming-other. Privileging intensive differences of affective change and motion, nomadic narrative creates rhizomatic figurations able to traverse the limits of normative thought with non-linear thinking. Written with affective memories of my experiences of difference, narratives of the PGT process form multiplicities of nomadic subjects inhabiting the time of Aion, embodied with the mindless, generative and affirmative vitality of Braidotti's *Life as Zoe*. Addressing issues of sustainability and endurance with nomadic ethics, nomadic narratives escape binary dialectics and excluded-other of representational thought, affirming a multiplicity of empowering witness-able accounts of the PGT process. I engage political philosophies of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, amongst other theoretical ontologies, providing understandings of processes I experience writing with nomadic subjects. I explore the limits of nomadic narrative, in the creation of smooth space that challenges normative social, cultural, and academic practices exceeding past the confines of this thesis.

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...to Mom. Thank you for your love.

...to Pat. For the many hours I have spent at the computer, kept company with the piece of Kintsugi, your care and support have never strayed far.

...to Hannah and Sam. Let's dance.

Preface

There is a sense that I should share with you, the reader, some information with this Preface, assisting with guidance in the form of an introduction with how one might approach this thesis, advising of background information or other pertinent stories to help familiarise and situate yourself in this journey we are about to undertake together. Beginnings are a tricky business, but I trace something of a beginning to a multiplicity of questions, mindful I am still in processes of asking them of myself. Let's start with a simple statement, though, a lingering rhetorical thought, really.

What just happened?

Sitting together riding the bus back from class in Palmerston North, having just wrapped up the final day of the contact course for the *Postmodernism and Psychology* postgraduate paper in 2017, turning to my friend Moana, I remember repeatedly asking her this question. Having spent four days immersed in various postmodern, poststructural, and posthuman theories of psychology, I remember a disconcerting *disquiet*, and a comfortable *togetherness*, I could not explain. It felt that we, as a class, exceeded the bounds of what was permissible to a small group of people. Yet, Moana and I were unable to state what it is we experienced, sitting together in class for four days, or what we were experiencing then on the bus. I was nervous with a sense that *things* (whatever that meant) would never be the same. Moana and I talked, although it seemed that just sitting quietly together, confused with feelings of wonder, was more than adequate to share our experiences. I recall the feelings with a sense the firm grip of logic and reason had loosened, no longer solely adequate to account for a world we had just departed, with other possibilities I had yet to fully grasp residing outside of the limits imposed by these modes of thought. After arriving back in Auckland after a short flight later that evening, sitting in my lounge, walking around the shops in town, talking with others about the week away, for several days I found my self still waiting to land. I was not exactly floating, but more feeling an unbounded dispersal towards various places I did not recognise. No longer held together with logic, I was in multiple places at once.

Returning to the requirements of a Preface, to familiarise a reader with information with which to approach this thesis, Braidotti (2012) reminds me a process of *familiarisation* assumes an oedipal relationship between self and other, entailing a "masculine habit of

taking for granted free access to and consumption of the bodies of others” (p. 81). Here, in these opening lines, I am pursuing other opportunities to acquaint a reader with this research. I understand my experiences of the bus ride home with Moana, of becoming aware of the inadequacy of logic and reason, as a process of *defamiliarisation*. As an evolutionary process, defamiliarisation began for me with the conditions created in our classroom that empowered shared transformations, felt not just in the confines of a classroom but also later with possibilities of futures embodied with *differences* felt as we rode the bus away. I also began to remember other events, experiences from before with the feelings of difference. Here, in space created with a Preface, I would like to invite you to join me in a gambit. Whereas a process of familiarisation is based on a sense of “supreme ontological entitlement” (p. 82) that one may know of the *other*, that I may know of you the reader, I approach this Preface as an opportunity “to free the process of subject formation from the normative vision of the self” (p. 83), permitting the reader of this thesis to become present in a multiplicity of locations. Although I may not know locations from which you have come, this thesis is a collaborative process, creating possibilities from which we derive new locations of subject formation together.

What have I done?

One might expect to find specific sections such as a literature review, methodological outline, results, analysis, and a conclusion within a traditional thesis working with *normative subject formation*. A reader will not find these here. The normative ideals and expectations of a traditional thesis are here for you to encounter, though, requiring another “set of ears”, other senses with which to listen as they are given to presenting differently with how one might engage this thesis. Whilst a unified theoretical framework formed from an extensive literature review will not be readily apparent, confined within a specific section, the reader will encounter moments of intrigue and consternation with elements of a well-researched body of work, hopefully resulting in departures of thought for a reader that I do not assume I am able to purposefully devise or control. The multiplicity of conclusions will not necessarily “follow” from a problem stipulated in an introduction, derived in an analysis, and affirmed with a conclusion. The work undertaken here began before I came to understandings of processes I experienced, and continue to experience, writing this thesis. The knowledge created with *nomadic writings*, although repetitive throughout, evades a linear understanding. I invite you to consider engaging aspects of this work differently, but always through an *iterative process* of re-reading the material

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several times, much as engaging in Braidotti's *nomadic theory* requires me to restate different iterative understandings of the concepts involved. Freed from linear expectations, I hesitantly suggest this research does not contain a "point", a purpose that is easily reduced to something to "get", a form of knowledge fully accounted for with bullet points derived with theoretical models. Other possibilities are afoot.

How did I get here?

In the following *narrative windows* of undertaking a genetic test, I write processes of defamiliarisation, of no longer identifying with a unitary self and creating subjectivities that exceed the politics of normative subject formation. I cannot declare definitively what "happened" to me or what was "done" in the process of completing the writings; I cannot tell you where "here" is. Engaging in processes of *nomadic thought* and *nomadic ethics* is not easily accounted for with representational thought. Forming circumstances of possibilities I cannot imagine, this thesis is informed of processes not yet complete, and instead of an analysis section, I have constructed *bookends* entailing processes extending beyond limits of narrative windows and futures yet to unfold.

Writing the final words of this thesis, I am still troubled by possibilities of unimaginable consequences. The writing bound within this thesis, as with processes of defamiliarisation, is imperfect, always partial and never complete. Should I start again, start over, or repeat this work, the experiences would be different, the multiplicity of memories and the concepts drawn upon to write narratives and bookends would inevitably vary. Yet, I am enthralled. Whilst I do not hope to transcend the *troubling*, affixing it with a set of outcomes, conclusions, and recommendations, I have come to know that *troubling* grows with further processes of defamiliarisation, of not forgetting but of retaking what is already given, forming possibilities to dance on the feet of chance and differ from oneself, and all that had been before. Maybe one possibility regarding how one might encounter this work, is that given a chance, I have a sense I would do it all over again, differently, always differently.

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Bookend (I)

Explaining his relationship with Michel Foucault, the philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1990) thought both men were on the same side as they “set out to follow and disentangle lines rather than work back to points...to catch things where they were at work, in the middle: breaking things open, breaking words open” (p. 86). Philosophy, Deleuze goes on to say, is always thinking of being in the middle, seeking to extend outwards along lines of thought towards the emergence of other formations, with the work of a philosopher the invention of new *concepts* which could be followed even further to break open yet more. Deleuze explains his philosophy does not privilege the surveying of a scene, deploying a singular beginning and end from which an individual can see a totality of what has come before or what will come after. One must begin in the middle where one is, Deleuze declares, and only hope to follow a line to somewhere else within a density of entangled lines. So, here I am in the middle, where I must begin again, beginning this time by remembering other beginnings.

A few weeks after my 17th birthday in July of 1995, my father committed suicide, as his father had many years before him. Both men died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head, after developing debilitating manifestations of Huntington’s Disease. First described in 1872 by Dr. George Huntington, Huntington’s Disease is a fatal genetic disorder, expressed through degenerative behavioural, neurological, and psychiatric manifestations (Wexler, Wild, & Tabrizi, 2016). I am unable to recall a time when genetics, terminal illness, end of life events, and suicide have been unfamiliar terms, a time before the presence of intimate experiences of depression, grief and loss. Whilst I often wonder of both men dying differently, I have moved amongst the world seeking richly textured experiences of life, living with extremes of despair and joy. Although I have grown up and become an adult without a grandfather and a father, I feel a fortune shining brightly when I think of the people, places, and things with whom I have shared life, together and never alone.

Born in the state of Michigan in the United States, for most of my adult life I have resided in Auckland, New Zealand. In October 2010, I received results from a Predictive Genetic Test (PGT) for Huntington’s Disease. As I completed the final year of an undergraduate degree in psychology at Massey University in 2016, I began pondering the difficulties in providing a narrative of my experiences of the disease. I have sought ways to live differently, if only to die differently, than my father and grandfather, and wondered of sharing this with others. My efforts to provide an account of completing the PGT process felt inadequate, though. No matter how I told of my experiences, I could no more explain to

others why I undertook PGT than how my partner and I endured the consequences of completing the process.



The Life of Windows

This thesis is constructed with three pieces of writing, each a *window* of the PGT process for Huntington’s Disease. Following Deleuze (1990), I have written narratives to break open experiences and disentangle lines of thought within these windows, if only to open more possibilities of thought to follow yet further. Narrative windows present a paradox in the context of the production of a thesis, though. How do I account for where a line began and where it might lead, tracing a line or the path taken as I follow these entangled threads? How does a narrative distinguish the middle, the beginning point of where I am now, to a different middle of another future temporal moment? Without a place of departure from where this thesis starts and a conclusion where the words no longer flow, within the institutional demands of a thesis, how do I demonstrate the potential capabilities, capacities, and outcomes of this theoretical research, without recourse to a survey or scene?

With Deleuzian political philosophy, narrative need neither to be a simplified expression nor a complex representation of experiences. With an understanding of Deleuze’s *processual life*, Tucker (2012) extends the concept of life “to the edges of contemporary practices” (p. 799), to present new modes of thinking and explore the limits of such thought. Tucker suggests an adequate psychological understanding of the *materiality* of narratives cannot be developed temporally, as language “works as an identifier, to ‘capture’ life according to culturally recognized patterns” (p. 777). An adequate understanding of individual life should instead seek to “unravel the specific pattern of processes that have connected previously unrelated sets of heterogeneous relations” (p. 781). As both language and materiality are “woven into processes...definable only as and through their relevance to other elements” (p. 777), these windows are not *drawn* delineating *points* where one might begin or end. Instead, following Tucker, the windows themselves are broken open with narratives, that in turn break open individual experiences of the PGT process, in order to conceptualise life as a process and enter into the flow of experiences of the PGT process “rather than claiming to be able to stand back and gain insight from ‘outside’” (p. 781).

Exploring the limits of normative portrayals of life and death, Beaulieu and Ord (2017) offer their work in an attempt understand Deleuze's death as a creative "pure event", an affirmative "gesture" where Deleuze is thought to suffuse notions of his own death with a "post-mortem capacity to affect, to launch a challenge to philosophy, to circulate and eventually to evaluate at least partially the value of life" (p. 134). Far from being a "simple factuality" (p. 129) which is able to be accounted for with a date, Beaulieu and Ord remove the death of Deleuze from the linear time of Chronos and place it into the time of Aion, to create an "expression of the infinite...at once deeply moving and stimulating...such that it no longer remains enigmatic" (p. 122). With encouragement from Beaulieu and Ord, these narrative windows are presented to trace the emergence of a possibility, the generative capacity to affect others outside the confines of time as Chronos, whilst testing the limits of what a body is capable in the chaos of time. With Braidotti's (2012) conception of Aion as an undifferentiated and generative "pure empty form of time" (p. 153-154), I return to Deleuze.

Deleuze (2001) calls the concept of the Western normative figure of thought that resides in Chronos, *simple empiricism*. Formed of a relationship between the individual *thinking subject* (you the audience, I the writer) and a *coextensive object* (this thesis, the death of a loved one), the normative subject experiences *life* with the linear collection and interpretation of experiences relating to coextensive objects. Deleuze, though, argues life is not enclosed, captured and stored in any single moment that requires interpretation, nor is life a collection of the moments of a subject caught between when "individual life confronts universal death" (p. 29). Colebrook (2006), following Deleuze's concept of life further, identifies a task of philosophy then is "to maintain the question, problem or meaning of life beyond any living organism" (p. 215).

Extending a notion of life beyond where the individual becomes imperceptible, past a question of life demarcated by death, Braidotti's (2012) nomadic theory of subjectivity is crafted with a different, yet still immanent, notion of *Life as Zoe*. Created with new understandings of difference by escaping the dialectical opposition of *the one* and *the multiple*, Braidotti uses Deleuze's concept of multiplicity to "reset the concept of difference in the direction of a nomadic, nonhierarchical, multidirectional social and discursive practice of multiplicity" (p. 17). Producing the new concepts of nomadic subjectivity and life as Zoe, Braidotti rejects the normative subjectivity of simple empiricism that dominates in Western societies, creating ways of thinking life as the vitalist flow of difference in the

creation and construction of new possible sustainable futures. Life as Zoe becomes the mindless, generative and affirmative vitality of all human, non-human, and more than human life, a force which “actualizes a set of both social and symbolic interactions that inscribe the human-nonhuman bond” (p. 112). Braidotti envisages a nomadic subjectivity which is capable of breaking and cracking under the strain of the extremes of affect, yet enduring to become different from what it once was, a subjectivity sustained with the generative eternal return of “creative mimesis” (p. 410), not the static sameness of identity formed with the simple empiricism of the normative subject.

Braidotti uses the Greek word Zoe, which we translate into English as *life*, in connection with the word *bios*. Bios also means life, but the two terms are not synonymous. I understand both Zoe and bios with interconnected meanings, not binary oppositions, which are often difficult to differentiate without consideration of the other. I understand Zoe with Braidotti (2013a), who situates an understanding with Deleuze’s concept of immanence, locating Zoe with “the practice of affirmation in the exteriority, the cruel, messy outsideness of Life itself”, describing life not as an individuating substance (bios), but as a generative force which “is immanent to and thus coincides with its multiple material actualisations” (p. 343). Elsewhere, Braidotti (2013b) describes the generative force of Zoe as “as the dynamic, self-organising structure of life itself...the transversal force that cuts across and reconnects previously segregated species, categories and domains (p. 6). Braidotti (2012) positions bios as an understanding of life within an “old hierarchy”, privileging “discursive, intelligent, social life”, where life is “sacralized as a preestablished given” (p. 92) and limited with the concept of organic death. Braidotti (2006c) provides a non-anthropocentric understanding of Zoe, where the human subject is “an autopoietic machine, fuelled by targeted perceptions and it functions as the echoing chamber of Zoe” to express “a profound love for Life as a cosmic force and the desire to depersonalise subjective life and death” (p. 139). Braidotti (2012) also uses the term *bios-zoe* to describe life without “brandname on it, nor does it have a price-tag attached to it. It does not flow within the constraints of...its old narrative: desire as lack, alterity and/ as negativity, the burden of Being that coincides with consciousness” (p. 166).

Intensive Life

Braidotti (2012) elaborates another conceptualisation of difference as a fundamental principle composing the nomadic subject. Resting on an ethical formation of subjectivity, which privileges *intensive* differences of affective change and motion over *extensive* notions of stable identities, the nomadic subject endures as a continuity of *becomings*, capturing the always already present *intensive affective transformations* brought to bear and embodied with the nomadic self. As I understand Deleuzian philosophy, Braidotti’s

nomadic ethics, nomadic subjectivity, and life as Zoe cannot be known through individualised moments of time or individualised subjects, as the concepts are without “subjects steering the process (or being steered by it)...and without points of origin or destination marking the allowed trajectory” (p. 1). Escaping the trap of an inadequate social critique formed of *dialectical resistance and confrontation* with the normative neoliberal subject, nomadic theory is an ethical project which seeks “to work critically from within in order to exceed the present frame” (p. 19). As a multiplicity of embodied affective difference, I understand nomadic subjectivity “as something produced from the differences of which they are composed” (Patton, 2000, p. 28).

Braidotti extends Deleuze and Guattari's figuration of a *rhizome* to inscribe a multiplicity of differences forming the concept of nomadic subject. To escape the oppositional thought of resistance and critique of the binary dialectic of *self/other*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) create a rhizomatic figuration with their *Maritime Model* of space. As I understand it, the model refers to *points* as the forming substance of *striated space* whilst privileging *lines* and *intervals* between points as the forming substances of *smooth space*. Striated space is experienced through the perception of organised and stable forms of identity, such as the *unified self* of a normative subject and the coextensive objects of narrative stories in an academic thesis, whilst smooth space is formed with a multiplicity of intervals and lines only present through the differences formed with a change of *vectors, directions, frequencies, and speeds*. Smooth space is also created by the vectors of *intensive differences* in thinking, with what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call a nomadic “voyage in place” (p. 482). I understand Beaulieu and Ord's work on the death of Deleuze as such an effort. Deleuze and Guattari link the “symptoms” of smooth space with experiences and evaluations of touch, bodily feelings, and affect, whilst striated space presents properties which are organised and measured, creating visible co-extensive borderlines of “formed and perceived things” (p. 479).

Whilst simple empiricism delineates the striated space where the extensive normative subject dwells, with death articulated as a state of corporeal absence of the normative individual subject in the time of Chronos, Conley (2006) explains rhizomatic figurations of thought can be created as a tactic to make porous the already present borderlines of formed and perceived things within striated space. Furthermore, rhizomatic figurations can create a proliferation of *lines of flight* within striated space by “following multiple itineraries of investigation” (p. 98), engendering new, unbounded smooth space in the time of Aion

“that is neither fixed nor bears any clearly delimited borders” (p. 98). The rhizomatic figure *molecularises* striated space, making affective connections with human, non-human, and more than human forces “to open spaces and undo fixed mental and physical borders and barriers” (p. 107), allowing one to become actively engaged in the politics of the present.

Returning to the paradox of windows, beginning and end points, this thesis is presented as a rhizomatic figuration within the striated space of normative academic practice, to form open, smooth space of molecular connections with human, non-human, and more than human forces no longer restricted or constricted by the rigid frames of simple empiricism. Formed of three pieces of writing, three narrative windows of a multiplicity of rhizomatic nomadic subjects which traverse both smooth and striated space, this thesis brings forth the possibility of felt experiences, embodied affect, and bodily sensations as symptoms to signal the outcomes required within the production of a thesis. With the possibilities of rhizomatic thinking, molecular connections and embodiment, I can begin to construct the figure and consciousness of a nomadic subject. So, I begin again, in the middle of another remembered connection.



Movement

I met Sam in 1997, whilst we were both employed at a summer youth camp in Michigan, less than an hour drive from my home town. We continued working together at the youth camp for four years, and as Sam was required to return to England at the end of each summer, we managed a precarious trans-Atlantic relationship for those four years. We married in 2001, and initially lived together in Michigan whilst we both went to university and established professional careers. With the advent of a new neo-conservative national political environment in the United States, we relocated to England in 2003. In 2006, feeling the stirrings of restlessness, we backpacked across Europe, Asia, and Australia, arriving in New Zealand in September. Within a few months, I began employment as a Probation Officer with the New Zealand Department of Corrections, and for eight years, I progressed through a variety of roles, with my *speciality* involving the supervision of *high risk offenders* in the community, mainly relating to men convicted of arson, murder, child and adult sexual offences. Following multiple career paths involving field work, management, and policy roles, I felt well-paid whilst benefitting from job security, and experienced trust and respect from the community in which I lived and worked. I also

sought opportunities to become politically active, engaging with community groups and governmental organisations, whilst developing Corrections practices, policies, and decision-making frameworks that led to safer communities. Although I found the work challenging and often taking a personal toll on my wellbeing, I felt privileged to be working with offenders and their whānau, and entrusted by the Government to manage large numbers of staff and the administration of government offices.

As I recall the various roles I held in Corrections, I reflect on Garo (2008), who describes (Deleuzian) political activism as having a “paradoxical character, in the form of a persistent combination of engagement and disengagement, both equally militant, at the point where incompatibility axes cross” (p. 54). Whilst I experienced growing dissatisfaction with the hegemony brought forth by the ascendance of a specific “type” of manager, I was paid commensurately larger wages and given outsized responsibilities devising and developing offender management practices and procedures. Despite the organisation lauding a professional practice framework predicated on an iterative yet dynamic risk assessment of offenders, where difference was assessed and evaluated for the positive and negative possibilities it afforded an individual to make changes to their offending behaviour, I experienced Corrections corporate culture as rewarding practitioners and managers who embraced a risk-averse management style. As with the criminal justice approach towards cognitive and behavioural surveillance of individuals to identify appropriate interventions that instigate and facilitate processes of change, these same techniques paradoxically became a part of my day to day as a senior manager involved in policy and recruitment.

A figure of authority within a criminal justice system which is tasked with the responsibility to “mold the bodies and minds of citizens in the direction of normal, constructive good sense” (Scott, 2009, p. 358), my employment within this culture progressively became intolerable, even as I and others sought to disrupt the purging of difference and create possibilities for professional practice to value qualitative differences in thinking. Through targeted internal recruitment of existing staff into managerial roles, and external recruitment of new staff for entry level roles, Corrections culture became intolerable of difference in pursuit of individuals who embodied and maintained a “brand” which represented the preferred normative practices. In the hunt for staff free of defects and errors, recruitment processes embrace *governmental practices* enlisting “scales of performance or functional ability” (Wahlberg & Rose, 2015, p. 68). Identifying difference as a risk to the potential of an employee’s performance absolves both the organisation and

the employee from of the burden of variability, which is seen to limit the prospects of maintaining a healthy functional employment history and possibilities of career advancement.

I am reflecting on the first of two governmental reports on criminal justice reform, in which Gluckman (2018) provides an overview of an exploding prison population in New Zealand. The research identifies political policies and social attitudes towards crime as the *primary drivers* of the increase in incarceration rates, and questions the efficacy of incarceration as a primary means of maintaining community safety through the removal of offenders from society. Gluckman challenges the perceived efficacy of “harsher” bail and parole legislation, which has been found to increase the number of individuals remanded in custody prior to conviction and extend the length of time individuals remain in custody (through minimum and mandatory sentencing requirements). Such policies, Gluckman explains, lead to no commensurate increase in public safety, nor a reduction in crime.

In response to social and political attention given to the escalating financial and social costs of the second highest incarceration rate within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Government has launched a consultation process, undertaken through The Safe and Effective Justice Programme/Te Uepū Hāpai i te Ora. Headed by an Advisory Group including a previous government minister, academic researchers, victim advisory experts, legal scholars, and cultural advisors, I am pondering the involvement (and future) of the Department of Corrections, which has reportedly been limited to assisting in the coordination of “listening” events of public consultation. I understand the programme as intending to consult with the wider community to move away from a punitive approach, and associated politicised policies, where criminals are *other-ed* for their actions and removed from society for this difference. Te Uepū Hāpai i te Ora envisages a process which realigns justice reforms towards victim restorative responses *and* community participation, to restore faith in a more effective system. Justice reforms, in a sense, will not focus on difference as a location requiring *correction*, with success measured solely on the productivity of reforming the criminal. Instead, success will incorporate the participation and involvement of all parties, in re-imagining a criminal justice system incorporating the values of dignity, aroha, compassion and accountability. I am hopeful in the possibilities of public safety through an individual’s affirmative capacity to become different in processes of change, *with* their whānau *and* the community.

Although already in a position of power, I recall responding to these experiences with what Garo (2008) refers to as a form of “micro-revolutionary thinking”, and engaging in practices of a “miniaturisation of politics” (p. 63). I feared becoming caught in a closed and circular

process, where I would be valued, and financially rewarded, for a privileged identity of becoming politically aware, whilst an identity of becoming politically active would be superseded and marginalised. Garo concludes, to escape this closed circuit and yet remain political, one must not begin with “the practices which seem to validate it”, and instead one must consider the “investments which define it” (p. 55). Whilst rejecting encouragement and entreaty from colleagues, and other more senior managers, to participate in reform, I declined to engage in the institutional politicisation enabled by my privileged status from within Corrections. It is within this intersection of entangled lines I began to disengage thinking of my self with *risk*, whilst knowing that an intimate knowledge of risk had become an integral part of my professional and personal subjectivity. Not only had knowledge of risk, risk assessments, and strategic management of risk served as tools to secure me gainful employment for two decades, these knowledges also became sites for contriving myriad devices wielded to successfully complete the PGT process. As a High Risk Senior Advisor for policy and practice, and subsequently the Acting District Manager responsible for one of New Zealand’s largest Probation areas, I had ostensibly achieved some measure of success with these tools. Whilst the requirement to abide the corporate culture became more difficult, certain identities became marginalised and others privileged, and all the meanwhile I became more wealthy. To become politically active, Thiele (2010) concludes, one must embrace “a belief in this world, *as it is*...to produce active affirmation in the face of every single result the world ever takes” (p. 35). No longer able to imagine a future self abiding the requirements of a Corrections manager, and fearing the capitalistic trap where the power of my political potential is deformed as “the flow of unqualified wealth encounters the flow of unqualified labor” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 366), in December of 2014, I resigned without regret and with no small measure of relief.

Differences

With an employment history across three countries, working with children with violent behavioural disorders, adults with poly-substance misuse issues, and some of New Zealand’s “highest risk” offenders in the criminal justice system, I remember the tiredness of thinking of the world as risky, assessing and managing risk, and learning to live with risk whilst learning how to mitigate risk. After separating from Sam in 2012, and enduring several years of professional and personal turmoil and pain whilst desiring possibilities of living differently, I decided to risk it all. The week I resigned, I moved to the refuge of the Waitakere Ranges in West Auckland. On my last day of employment, I began a

relationship with Hannah, who worked in Corrections as well, and soon thereafter I took up full time study at Massey University to finish an undergraduate degree. Intending to complete a Master's Degree, I began postgraduate studies in psychology whilst dwelling on the possibilities of academic research to provide a witness-able account of undertaking PGT. I enrolled in classes that covered new and unfamiliar theoretical terrain, exposing myself to new potential theoretical approaches to research, including feminist methodologies, discursive psychology, poststructural psychology, and posthuman ontologies. Each class brought possibilities of new understandings of the literature pertaining to genetic testing and Huntington's Disease, as I became increasingly more familiar with the arcane biomedical explanations of Huntington's Disease and research into genetic testing.

Prevalence studies for Western populations, involving both genetic and clinical diagnostic protocols, find rates of between 10.6–13.7 per 100,000 individuals of the general population are diagnosed with Huntington's Disease, with incident rates of new diagnoses per year ranging between .47–.69 per 100,000 individuals (Bates et al., 2015). Huntington's Disease is caused by an expanded repeat of a *trinucleotide*, cytosine-adenine-guanine (CAG), located within the *huntingtin gene* (otherwise known as the HTT gene) on Chromosome 4. The typical human genome consists of 13 pairs of chromosomes, with one chromosome from each pair inherited from each parent. PGT measures the number of CAG repeats present in the HTT gene on both chromosomes of Chromosome 4. The number of repeats varies across the general population, with 17 to 26 repetitions of CAG occurring within the healthy population, indicating these individuals will not develop the disease. A mutation in the HTT gene, resulting in 40 CAG repeats or higher, indicates the disease will inevitably establish within the individual. Variability occurs with CAG repeat counts of between 36 and 39, described as *reduced penetrance*, meaning the disease may or may not manifest in an individual. HTT mutations with a CAG repeat of between 27 to 35 are referred to as *intermediate*, meaning that although a carrier will not develop the disease, if the mutated HTT gene is passed on to offspring, the gene then carries the risk of expanding into the mutation range, and the disease may develop (Crozier & Dale, 2015).

Returning to Garo's (2008) elaboration of micro-revolutionary thinking, molecular politics, and the investments which define closed and circular processes, the (risk) binary of "having" and "not having" a gene became a specific representation of a dilemma, a problem I understood as a reason for undertaking PGT for Huntington's Disease. Given the unequivocal onset and presence of physical, cognitive, and psychiatric symptoms identified through various diagnostic tests prior to the availability of PGT, my father was

diagnosed with Huntington's Disease without genetic testing. My grandfather, and multiple other family members for generations before him, developed the disease and died prior to the emergence of both pre-symptomatic testing and predictive genetic testing. My father passed away prior to me asking him a single question about Huntington's Disease or our shared genetic heritage, and I began to wonder, rather than thinking in terms of what genes I may or may not have, what other questions of genetic inheritance are enabled in representational thought-and how these questions are involved in the decision to end one's own life.

The first clinical trials for pre-symptomatic (PT) testing of Huntington's Disease occurred in 1983, with PT protocols developed for the general public by 1985. PGT became available with the discovery of the HTT gene mutation in 1993. Whilst PGT indicates the presence of a mutated gene, and the certainty of developing the disease, PT is a diagnostic tool available to assess the presence of the disease prior to the onset and manifestation of overt symptoms without the need for a genetic test (Clément et al., 2015).

In response to the slipperiness of explaining the complex categories of genetic indeterminacy, I recall the seductiveness of thinking genetic inheritance as a clearly delineated set of binary possibilities, genetic testing resulting in a singular piece of knowledge, which is produced then incorporated into life. Whilst being *at-risk* of inheriting Huntington's Disease is perilous, genetic indeterminacy also engenders an overwhelming need to consider untold changes of shifting from one at-risk category to another after receiving a test result.

Huntington's Disease is an autosomal genetic disorder, meaning a mutated HTT gene can be transmitted to offspring by either parent. Children of an individual with a single mutated HTT gene have a 50% random chance of inheriting the parent's mutated gene and a 50% chance of inheriting the non-mutated HTT gene. When an individual inherits a mutated HTT gene from both parents, resulting in mutations present in the HTT genes in both chromosomes of Chromosome 4, not only will that individual develop Huntington's Disease, the individual's offspring will also certainly inherit a mutated HTT gene. If an individual's grandparent has the mutated gene, but the status of the respective parent is unknown, the individual is said to have a 25% chance of inheriting the mutated HTT gene from the grandparent (Nance, 2016).

Financial implications change in relation to becoming eligible for life insurance, or alternatively one might become ineligible for life insurance whilst hampered by a shortened lifetime earnings potential. The socially acceptable and comfortable explanations given to others, telling why my partner and I did not have any children, become strained and need to be rethought. The consequences of thinking with a foreshortened future when you do not expect to die of old age comes to bear on the present when a lifespan potentially increases by decades. Neglected healthcare, such as dental care, become new concerns when you might live to old age. For as much as I worked at preparing for both having the gene and not having the gene, I also recall the frustration and helplessness of not having any experience of living without the spectre of Huntington's Disease and genetic indeterminacy. What happens when there is nothing left remaining to answer, nothing left to guide one's life? How does one prepare for such things?

The identification of *discriminating factors* becomes important to research seeking to better understand who and why some individuals become, statistically speaking, the "one in a million" who undertake genetic testing, and those who do not, or cannot. Whilst research has found highly variable rates of at-risk individuals completing PGT for Huntington's Disease, all reported rates are thought to be "low".

Prevalence and incidence rates of the disease provide quantitative data indicating the statistical variability of individuals who start, and complete, genetic testing. Researching the prevalence rates of people diagnosed with Huntington's Disease over the age of 21 years old specifically within the United Kingdom, Evans et al. (2013) found 5.4 per 100,000 individuals were diagnosed in 1990, increasing to 12.3 per 100,000 individuals in 2010. The study highlighted that a revised incident rate of the disease from earlier studies was used as a benchmark, indicating the population of people living with Huntington's Disease doubled in the timespan the research covered.

Whilst a meta-analysis of research prior to the development of PGT found between 40% and 79% of people at risk of inheriting the gene mutation voice interest in undertaking genetic testing when approached by health professionals (Meiser & Dunn, 2000), recent studies have found “only” between 3-25% of individuals at risk eventually undergo genetic testing (Forrest Keenan, McKee, & Miedzybrodzka, 2015). Creighton et al. (2003) found that 18% of the Canadian at-risk population (specifically, those 50% at risk of inheriting the gene) completed predictive testing over a 13 year period. Basing their research on an estimate, that for every person diagnosed with Huntington’s Disease approximately 4.2 other individuals are 50% at-risk, Tassicker et al. (2009) found only between 13.0–15.4% of the at-risk population (specifically within the state of Victoria in Australia) sought genetic testing. Using minimum, and therefore different, prevalence rates for individuals 50% at-risk of inheriting the mutated HTT gene, Morrison, Harding-Lestera and Bradley (2011) found similar results, suggesting “only” 10.6 individuals per 100,000 ultimately complete the PGT process.

Correlating rates of individuals undertaking PGT, with discriminating factors such as marital status, gender, age, number of children, and number of relatives (and which relatives) affected by the disease, research differentiates individuals and focusses attention on the shared characteristics of individuals who are thought more likely to undertake PGT. Scuffman and MacMillan (2014) identify specific motivations, such as for family and financial planning for the future, career planning, and “the need to know” in order to get rid of uncertainty, as reasons *why* someone undertakes PGT. The presence and strength of motivational factors is also used to indicate who is more likely to complete the testing process once it is started. I understand a purpose of correlative research is to develop clinical knowledge that shapes genetic counselling practices, supporting the formation and development of these characteristics within at-risk individuals. PGT, ostensibly, is therefore made available to individuals who otherwise would not access the service, or fail to complete the process.

Changes to psychological functioning and the prevalence of correlated adverse events are thought to be factors influencing decision-making processes, with researchers hoping that improvements to genetic counselling protocols will, in part, improve testing rates by increasing the availability of testing to individuals who otherwise may not undertake and complete PGT.

I understand normative research as investigating the suspected psychological impact of the testing process on people who have undertaken PGT, to better understand the lives of at-risk individuals. Wiggins (1994) measures changes to psychological concepts such as anxiety, depression, and well-being to understand the positive benefits and negative consequences of undertaking PGT. Almqvist, Bloch, Brinkman, Crauford, and Hayden (1999) measure rates of suicide, attempted suicide and psychiatric admissions to undertake an analysis of the consequences of undertaking the testing process. Pakenham, Goodwin, and MacMillan (2004) use a cognitive model predicated on an individual's ability to conduct an appraisal of the perceived consequences (emotional, social, financial) of learning whether or not one has inherited a mutated HTT gene, measuring the presence and efficacy of psychological individual coping strategies (i.e., avoidance, wishful thinking, and problem solving behaviours) to predict the likelihood of negative outcomes, such as increased distress and anxiety levels. The research model, as I understand it, assumes that an individual who believes themselves able to effectively evaluate and manage will adapt to a changing genetic status, providing self-belief as a discerning characteristic of individuals who undertake PGT, and differentiating them from those who do not to seek genetic testing.

The use of thematic analysis places individuals into larger groups with whom, it is assumed, embody the lived experiences of PGT similarly. For instance, Hagberg, Bui, and Winnberg (2011) explore experiences of individuals receiving a positive result from PGT, with knowledge of being a gene carrier understand as having possible positive and negative impacts, as a *motivator* or *obstacle*, in decision making for life choices. Forrest Keenan, Miedzybrodzka, Van Teijlingen, McKee, and Simpson (2007) examine the experiences of young people growing up in homes affected by Huntington's Disease, to understand how some "cope" better than others to being told of the presence of Huntington's Disease in their family. Similarly, MacLeod et al. (2014), using an interpretative phenomenological analysis, explain PGT as a single process in which at-risk young people have differing experiences as they progress through testing and become a confirmed gene carrier, whilst Smith, Stephenson, Jacobs, and Quarrell (2013) outline the decision to undertake genetic testing as a *dilemma* of the *moral individual*. Andersson, Petersén, Graff, and Edberg (2015) use longitudinal case studies to examine experiences of testing positive for the HTT gene through the PGT process, whilst Leotini (2006) uses a single narrative account of a woman undertaking PGT to highlight the informant's poor experiences of genetic counselling services.

Nance (2016), conducting a historical review of genetic counselling services, affirms a need to provide support in the most appropriate environment, at the right time, and in a

way that is right for individuals, whilst also assisting in “the thorny challenges of the family” (p. 84). I am struck by her conclusion, that:

If there is a sense that we should strive to reduce the total burden of HD [Huntington’s Disease] in the next generation through counseling and educational activities...then the current approach to genetic counseling and testing is not succeeding. (p. 83-84)



Difference

The aforementioned discriminatory factors are predicated a Western normative subjectivity, which values what Braidotti (2012) calls a “tacit consensus about the self-evidence of the universalizing powers of self-reflexive and self-correcting reason” (p. 210). The valuing of reason positions an individual who has *not* completed the PGT process as a site of difference and *otherness*, lacking success in the failure of an activity. My reading of Braidotti provides an understanding of the conflict I experienced in telling my story as a *problem of articulation*. Unable to provide a self-evidential, reflexive, and reasonable account of the subjects, objects, and the *transcendence* of specified boundaries informing how a choice was made and what it took to succeed, attempts at normative narrative accounts describing how I ultimately succeeded in completing the PGT process also result in a hierarchical and dialectical binary logic where my self-reflexive failure is also a site of difference and otherness. The binary logic of success/failure similarly reduces difference to a “pejoration, disqualification and exclusion” (p. 409), as I am unable to articulate normative behaviours and thinking. Further troubling this problem of articulation, I am unable to account for the time that constitutes this event, when I started and completed the PGT process, nor can I explain the duration of time it took to do so. Did I begin on the journey of undertaking PGT as a teenager, on the day I was told my father had the disease, with the course of my life following a path of an ever increasing active and conscious decision to complete the process? Did the process begin the day I initially met with genetic counselling services, or when I submitted a blood sample for the genetic test? Would I have completed the PGT process if I had given a blood sample, but, unable to cope with the information, declined to receive the results? Did I complete the PGT process by simply reading the numbers that tell of the CAG repeats present in the HTT gene within my cells?

Returning to the Deleuze and Guattari's Maritime model of space, I understand the normative subject privileged within striated space as constructing the binary of *choice* as a point where the individual self can dwell within a particular duration of time. A normative experience is required to demarcate in what terms one has "succeeded" and where one has "failed" in the PGT process. Normative research regarding the individual constructs the binary of choice by creating *striations* in space with formed and perceived things; discriminating factors, motivations, traits, and cognitive abilities that enable these decisions. The accumulation, usefulness and execution of these striations becomes the method of success or failure. A life of the individual comes to be known through a series of these points, of decisions and events navigated with accumulating factors along a linear path of time. Deleuze (2001) maintains the indefinite article of a life, though, is only the singularisation of immanent events by an individual, interpreted as experiences constitutive of and belonging to the normative self. Paradoxically, Deleuze concludes that whilst a life is everywhere "in all the moments a given living subject goes through", *life* itself does not have moments, but "only between-times, between-moments" (p. 29). Life does not come about before, after, or because of events, nor does life happen because of events.

Instead of the singularisation of life belonging to an individual, the nomadic subject is a "process-oriented vision of the subject" (Braidotti, 2010, p. 410), replacing the normative subject's dialectical logic of simple empiricism, which cannot account for the apparent paradox of a life being all moments yet not reducible to these moments, with repetitions of Deleuze's concept of multiplicity. Nomadic ethics addresses the paradox by embedding accountability within the concept of the nomadic subject, linking memory, narrative, and imagination to "activate the process of bringing into discursive representation that which by definition escapes self-representation" (p. 410). As a *cartographic figuration*, the nomadic subject provides ethical accounts of a multiplicity of differing subject positions, as well as empowering accounts of multiple differences within any subject position. Traversed along the co-ordinates of geo-political and historical locations, as a Deleuzian political construct a nomadic subject can be understood as *an evaluative multiplicity of subject positions*, able to navigate the striated space formed of points as well as the smooth space of intervals and in-between times, a subjectivity created "in order to extract from them all the possibilities that they carry" (Valentin, 2006, p. 193).

Formed by “retelling, reconfiguring and revisiting the concept, phenomenon, event, or location from different angles” (Braidotti, 2010, p. 412), the nomadic subject is a methodological construct, capable of crossing boundaries that position *difference* as the site of otherness, freeing the concept of difference as a pejoration or disqualification to be excluded. The role of *qualitative difference*, Boundas (2006) explains, is not limited or confined here to a multiplicity of ontologies or subjectivities. Pure difference is also involved in forming an ethics of a subject, with the intensities and affect of a nomadic subject providing always already innumerable possibilities of ethical relationships with human, non-human, and more than human entities. Ethics replace the *moral judgements* of a normative unitary self with the Deleuzian concept of *desire*. Based on a premise of *lack*, the figure of the normative subject poses a need to acquire that which is outside of itself, to overcome or transcend boundaries that prohibit carrying out moral duties and obligations, compelled with the moral imperative of reason where one acts based on “the transcendental ought, along with its twin bulwarks of duty and obligation” (p. 14). According to Boundas, Deleuze’s concept of desire “produces relations and connections that are real in their functions and revolutionary in their rhizomatic multiplicity”, and is an act where the subject lacks nothing in “facilitating the formation of adequate ideas and striving towards more and ‘better encounters”” (p. 16). Aligned with Braidotti’s (2012) concept of *becoming*, desire is the affirmative capacity to act with others in constructing a rich array of “possible worlds through a web of sustainable interconnections...a collective assemblage of forces that coalesce around commonly shared elements and empower them to grow and to endure” (p. 96).

Disentangling the risky body...

I have an interest in theory that allows me to tell my story differently, that is, theory that allows the telling of a story I cannot access through a normative narrative account. Returning to other connections, I recall a level of anger I had not associated with psychological research when coming across research by Titus et al. (2017). The research analyses the presence of nightmares as a *predictive factor* in a risk assessment of suicidality. Having experienced and endured feelings associated with suicidality and depression after the death of my father, as well as in the midst of the PGT process, dwelling on the feelings connected with this single piece of literature, I have come to understand the possibilities of research as both a pervasive and intrusive form of surveillance. Remembering my own experiences, I struggled with feelings of social isolation and disordered thinking, experiences of otherness inscribed with an increase in

uncertainty and despair, of being unable to connect with others. Re-imagining my self disappearing as I struggled with these feelings of loneliness, desperate to leave feelings of trauma from the past and the anxiety of an unrecognisable future, I understand this research as measuring my normativity against an ideal, the site of otherness ever increasing and yet reduced to manifestations of unconscious nighttime brain activity. Re-engaging with memories of pain and sorrow, I wonder, having lost my father unexpectedly and inexplicably at the age of 17, how else should I have been acting? With feelings of the unscrupulous judgment of others, one might ask to whom and to what else should I have been aspiring?

Providing critique of *genetic reductionism*, Lemke (2004) suggests genetic knowledge formation often works to “link complex behavioral patterns and social phenomena back to a genetic basis” (p. 552), tracing complexity to ever simpler points in which to create the normativeness of a “genetic consensus” (p. 553). Titus et al. (2017) similarly seeks to contribute towards an understanding of how nightmares serve as a mechanism which increases the risk of suicide, and by a similarly reductionist approach establishes deviations from a norm as sites of psychological intervention. As Lemke articulates, rather than simply criticising reductionism as being “one-sided, ill informed...solely to assert its reductionism or to illustrate the complexity of the problems addressed”, critical research also needs to take up the enterprise of showing “how this reductionism functions in practical terms and what social consequences it will have” (2004, p. 553). After working in professional settings incorporating clinical/forensic/social psychological concepts to implement a range of “socially just” interventions, I remember experiencing uncomfortableness as I became aware of the possible exploitative nature of psychological research, which, in making visible the neoliberal normative subject “might also allow this visibility to become profitable in both political and economic terms” (p. 556).

No longer content providing a narrative to understand the experiences of the PGT process, an account of a normative individual surveilled and exploited through the active intervention of others, I began exploring the possibilities of Foucault’s theories and discourse analysis to attend to the “epistemo-political field of the visible and the expressible, which controls the diverse forms of signification, and defines the conditions for truth and falsehood” (Lemke, 2004, p. 553). Focussing on the conditions of life for an individual undertaking the PGT process, I thought discourse analysis would enable an understanding of “how genetic information is generated and produced, how it is circulated

and used, but also how it is appropriated and ‘consumed’” (p. 558) in order to navigate the complexities of the PGT process. Revisiting Deleuzian desire and Braidotti’s nomadic subject, I connect experiences of anger and painful self-reflexive experiences of particular limits of normative psychological research with imagining other possibilities of research, in order to establish unforeseen better encounters with others. My experiences of normative research lingered on, the anger and frustration becoming symptoms and forces of an interest in theory allowing me to tell my story differently, signalling the immanent formation of smooth space from within the striated space of normative subjectivity with the possibilities of research yet foreseen.

To *become-political*, Braidotti (2006a) describes a process which requires a “radical repositioning or intensive transformation on the part of subjects” (p. 241), where the dis-identification with familiar forms and representations makes possible the desire of new affirmative and productive subject positions. Although I am familiar with the individual subject of Huntington’s Disease research, with the focus on traits, skills, and aptitudes thought to “allow” one to complete the PGT process when others fail, I appreciate the potential for Foucault’s work on governmentalities to de-centre the subject, to better understand the forces at play which constrain and enable decisions that one might navigate to undertake PGT. I remember the tight, contortionist movements whilst navigating the complex spaces of emotional, social, and medical discourses which were just beyond my capability at times, and the requisite acts that I needed to invent, learn, and practice. Instead of separating those who have and those who have not completed the PGT process, research with a de-centred subject gives scope to provide an embodied account of my memories of the bruising, embodied pain and injury that I recall whilst completing the process.

Remembering Colebrook’s exhortation to reframe psychological research beyond the notion of life of an individual, with fondness, I recall engaging with Titus et al., and completing an assignment created immanently with new feelings of anger about normative psychological research. As I began work on this thesis, feelings cohered into a preference for experimentation, an unfamiliar affirmative oppositional political agency in search of possibilities, of alternative better encounters unable to be represented with simple criticism and the negativity of lack. Initially settling on conducting a discourse analysis, and embracing Foucauldian theories of governmentality, I hoped narrative interviews with

participants would help to make sense of how one might become one in a million with new ethical ontologies. But...

...with new connections

The idea of choice, a neoliberal idea predicated on the normative unitary self, is shallowly answered through the constructs of personality, decision-making frameworks of cost/benefit, and discriminatory factors. Scott (2009) is critical of knowledge production which stipulates specific "principled ways of remembering...as well the values of certain kinds of truth, method, and order" (p. 358), where sameness is treated as a threshold of success for the reasonable and logical, where one overcomes boundaries and barriers by being like others who have done similarly, against those that have not, cannot, and will not. Discussing the ethics of Foucault's work, Scott points out that the different premises and conditions of working with an ethical ontology allowed Foucault "to understand better by finding a different vocabulary, changed combination of concepts, and the mutations they bring by connecting with aspects of experience that are barely emerging at the borders of his awareness" (p. 362). I understand the presence of *mutations* in thinking as a means to provide possibilities of variation, in the formation of differing, non-normative yet ethical subjectivities, where the priority of research turns to the political, and past the life of the individual.

With a Foucauldian ethics, I understood a possibility of psychological research of the PGT process to illustrate how, in the creation of *subversive knowledges* against the normalising power of discourses and institutions, one can be different. Where difference in humanness is the creative potential of thinking problematically, difference also enables the conditions of change to answer a question of how one undertakes PGT. Rather than the dialectical question and answer of a neoliberal subject, for which normative psychological research has been unable to demonstrate an adequate language to describe the experiences of people who have undergone the PGT process, an analysis of governmentality dislodges the focus of research from reasonable and logical explanations of *why*, to privilege questions of *how* otherwise not found in the literature regarding PGT and Huntington's Disease. Following Scott's (2009) elaboration of events which shape who we become, I understand the PGT process as experiences of navigating the intimate and non-logical "structures that govern the establishment of truth", a process composed of discontinuous events with "multiple strata and trajectories as well as with discontinuities of differences running through them" (pp. 358-359) that do not fit neatly in tidy accounts. I have come to

understand many of the practices, events, and trajectories of my life as a journey to bring about new ethical possibilities formed of new circumstances. To undertake and complete PGT, the ethics of mutations provide me leverage to navigate discourses not immediately accessible with current cultural and social practices, geographical and geopolitical locations, and interpersonal relationships. To succeed in undertaking a test that I knew to be challenging, for me and all others present with me, subversive knowledges appeared as a worthwhile pursuit for thesis work to understand processes of change and difference.

In their analysis of genetic risk and the implications for personhood, Novas and Rose (2000) critically examine the discourses surrounding the rise of genetic technologies, and refute the generalisation that individuals within Western neoliberal societies face discrimination based on the increased availability of genetic knowledge. They determine an individual who is able to calculate the risk of adverse health events occurring, enabled with new forms of genetic knowledge acquired with technology such as PGT, results in the new form of personhood of the “genetically at risk individual”. This status of personhood, a mutation formed of new and different combinations of vocabularies and concepts previously unavailable prior to contemporary genetic knowledge, allows for the formation of “new categories of individuals” (p. 486) who utilise *life strategies* in the creation of new identities. Novas and Rose regard the normative individual as an entrepreneur. Wielding life strategies invested with new choices of practices not previously available, the entrepreneurial self thinks of life in terms of risk, assessing life strategies in terms of the maximisation of preferable life chances. Employment opportunities, quality of life determinations based on available medical knowledge of diseases and treatments, and the ethical responsibilities in partner formation and child rearing decisions become foregrounded as choices from which life chances are measured, as goals from which the effectiveness of life strategy practices are measured, whilst also allowing one to be measured by others as well. These concerns present a new form of personhood, formed of the relationship between body and self, which Novas and Rose identify as *somatic individuality*. New languages created by the personhood of an individual genetically at risk, Novas and Rose argue, articulate knowledge formations to “render visible to others and to oneself aspects of human individuality that go beyond ‘experience’...re-organizing it in a new way and according to new values about who we are, what we must do, and what we can hope for” (p. 488).





The Ethics of Mutation and Obligation

Whilst I have an immediate appreciation for research describing the affirmative possibilities that difference enables in the creation of new subjectivities, I am troubled by Novas and Rose's (2000) determination that genetic information is an "object of positive knowledge" (p. 489). Novas and Rose describe a personhood of somatic individuality, framed by understandings of genetic risk, where the individual is neither a subject of domination nor a subjectivity wrought by the suppression of freedom. Somatic individuality, instead, constitutes a framework for "reshaping of personhood along somatic lines and a mutation in conceptions of life itself" (p. 485). These new conceptions of life contribute to an expansion of neoliberal ideals, where:

"...new modes of subjectivity produce the obligation to calculate choices in a complex interpersonal field, not only in terms of individuals' relations to themselves, but also in terms of their relations to others, including not only actual and potential kin, past and present, but also genetic professionals and biomedical researchers." (p. 488)

Rose and Novas assert the affirmative, active participation of an individual in this process, who, in the formation of a personhood, is "free yet responsible, enterprising, prudent, encouraging the conduct of life in a calculative manner by acts of choice with an eye to the future and to increasing self well-being and that of the family" (p. 490). The calculative, enterprising somatic individual begets a normative, *entrepreneurial* consumerist approach to knowledge pertaining to Huntington's Disease, to meet the needs of an "identity in terms of a genetic past, a genetic present and a genetic future" (p. 495). Knowledge, accordingly, is instrumental to the care of one's self and pursued as an instrument to show one's care for others, whilst within this form of relational personhood, professionals are no longer "the sole repository or mediator of knowledge", but instead "assigned the responsibility and duty to produce new forms of knowledge that are available and applicable to persons" (p. 506). I understand a personhood of somatic individuality with Rose's (2001) conceptualisation of a neoliberal individual self, who, in desiring, creating, and consuming genetic discourse and knowledge as a form of capital, is "opened up to choice, prudence and responsibility, to experimentation, to contestation" (p. 20). When facing the needs of past, present and future genetic identities, a somatic individual uses the epistemology of a

“vital politics” of life, which, according to Rose, is measured “in terms of the quality of our individual biological lives and those with whom we identify” (p. 22).

Starting work on this thesis, seeing myself within the concept of a somatic individual, I recall the excitement of thinking “this might work”. In preparation for interviewing participants who have completed the PGT process, I began writing of my own memories of PGT within a framework much aligned with the somatic individual. Initially approaching narrative as accounts of the encumbrances evaded, the obstacles avoided, and the barriers overcome in an attempt to narrate a journey of presiding over one’s life in order to preside over one’s death, I wrote with, and within, a discursive binary of *not having the gene* or *having the gene*. I wrote passages of narratives with life constituted as a dichotomy of before and after PGT testing, with the specificity of my genetic risk forming both a life saving tool yet shifting liability. These feelings of excitement soon faded, though, with feelings of immense frustration further unsettling me when these writings stalled.

Reflecting on the feelings emerging whilst I sat with the stalled writings, I remember Braidotti (2012) situates the convergence of the unitary neoliberal self engaging in “dialectics of recognition and lack” (p. 3) as a location where “advanced capitalism thrives...spinning quantitative differences into a consumerist mode” (p. 170-171). The somatic individual’s life strategies, to my understanding, create “a more instrumental, narrow logic of opportunistic exploitation” (p. 336) of life, which, envisaged as bios, is generically contained within an individual, and bestowed upon all equally. My understandings of genetic risk, providing contradictions narrative must navigate, inform decisions subject to debate with the involvement of others regarding economical functionality. Confronting narration of the *obligations* forming the basis of my calculative and prudent entrepreneurial self, I am unable to account for myriad artefacts of a personhood based on an identity in terms of a genetic past, present and future. Unable to provide the hopes, desires, and goals of a normative self, missing are the reasoned and justified values pertaining to decisions I had spent decades navigating. I am unable to account for what kind of life I sought - nor what I hoped to achieve.

Returning to research on Huntington’s Disease and the sustainability of the relationship between the somatic individual and entrepreneurial self, many avenues of psychological research focus on suicide as a contributor to the high mortality rates for genetically at-risk individuals, and those who have developed Huntington’s Disease. Contemporary studies

have found that although less than 1% of deaths within the general population are caused by suicide, nearly 7% of individuals diagnosed with Huntington's Disease commit suicide, making a self-inflicted death the third most frequent cause after pneumonia and other respiratory infections (Brogueira Rodrigues et al., 2017).

Research into the rates of suicide for at-risk individuals indicate suicide occurs at four times the levels found for the general population in the United States, whilst the same study also found 28% of the 831 patients with Huntington's Disease who participated in the research had attempted suicide at least once before (Farrer, Opitz, & Reynolds, 1986).

Reflecting on the perpetuation of violence within my family, mindful of circumstances of my father and grandfather's deaths but also other relationships within my family that appear roiled with conflict, I wonder of the somatic individual's binary formulation of having/not having, knowing/not knowing, and telling/not-telling the genetic information of somatic individuality. Braidotti (2012) provides a Derridean understanding of this binary, suggesting the repeated pattern "results in a productive relationship to the aporetic and the recognition of a fundamental double bind that ties the self to the radical alterity of others" (p. 31). The normative self takes as a given the difference of a genetic binary, forming alterity as a negativity of lack, with the unitary subject "consolidated by habits and flat repetitions" (p. 154) to maintain the *excluded other*. Braidotti encourages an evaluation of the unsustainable costs this form of self-representation invokes, questioning the *schizoid logic* of these repetitions as "legal forms of addiction" that "railroad us back toward established ways of thinking about ourselves" (p. 263). With the logic of evading and avoiding obstacles, and learning of new possibilities to overcome barriers and limits, I continue to reassess my own formulation of my family as illogical, different, and my own inability to recognise them in their contextual worlds. The subjectivity that stood me so well in the face of adversity, the difference I envisaged between my self and my father permitting me to thrive and enter into spaces which had no entrance, as being unlike others, is no longer sustainable. I am frightened by the possibility I am more like my father, or less different, than I have ever known. Being present with my reflexive memories of resistances to rationality, which Braidotti positions as a "starting point to elaborate sites of political resistance" (p. 278), I also recall relationships of generosity and connectivity to others with feelings of pain, and feelings of comfort and relief in sharing the affective extremes inscribing the fear of my own death. With these reflexive memories, understanding others through my own limitations in completing the PGT process instead

become “points of passage or thresholds and markers of sustainability” (p. 318). The shame of these reflections, though, the fallibility of my logic and reason whilst becoming aware of the negativity of my own knowledge systems of self-representation, is startling.



Having come far, yet still in the middle, I begin once more with another remembered beginning. Although these initial writings helped develop understandings of ways around the limits of normative practices, I have come to understand these narratives as providing an account of striated space, of identified points where a unitary normative self dwells, enabling me to complete the PGT process where others fail. I fear the striation of space serving as *sediment*, forming particular subject positions and grounding them in place, reliant on the linear and logical normative subject to articulate the events of these strategies, privileging the perpetuation of otherness. Reflecting on my narrative efforts, and the requisite “expertness” required of the neoliberal normative self to articulate the life strategies of genetic discourse, I am uncomfortable with the binary formation of a somatic normative neoliberal individual as with the risky subject of discrimination they are posed (poised) to refute. Although fluent in the language of risk, having lived at-risk and worked with risk for most of my adult life, I am unable to account for my own entrepreneurial thinking of risk in relation to my life chances, quality of life decisions, and interpersonal ethical responsibilities. Having become troubled with the possibility that participants in narrative research would similarly be unable to provide an expert account, of once again failing to account for experiences of the PGT process, requiring the intervention of others and returning to the binary logic of self/other, I continue seeking ethical possibilities to tell my story. Becoming aware these troubled feelings form beginnings of further transformations, I recall Braidotti (2010), who holds such ethical transformations must “emerge out of a different set of premises, affects and conditions” (p. 413).

Responding to questions of subjectivity as a political philosophy, I remember Deleuze (2001), who insists:

...what counts in such processes is the extent to which, as they take shape, they elude both established forms of knowledge and the dominant forms of power...What we most lack is a belief in the world, we’ve quite lost the world, it’s been taken from us. If you believe in the world you precipitate events,

however inconspicuous, that elude control, you engender new space-times, however small their volume. (p. 176)

Braidotti's (2012) nomadic theory came to my attention with the premise of "an ontology of presence" (p. 132), where desire is not constituted by what one lacks but is "a powerful force in itself" (p. 21). With Braidotti's formation of nomadic thought, nomadic narrative engenders new space-times through encounters with "anomalous and unfamiliar forces, drives, yearnings, or sensations" (p. 97). I understand this to mean embodied molecular human, non-human, and more than human intensities create in-exhaustive multiplicities of nomadic subjectivities; in other words, the possibilities of affirmative and empowering political philosophical activity form with narrative of a dispersed self. Working with nomadic theory, I began writing nomadic narratives, exploring the smooth space forming with *non-unitary nomadic selves* interacting with other entities and *collective assemblages*. Through working and reworking nomadic writings, they have become the narrative windows that follow. They are experiments of writing from memory of difference, completed with what Braidotti (2010) refers to as writing "by heart" (p. 414). With no substantive requirement to factually check what happened, when it occurred, and to whom, I write with affective memories of my experiences as enabling truths. Forming from the non-linear temporality of nomadic thinking, molecular connections with human, non-human, and more than human entities, forces, and flows provide the *affirmative sensorial and cognitive data* from a "virtual totality of a continuously recomposing block of past and present moments" (p. 414). As an "opening-out", these narratives are crafted of nomadic encounters with memories of the PGT process, the self dispersed to "express the vital energy of transformative becomings" (p. 415). The dispersed self is traced within these writings as *etchings* of transformative becomings within smooth space, carved from differences between points and spaces that no longer need to be filled, and therefore become never-lacking.

The Posthuman

Once more in yet another remembered middle, I ponder Villani (2006), who recognises the possibilities of political activity in testing "how far the concepts of Deleuze's philosophy may be stretched, without breaking" (p. 227). Villani argues political activity needs to challenge simple distinctions between striated and smooth space which "represents only a way of managing the territory rather than a process of deterritorialisation", stipulating that "flattering the plural is never enough to understand the multiple" (p. 237). Engaging with the development of new ethical encounters of academic knowledge production, Braidotti

(2016) problematises the terms *humanities* and *posthumanities* in the age of *Anthropocene*. Situating the need to establish multiple affirmative processes of *defamiliarisation*, Braidotti implores the value of pain in processes by which the normative subject breaks from *anthropocentric thought* and enters into relationships with a multiplicity of human, non-human, and more than human forces.

I understand the term *Anthropocene* as a (generally) agreed-upon term for the present geologic epoch (see Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000). Colebrook (2014) implies the *Anthropocene* epoch signifies when human (anthropogenic) habitation on the planet has become “discernible as a geological strata readable well after man ceases to be” (p. 12), whilst requiring that one must look “at our own world and imagining it as it will be when it has become the past” (p. 26) to do so. Referencing a need for a multiplicity of terms, Haraway (2015) suggests the planetary impacts of human intervention exceed the confines of climate change, in-exhaustively listing the “extraordinary burdens of toxic chemistry, mining, depletion of lakes and rivers under and above ground, ecosystem simplification, vast genocides of people and other critters, etc, etc, in systemically linked patterns that threaten major system collapse after major system collapse after major system collapse” (p. 159) as important considerations in defining the term. Braidotti’s (2016) situates her work, within the *Anthropocene*, as challenging the academic humanities “separation of bios, life, as the prerogative of humans, from Zoe, the life of animals and nonhuman entities”, where “humanistic Man—as the universal measure of all things—defined himself as much by what he excluded as by what he included in his rational self-representation...and their differences get organized on a hierarchical scale of decreasing social and symbolic worth” (p. 381).

Stretching and deterritorialising the concept of *multiplicity*, Braidotti privileges the process of *defamiliarisation* as a space where “knowing subjects evolve from the vision of the self they had become accustomed to” (p. 388). Elsewhere, Boundas (2006) provides an exposition on the concept of *difference*, stretching Deleuze and Guattari’s subverted understanding of the *nomad* as an intensive subjectivity based on their “attempt to summon those who are in a position to stand against the state’s capturing forces” (p. 21). Creating an ethical subjectivity of difference, no longer defined in terms of repeated habits privileging co-extensive borderlines of formed and perceived things, situates processes of intensification as a subject of thought. Boundas alerts us to the unorthodox nature of this thinking, describing intensities as those forces “responsible for the genesis of entities... whose mode of existence is to actualise themselves in states of affairs” (p. 4-5).

Returning to academic entanglements, I understand issues of multiplicity, de-familiarisation, and intensive subjectivity with the use of rhizomatic figurations in this thesis. Multiple intervals and lines only present simple accounts. Likewise, returning to the unsettling experiences of somatic individuality, mutations and governmentality, the sedimentation of particular subject positions requires more than a simple multiplication of subject positions to dislodge the striation of space. What is needed, following Deleuze, are differences formed with multiplicities of changing vectors, directions, frequencies, and speeds. Braidotti's (2010) nomadic theory transforms the binary of "oppositional consciousness and resistance on the one hand and negativity on the other", a form of thinking that produces the stability of sedimented subjectivities, with "a change of perspective that aims at recasting critique as affirmation" (p. 413). Reframing the concept of affirmation, Braidotti (2012) replaces the normative *moral intentionality* of a subject with Deleuze's concepts of repressive (*potestas*) and positive (*potentia*) power. According to Braidotti, the recognition of pain, as well as joy, empowers processes of "transformative experimentation with new arts of existence and ethical relations" (p. 269). A nomadic subject creates new affective connections and affirmative processes to "increase one's ability to enter into modes of relation with multiple others" (p. 286). Harm and pain, considered negative experiences and undesirable states of the normative subject, empower political action and affirm self-styling in acts of becoming. The negativity of *potestas*, a disempowerment of the self to relate to others, reduces the expression of interconnectivity and interdependence of the self/other in subject formation. An ethical act therefore increases *potentia*, empowering joyful acts of creation in an expression of freedom, challenging a norm of the "centrality of the notion of the individual to an ethical sense of values or to a socially well-functioning system" (p. 310).

No longer contingent on the intentions of an individual to maintain moral norms and normative social systems, a nomadic ethics builds accountability with the pursuit of interactions which create sustainable encounters with others. Braidotti (2010) warns us, though, the practice of self-reflexive skills in the methodological approach of nomadic writing presents specific challenges to the normative practices and demands of academic institutional requirements. As a form of academic auto-ethnographic research, nomadic narrative requires consideration of normative ethical privacy principles, typically resulting in a practice providing anonymity or confidentiality to named or otherwise identifiable individuals.

I am recalling a question from my mother, a reprimand of sorts, whilst we are in the midst of a long conversation overlooking a winery in Southwest Michigan. Remembering her question of why I “psychologise” everything, unendingly and all the time, I remember Ellis (2013), who celebrates autoethnography as a way “of being in the world, one that requires living consciously, emotionally, and reflexively...that we observe ourselves observing... that we rethink and revise our lives, making conscious decisions about who and how we want to be” (p. 10). I understand autoethnographies with the use of personal experiences in research, specifically the vulnerabilities of both myself and others in narratives, which “reflects on the nuances...to show how the aspects of experience illuminate more general cultural phenomena and/or to show how the experience works to diminish, silence, or deny certain people and stories” (p. 23). Autoethnographies, according to Ellis, demonstrates knowledge of previous research to contribute to future research, where “secrets are disclosed and histories are made known” (p. 23) to bring a multiplicity of voices to engage in collaborative experiences with the audience. Some of these experiences, vulnerabilities, silences, and voices might be seen by others as “not mine”, requiring consideration of privacy principles.

Acknowledging her authority in creating her own subjectivity, Sam has taken opportunities to read these narratives prior to submission, allowing our exploration of affective processes as the writing progresses. This engagement has brought to the fore a tension, arising as we consider her privacy and our confidentiality in this writing and discuss theoretical underpinnings of Deleuzian philosophy and nomadic subjectivity. Differently, acknowledging the politics of her involvement are no less relevant with accounts of events occurring “before” I met her, Hannah has also read these narratives, providing for processes of intensive support and critical feedback in the creation of ideas, concepts, and experiences. An implication of writing with a nomadic subject is the methodological intention of providing an ethical account with the *politics of location* inhabited with specific embodied subject positions. I am troubled by the possibilities of untangling all the identifying traces of others, as I form the politics of location with my experiences and construct dispersed selves with these narratives. It is difficult to envisage nomadic narratives of my experiences without providing accounts partially identifying others, especially Sam and Hannah, in some capacity. Yet, contemplating academic requirements protecting privacy, whilst writing narratives irreducible to individuals yet experiences we share, I am troubled that any audience of this writing who knows of us will invariably identify the individuals of this writing. Although formation of a nomadic subject is no longer reliant on a mutual recognition of the self/other, I understand invoking full anonymity for

identities would form possibilities of different “naked” political subjectivities, limited by the politics of location I am able to account for in these narratives without identifying others.

As I understand it, not providing confidentiality in narrative would likewise form different subjectivities, normative or otherwise. Although concerns began with Sam fearing erasure of her own experiences of the PGT process should her experiences of events not be accounted for, the possibility of erasure also resides in not providing privacy, serving as a particular challenge to normative practices of thesis production. Narratives pertaining to some of the most frightening, challenging, and traumatic experiences of our lives together, to say the least, requires attending to the politics of our fears. Sam and I share the neoliberal construct of last names, and we attend the same medical doctor within these narratives. Sam, Hannah, and I share friends and family who remain integral to us and who may read this. Importantly, we continue to co-create politics of location with each other. We “hang out” socially, alone and with others. We have professional and personal aspirations, informed and potentially complicated by the publication of nomadic narratives. We continue to experience feelings of loss, grief, and anger, together. By attending to politics of these locations, and the embodied fear of individualised privacy and erasure, we continue to create together, entering into new and sustainable ethical modes of relation with each other in joyful acts of becoming.

Returning to the flattery of the plural and a subjectivity of intensifications, the pursuit of sustainable interactions presents other challenges with the normative practice of authorship as well. The nomadic subject with which I write is not the creation of a singular self, nor an accumulation or multiplication of individuals. Simply crediting other co-authors to increase multiples of individuals responsible for these writings would present itself as another form of managing the territory of striated space created in an academic enterprise. If these writings are constructed with a self present with a multiplicity of interconnections within a shared world, how does the dispersed self also become accountable in neoliberal academic practice? How do I account for these interconnections whilst acknowledging the requirements to consider privacy and anonymity?

In response, I turn to Braidotti (2016), who asks us to rethink with “ecologies of belonging”, forming a self “the subject never masters nor possesses but merely inhabits and crosses nomadically, always in a community, a pack, a group, or a cluster” (p. 387-388).

Considering Braidotti’s exhortation, this narrative substitutes Sam and Hannah’s real

names in this thesis. The identities of other individuals in these narratives are kept confidential in line with normative academic practices as well. Untangling the stories of other individuals from my own, as I understand autoethnographic methodology and nomadic narrative, would not be theoretically possible. Creating narrative windows, the voices of “others” in an individual sense do more than just add to mine, for this would be a different flattering of “one” to manage territory. Writing nomadically, the voices of others enliven my own with processes of defamiliarisation, creating ever more possibilities of voices that do not answer to my name.

This continued stretching of thought comes with a warning; Boundas (2006) cautions multiple levels of deterritorialisation are unable to be understood with representational thought, as difference becomes “subsumed under similitude, opposition, analogy and identity” (p. 8). Whilst representational thought “belongs essentially to consciousness and follows the logic of solutions”, Boundas situates the possibilities of using an *Idea* for what is unrepresentable in order to go to the edges of contemporary practices and “the conditions that account for things, states of things and their mixtures” (p. 9). Without an answer to this problem, but instead with some ideas, I open up yet more smooth space with a rhizomatic figuration of the molecular human, non-human, and more than human forces no longer restricted within the rigid frames of simple empiricism. Having followed a density of entangled lines to this new middle, a question asking how one can become worthy of the present, I must begin again in yet another middle.

Narrative (I)

Overflowing

In the winter of 2010, after months of sleepless nights and wake-less days, I drive myself to Dr Readdy. As I never went to sleep that night, you might say I never really woke up that morning; I simply got out of bed. I cannot drive myself to work, cannot open the toothpaste tube and brush my teeth. Today, finally, I cannot be by myself. I have yet to give blood for the test. I have become overcome with feelings, fear saturating life throughout my day, anxiety providing movement through my night. Time is emanating from this pain, ever and only forward. Each day is lived dutifully as yet one more set of movements to trudge through, a set of hours to count, set of nerves to fray. The feelings are unbearable: this living has become unbearable.

The receptionist fits me in without an appointment. When it is my turn, I collapse in tears in front of Dr Readdy. I am not tired; I have become exhausted. Each day feels as if more and more of me is reduced, and I become of less and less. Pleading, not entirely sure what I am crying about, what I am pleading for, I want him to know my desperation. It is the best I can do. I have tried. I can't take it anymore.

He doesn't say a word. Just a hand on my shoulder. I need his help, to survive one more day. He would be here with me.

I know risk assessments. I see the questions before I hear them. Am I suicidal? I cannot tell. Have I had any thoughts of hurting myself? I hurt so much, I feel nothing else. I feel so much all the time, I do not know if it is possible I could actually hurt myself any further. Listening to music, tying my shoes, hiking in the mountains, hearing people talk of their boredom, driving, shopping for groceries, talking, sleeping...all are difficult, harsh, and only bring about pain. I tell him I feel like I am crumbling, within myself. There is nothing to hold me intact, together, except the constancy of pain and fear. I am not done with the testing process. I am scared that I don't remember happiness.

I do not hear any further questions, only his listening. Consumed with fear from potentially having the gene, I fear a life of not having the gene. I fear the anger I feel towards my family, for failing to come along with me through this vast expanse of pain and fear, and I am overwhelmed with experiences of travelling with those to have chosen to be here with me through these feelings. Yet, these fears are overflowing, requiring more of me. Each day all over again, I am desperate to understand my pain, to abide it until tomorrow.

Anxiously moving forward, my efforts are too slow to fill up the hours of the day as I run out of minutes, before this time is up. My days have become preoccupied with treasonous doubt of myself. I am not sure I can continue to do this. Having begun a process that has yet to finish, I cannot undo what has become of me. Having put myself here, I am crucifying myself whilst trying to find a way through. I cannot control this.

Somewhere in this space, we talk of antidepressants, and medication to help me sleep. We talk of other people with me, places I have been and yet to go, and what might become of me.

'How has it come to this? What if this doesn't work?'

'Let's just do this one thing, first.'

I am not sure if this is what he said, or what I heard. I am afraid of leaving his office, afraid of being seen by others, yet afraid others don't see me because I cannot let them see the pain. I am afraid my life is not working. Comparing my pain to Dad and Grandpa, the pain they both must have endured, both ultimately failing before committing suicide. They did not endure. I go next door to the pharmacy, with my prescription for anti-depressants and anti-anxiety pills. I am failing...

As I write this...

Beginning this project with a single hour, filled with experiences of suicide, Huntington's Disease and loss, of interminable choices and decisions predicated on unconscionable fear and terror, the results of this effort speak to me of the inadequacy of narrative language. I cannot express this hour adequately, and therefore have chosen not to share it with others until now. Unknown to all but me and Dr Readdy, I wonder of the implications of producing a narrative of this event, time, and place. Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou (2013) argue a narrative capacity constitutes me as human, my narrative a worthy subject of psychological study. Constituting the world through my understanding of their formation of normative narrative, marking a single hour, I do not know where to put the woman with whom so much of these feelings and experiences were shared. This narrative act presents itself as a harbinger of erasure, an act lacking those things of which I cannot speak. A normative account reliant on physical embodiment imperils the existence of my father, who resides in my life more in his death than in his living, and to me is still of this world. Distinct from the sculptural landscape of my garden, I lose the possibilities of co-constituted

despair and healing with the land outside of my front door, the mountains in which I spend my time. How might I account for the toil of digging, planting, and living with my garden, where Bawaka Country including Wright et al. (2015) speak to me of possibilities pertaining to where I buried the death of my father - and unearthed ways of enduring as I grieved his absence? How can I provide an understanding of myself without the plants, animals, and creatures too small for me to name, with whom I share this time? I wish to turn away from narrative that tells of absence and lack, of what I may have acquired or discarded in the construction of a world. Answering these questions, my responses become monstrous, and I am reminded of Derrida (1989):

“Monsters cannot be announced. One cannot say: ‘Here are our monsters,’ without immediately turning the monsters into pets.” (p. 80)

Burdened by the call to constitute my humanity, I become aware that narrative seeks to set out an account, a *ledger of sums*, demarcating figures and characters and relationships. To account for situated knowledge, to become understandable, Tamboukou (2008) tells me narrative is “to express specific lines of thought interwoven around moments of being temporarily crystallized” (p. 3). What happened? To whom and when? How did it feel and what do I make of it? Did it change me? What else may have been? Pondering the value of humanity as a subject, as the provider of the object of study, questions of sense making in the retelling of this briefest of time feel inadequate. How is one to know the extent of how the experiences of a father and grandfather’s suicide impact on oneself, how might you qualify this? What, and whose input, are you willing to leave out of what these things mean?

I arrive back at my value as a human, and question if my humanity parallels my inadequacy to account for myself. Would I be less embodied through narrative shortcomings unable to account for myself; are my human rights reliant on my ability to announce them? Countering these concerns with a feminist interrogation of narrative, Tamboukou (2008) provides for feelings of narrative inadequacy, creating another account of the objects and possibilities left out to represent the missing and the absent. Tamboukou contends this account can still be found, albeit only when materialised in a *depository* outside of the control of the individual, which once located, becomes useful in allowing the narrative to be taken along new lines of thought. Narrative accounts are fully actualised with the inclusion of a depository, altering the initial aim or intention, forming the possibility

that a single narrative can provide for a plethora of readings, meaning a multiplicity of different things, at differing times, to different people. With the possibilities inhered with incomplete or inadequate narratives, Tamboukou claims others might transcend limits of representation, and make more of a narrative than I. Here, I recall Latour (2008) with feelings of commodification and exploitation within a capitalist culture, and with it a “prodigious enthusiasm for seizing unbounded opportunities” (p. 8). Can I be known though this, an unbounded opportunity, which Lorraine (2013) suggests is formed in “constituting oneself as a lacking subject” (p. 62). Lorraine tells me a narrative of lack leaves the subject “restricted to fantasising the objects that once acquired will give her the satisfaction she seeks” (p. 63). I find myself disturbed with the embodied production of loss and lack, concerned it leaves me feeling eaten up, created for the consumption of others. I do not wish to participate in this endless devouring.

Elsewhere, Hagen (2018), expanding understandings of embodied experiences of Huntington’s Disease, consigns the body to a discursive register. Used to show the “divergence between the invisible and the visible features of the body” (p. 72), a discursive register shows otherwise indistinct areas of an individual used in acts of meaning making. Likewise, Forrest Keenan, Miedzybrodzka, Van Teijlingen, McKee, and Simpson (2007) use normative narrative storying to account for young people’s experiences of living with the presence of Huntington’s Disease within their families. These accounts, formed into thematic representations, provide researchers with clinically relevant points of departure to improve clinical practice, and the social support thought to be required for individuals who live with Huntington’s Disease. These approaches suggest to me narrative accounts are understood as articulations of an individual’s problematic circumstances, for which the participants lack the capacity or ability to resolve on their own. Reading my opening narrative with Dr Readdy, do I constitute the *worried well*, a prominent subject position Forrest Keenan et al. attach to a group of participants. Does my body show the “detrimental impact of being at risk” (p. 124) of developing Huntington’s Disease, my body itself a discursive register indicating I am at risk of not finishing the PGT process? Or has my health been impacted further, where in becoming the *worried unwell*, my unwell-ness becomes a derivative giving value to research seeking better testing protocols? I wonder of the valuation of embodiment, of what these feelings of desperation are worth.

Returning to a looming possibility of knowing I am at risk of inheriting a fatal degenerative neurological disorder, according to Rose (2001), the normative subject of neoliberal

governmentalities experiences pain, sorrow, and anxiety, in other words all the unpleasantness of desperation, as alterable errors in life. The normative self, open to correction in dogged pursuit of cleaner and better living, seeks to be free from risk, peril, and disease, whilst an early death becomes synonymous with tragedy for the individual. In these narratives, worry of unpleasantness, pain, disease and death become fuel for what Braidotti (2012) calls the *difference-engine* of capitalism, enabling change through the capacity to take direct action, improving and maximising health and well-being of the individual. I understand worry, in this context, as an enabler, which provokes me to reconsider my choice to commence the PGT process, with the worry of how I am living possibly relieved by stopping the process, or simply put to rest for another day with another bottle of wine. Is worry the manifestation of a concern, that I have become what Deleuze (1985) calls a *bad player* of life? In the hope of achieving a specific desirable outcome, have I mistakingly undertaken a wrong combination of throws, my desperation caused by the failure of my repeated habits to create a particular present? Have I attributed repeated habits and actions with causality?

As a normative subject in these reflections, I am always already lacking and deficient, requiring redress through the ever more attentive gaze of others. Braidotti (2010) terms this normative subject the *knowing subject*. Formed with the specific coordinates of “rationality, consciousness, moral and cognitive universalism” (p. 409), the knowing subject also uses the possibilities of these attributes to transcend the limits of a self. Reflecting on the bio-politics of my story, I want to wander back to Deleuze and his *good player* to re-articulate narrative of a normative self. Exploring possibilities permitted by “experimentation in a world of inexhaustible creative resources” (May, 2005, p. 68), I seek understandings of desperation that give shape and form to a self through the embodiment of affectivity. Experimenting with Braidotti’s (2012) figuration of the nomadic subject, I understand self-reflexive nomadic narrative as written with an assemblage of overflowing human, non-human, and more-than-human forces and passions. Never lacking, off the ledger, marginalised or undervalued, narrative accounts bring forth affectivity as empowering activators to embodied understandings of limits, offering no assurances, though, except the hope of sharing the inexhaustible *virtual possibilities* of the nomadic self tolerating, traversing and crossing over the limits of radically immanent flesh.

Endurance

Writing with Braidotti's (2012) vision of a nomadic subject, knowledge of limits empower an affirmative generative capacity, so that however living had been done, tomorrow I might live, and die, differently. Visiting with Dr Readdy is not a signification or indicator of brokenness, of disrepair. My body, instead, has given notice of *enough!*, acknowledging a figuration of my subject is no longer sustainable. Desperation, no longer a problem requiring resolution or attention, becomes an embodied force of a limit reached, which, although painful, when in contact with other passions and forces gives the nomadic subject a form of *mobility*, and another throw of the dice. With Braidotti's imagining of the nomadic subject residing immanently with creativity, I take a line of flight from this narrative of a pain and desperation that must be endured, with the mobilisation of nomadic resources. The nomadic subject, a multiplicity of cartographic figurations, is a method of creativity forming multiple virtual *counter-images* contrasted to the hegemony of the knowing subject, dependent as it is on a stable identity for subjective embodiment. Cartographic figurations of the nomadic subject, based on an ethics of accountability to the politics of place and time, bring into being a "representation that which the system had declared off-limits" (2010, p. 410). It is the possibilities afforded in transversal crossings of limits, of living past what is declared off limits, that tells of what I am capable of becoming.

I am called to revisit the desperation of that day, of *collapsing* in Dr Readdy's office. Unable to go any further, I imagine a singularity falling apart, my crumbled form evoking a folding inwards and downwards. I experience this positioning of helplessness as a problematic representation of diminished voice, body, and soul, where I am lessened in value and loosened from my rightful place as healthy and vital. I must overcome vulnerabilities and failures; I must transcend these feelings to be healthy. Pakenham, Goodwin and MacMillan (2004) describe a normative subject whose capacity to endure the PGT process is reliant on the individual's ability to adjust to concerns arising from the genetic testing process. Success in these endeavours, the researchers' hypothesis, results from three identified processes, namely "cognitive appraisal, coping style and coping resources" (p. 381). A failure to adjust to my circumstances, desperation becomes a possible warning sign that I am not coping with the stress of experiences of the PGT process. I am absent resources, or possessing maladaptive coping style(s), both seen as potentially harmful and increasing the likelihood that I will withdraw from the testing, hurt myself, or take other more extreme action to stop the pain. Dr Readdy's education has privileged him with careful wisdom to prescribe pharmacological substances, coping

resources consumed for the foreseeable future and as long as this particular help helps to transcend desperation and worry, and prevent harm. I want to resist this unitary subjectivity reliant on terms of loss and lack, a neoliberal self who resorts to succeeding by consuming.

My feelings of being the object of a risk assessment suggest I am satisfied in the knowledge I am able to expose distress, to make myself vulnerable to the view of others. There is a ritual in this observing, providing Dr Readdy a power to coordinate experiences of the appointment. This ritual exists, according to Foucault (1997), as “the whole range of practices that constitute, define, organize, and instrumentalize” (p. 300) the relationship through which Dr Readdy and I engage with each other. He takes my blood pressure and checks my pulse. Proffering an arm, chest, and vital signs for his interpretation, I am here, in the thumps, whooshes, and patters; he listens. In this arrangement of medical attention, Dr Readdy requires something or someone to become the attention of his care. Is it me, my pain, or this body? I long to ask, “will this pain kill me”? Desperate, might I have become suicidal at the very point where a risk of suicide is likely to increase? How does this desperation correspond with the arrival of an image of thought, of what Robins Wahlin (2007) describes as “comprehensive view of the consequences” of a decision to get tested, where the normative subject’s desperation results from a lack of the “ability to perform as required in the situation” (p. 284)? To arrive here, I become statistical *data points*, measuring the risks and associated effectiveness of the protocol for undertaking the PGT process. Have I failed at something, or have I yet to succeed? I resist believing anything could be expected out of me, that there is a way I ought to have managed these circumstances better, and refuse to confuse enduring with surviving and death. Blood continues to pulse, and although my body is racked with pain, I still hope to throw the dice.

Immanent Variation

I begin to drift to other visits with Dr Readdy, remembering how his medicine has cared for me otherwise. I am thinking of variations of care and desperation in these memories. Outside his office and on the concrete, I see him a few years later in the sunshine. I become startled; we had never met in public, so far from his office. I am desperate, though, again struggling to endure, with problems of a different kind.

Sam became pregnant in early 2012, just over a year after we had completed the PGT process together. But our baby had not grown as expected, with scans showing pictures of

developmental abnormalities. We were told our baby would almost certainly fail to survive to full term, the abnormalities resulting in a possibility of a miscarriage at any time, putting Sam's life at risk as well. Should Sam carry the pregnancy to full term, the abnormalities would almost certainly result in a stillbirth, or, at best, our baby dying shortly after birth, unable to endure and survive alone, unsupported by Sam's body. Specialist genetic tests identified the cause of the abnormalities. They tell me I have three abnormal chromosomes. Two specific chromosomes have "swapped" unequal sections of DNA, and in this *translocation* have also reversed order, leading to one chromosome containing "too many" genes whilst the other contains "too few". Configured together, both chromosomes "match" and provide a full human genome perfectly capable of sustaining me. We are told that with any pregnancy where I am the father, the fertilised egg has a 50% chance of inheriting only one mutated chromosome, almost certainly resulting in similarly unpredictable congenital abnormalities, and an unviable pregnancy. By the same measure, a fertilised egg may inherit both mutated chromosomes from me, or both corresponding healthy chromosomes from the mother, resulting in a 50% chance the full human genome would be present with the embryo. We are told our baby inherited only one mutated chromosome from me, that we were "lucky" the foetus had survived this long. I am told of a third abnormal chromosome, mutated differently, where, inexplicably, the order of specific genes is similarly sequenced "back to front". Although unrelated to the problems of the pregnancy, this third gene complicates any simple understanding of my genetics. How does one endure being told by specialists (again) of being a "one in several million" statistical anomaly, this time understood with a subjectivity of lacking, putting loved ones at risk?

We, as a couple in a marriage, did not endure. Dr Readdy knew of this, he has been with us throughout, and is there with me now. I tell Dr Readdy I am on leave from work, and I am perplexed. I am stuck. My holiday plans are foiled as my motorcycle will not run, and I do not own a car to take me to the places I want to visit. I need to syphon oil from the reservoir on the bike, and I am at a loss as to how. He says to follow. Together, we go back to his clinic and into his office. He rummages around with medical supplies, and hands me a narrow gauge tube and small plastic syringe. Beaming a smile, he describes the workings of a new syphon, an enema kit, to evacuate the oil from the reservoir.

Coming back to vulnerability and perplexity, I reflect on the variations of problems, issues, and needs that overflow the years Dr Readdy has been my doctor. So many visits with him

have been in response to managing what Arrigo (2013) calls “the risk of being in-and-of society differently” (p. 676). Huntington’s Disease, parenthood and pregnancy, suicide, genetic mutation, desperation and depression all carry a defining trait that something undesired is in waiting, looming, hanging on, lingering. I have had tests, assessments and diagnoses, mechanisms of care that assist in connecting me to the appropriate treatment. Representations of Dr Readdy in this account thus far, are mere moments of frozen time, where his medicine and treatments are attempts to actualise and embody him in narrative. I position him as a subject in a particular point of time here, and here, and here...a series of points leading up to a linear understanding of the doctor he has become for me now.

(Re)alliance

I am reminded here of Deleuze’s (1994) molar lines. The doctor/patient relationship, bedside manner, medical expertise, holistic care, all become essentialising principles in tracing an outline of the molar subject of doctor and the territorialisation of what he is able to treat, cure, and provide remedy towards. The creation of a molar aggregate dispenses rights and responsibilities that require abidance in order to maintain what Deleuze refers to as a “balance in intersubjective relations” (p. 12) between Dr Readdy and myself. Not only does this molar identification of Dr Readdy provide an integration of these rights and responsibilities we must adhere to, I am embodied as a self-contained and integrated whole, gazed upon and represented through constituent parts. The molar forms of doctor and patient, the territorialisation of care and treatment, tell us who we are and limit what may become of us.

Within the opening narrative of desperation, my self-contained body is positioned as possessing too much (anxiety and worry), too little (happiness) about having the wrong stuff (genes). As the normative subject of genetic discourse, I lack ability and resources to cope, and the capacity to adjust, seeking it elsewhere outside of myself. I am unable to realise goals, aspirations and objectives on my own, of my own accord, and though my own means. My body, mind, thoughts and feelings feel degraded throughout the day; there is less of me but ever more anxiety and desperation. I cannot be still or rest. I have not slept for days; months have passed since I last slept through the night. Anxiety keeps me awake in bed, accompanying me as I pace the house at night, only to greet me once more in the morning. The molar Dr Readdy, with his confined rituals and responsibilities, gazes upon me to fulfil a lack, providing what is unavailable within my immediate environment to reduce excesses of anxiety. For as much as I fear what has become of my(self), and that I

am following my father and grandfather, I fear I have yet more to endure and he must bring relief within reach.

I wish to concern myself with what has been declared off limits to the subject position of expert, the intersubjective relations that privilege Dr Readdy as an expert, the knower of the interconnected whole and constituent parts of the body. How might I undertake an alternative reading of the visit, without declarations of what must be and the delimiting of what can only be? Whilst it is possible to interpret Dr Readdy as providing the medicine and compassion instrumental to enduring and surviving through current and past desperation, I return to Braidotti's nomadic ethics, to a different reading of endurance that permits me to *become-otherwise* and endure if only for one more day.

Following Deleuze, Braidotti (2006c) is not satisfied with defining a concept, and instead provides explanations of endurance created through an elaboration of a nomadic ethics. Existing spatially with an embodied "actualisation of passions or forces" (p. 134), endurance also has a temporal dimension as this actualisation self-perpetuates and lasts in time. An actualisation of forces that last in time is sustained through specific cartographic figurations of the nomadic self, with specific patterns of these actualised forces making the subject known. With a capacity to produce extremes of affectivity, the sustainable self also tolerates affective intensities of extreme pain, or what Bird (1999), quoting from Shakespeare, signifies as the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" (p. 1289) of Huntington's Disease. Desperation, no longer known as a condition or state of affective error and dysfunction requiring a lacking subject to remedy from outside of the self, is welcomed as an activator. A nomadic subject who cracks at the intensive limits of a specific figuration brings forth new possibilities of enduring through other actualised figurations able to tolerate these extremes of affectivity. Writing nomadically, I am no longer a unitary, individualised self, needing to endure the crumbling, transcending this experience as an act or event happening to me with the help of others. Crumbling is no longer violent carnage wrecked upon my self, psyche, state of mind or mental health. With Braidotti's concept of endurance, desperation is no longer desiring from outside of my self, to acquire what I am lacking from Dr Readdy's knowledge, services, and treatments. Desperate through tears, strained voice, and physical pain, having reached too much and gone too far, my nomadic subject becomes otherwise with new patterns and multiplicities of an actualised self. Sustained through the inherent positivity of affectivity in processes of becoming, the nomadic subject mobilises resources such as one's unrestrained

imagination, transforming negative into positive affectivity, affirming alternative possibilities of a self able to tolerate and endure cracking at limits of the present self.

Considering Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of *desiring machine*, desperation is longer confined as an imposition or deviation, a problem I must outlast, transcend or endure. Desperation becomes transformative, empowering me to last in an active process of the dispersal of a self. I am gathered together again through ethical forms of relations created with other human, non-human, and more-than human entities, connections with other forces and passions not actualised in the present. My present nomadic self, a desiring machine reaching the limit of endurance of a specific actualised self, creates new connections with Dr Readdy. If desperation becomes a mechanism, an actualisation of a nomadic subject as desiring machine, what becomes of a relationship with Dr Readdy, what connections, what forces and passions become of our intermingling? What becomes of the molar Dr Readdy as I unfreeze what was never frozen, but alive and affirmative?

Overflowing Captivity

After visiting Dr Readdy, I began taking anti-depressants, as well as anti-anxiety medication to help me sleep. I struggle to reject the identity of a lacking body whose capacity and capability to endure is diminished, needing reprieve in order to survive the PGT process. I am reminded of research seeking to understand the links between suicidality, genetic risk and the onset of Huntington's Disease, focussing on reducing the risk of suicide during critical periods where the normative subject is thought to be at heightened risk (Paulsen, Ferneyhough Hoth, Nehl, Stierman, & The Huntington's Study Group, 2005). I have become familiar with the normative subject of the research, where the threat of harm is managed by reducing extremes of affectivity. These figurations of the normative subject support Rose's (2017) theory of post-neoliberal governmentality, which advances the notion that Western thought is in the process of mutating from the neoliberal ideal of an individualistic freedom from impediments, with an emphasis in self-actualisation and self-realisation through unfettered rights and empowerment, to governmentalities of conduct. Rose argues post-neoliberal governmentalities govern by espousing a restrictive, limiting form of liberty, which controls, regulates, and represses *dangerous passions* such as desperation through the "rational control of those mysterious depths and of the dangerous passions found there" (p. 319). These new governmentalities, according to Rose, produce "a controlled world where our vulnerabilities are understood and managed" (p. 319), where dangerous passions are a risk to the safety of the populace,

and managed as unplanned and troubling barriers limiting fulfilment of the normative subject. As I contest the consumption of pharmaceutical technologies which exchange freedom for security, relieving fear and terror by curbing affectivity, Rose warns governmentalities tend to exceed their confines, contending that those in opposition to the exchange may come to embody the “mutations” of the governmentalities they oppose as well. Possibilities of agency in decision-making appear to be closed down in post-neoliberal theories of governmentalities, and I feel an embodied sense of loss. How else might I resist?

Here, in this place of decisions and explanations, reasons and rationales, I become aware of an attempt to narrate a story of Dr Readdy with the structures of the world. This narrative perceives outside of myself if only to advise what could and should be studied from an external position, to tell how I am to be known. Through this normative narrative, I wish to close some possibilities of knowing and open only those of value, denying and rejecting some whilst pursuing and acquiring others. Foucault (1982) characterises Western thought as valuing precision and explicit explanations of structures that incite, induce, and seduce possible actions. Normative narrative discourse relies, according to Tucker (2012), on the identification of formed and conceived components that are used to represent the world, unchangeable and inherent with a “stable essence” (p. 772). To understand a decision to take medication, knowledge that I have taken antidepressants previously, and may perceive them favourably as a way to improve my health and wellbeing, is implicated in the outcome of the decision. An awareness of the impact of the pharmaceutical industry on educational and social experiences, due to the close proximity of a major international drug company near my home town, elicit an appreciation of the extent that pharmacological practices have impacted on how I identify and resolve health issues. Familiarity with the particular drug’s effects, the embodiment of religious practices, and a cognitive capacity to understand complex medical knowledge and efficacy research comes to the fore in relation to understanding decision-making and agentic practices, with explanations of choice becoming narratives of structural identification. As a conceptualisation of a representational model of language, normative narratives are self-restricted to representing only the stable concepts able to be constructed through structural knowledge production practices. The characteristics of the concepts produced, May (2005) argues, need not be stable, as stability is only inherited in the objects that come to identify them. I understand this to mean I am restricted to being represented in

normative narrative to a subjectivity formed with the concepts (re)produced with structural knowledge practices of normative logic and reason.

Deleuze (1994) offers an alternative to normative representational thought, where choice is no longer defined as a problem with solutions restricted to particular structural knowledge practices. Tucker (2012), adopting Deleuze's concept of *problem-question*, proposes a psychology which would problematise choice as a process of individuation. Articulated as "a recalibration of analysis" (p. 772), Tucker advocates for retooling psychological enquiry to explore the novelty, variation and inventiveness of thought, offering an "ontogenetic position of multiplicity and relationality" (p. 781) that is not restricted to the human realm. A psychology of individuation focusses on a processual analysis of choice and decision-making, in which psychology becomes a strategy and a tool, not simply a better conceptual psychological model. Psychological practice, therefore, becomes the intentional implementation of interventions enabling new modes of thought no longer confined to the domains of subject positions and objects of thought, where moral rights and responsibilities are assigned. Rethinking agency and decision-making as the *relational encounter* of a multitude of factors reinterprets the future as "open potentialities" (p. 782), where what will happen cannot be known with any certainty - nor can the future be predicted. In relation to a narrative of choosing medication, this entails a shift, to become aware of the webs of relationships and forces constitutive of my nomadic subject. Involving human, non-human, and more than human forces and flows, writing with Braidotti's (2006) nomadic subject becomes a potentiality, composed of "a web of multiple relationships that encompass all levels of one's multi-layered subjectivity...the expression of one's continuing attachment to certain dynamic spatio-temporal co-ordinates" (p. 136).

Virtual Dispersal

Whilst the uncertainty of the nomadic subject, figured as a multiplicity of difference providing for the expression of the self through different co-ordinates, gives way to an unpredictability of future possibilities of thought and action, I wonder how these webs of relationships might be understood in the construction of possible futures. Returning to the figuration of the nomadic subject, I am curious as to how tracing relationships and interdependencies of forces can be put into action to form a problem-question pertaining to processual understandings of medication. Braidotti's (2012) nomadic ethics provide a political figuration of the "transversal connections among material and symbolic, concrete and discursive, lines and forces", actualising a post-human ethics "which values non-

human or a-personal Life” (p. 171). Braidotti names this political figuration Zoe, which becomes a creative force of the nomadic subject from which possible futures are constructed. I understand Zoe as actualised *dangerous passions*. More than a vulnerability, risk, barrier, or limit, Zoe is a dangerous force of virtual possibilities, unfolding in unknown futures yet to come, which are sustained through the actualisation of affirmative values, forces, and flows. Zoe is non-representational and non-structural, whilst writing with Zoe recognises the affirmative generative capacity of the nomadic subject, where desperation and other dangerous passions come into contact with my relationship and history with Dr Readdy, providing for another throw of the dice. Thinking with Zoe, I am able to interact with and interpret, not just label or identify, the creative force with which I write regarding a processual understanding of decision-making.

Zoe becomes known in narrative writing through the rhizome of forces and passions distributed through feelings of desperation, of the temporal nature of a longstanding relationship and a multitude of different experiences with Dr Readdy and his practice, of past experiences of taking antidepressant medication in other circumstances, and the embodied feelings of a totalising despair at being unable to solely care for myself. Zoe, always overflowing as a creative force, gives shape to a different, non-representational understanding of an event of individuation, where taking medication becomes a matter of *how*, rather than a question of *why*. With the desire of difference, to go on if only for one more day, Zoe informs an understanding of taking medication as a process empty of an individual “I” which makes decisions understood through the identification of stable forms of the self, choices, and outcomes. Zoe, I am reminded by Braidotti (2008), is a “vitalist notion of Life”, a creative force which “stresses that the Life I inhabit is not mine, it does not bear my name” (p. 22). Taking medication does not require a moral intention of an individual to defend a choice.

Returning to Dr Readdy, memories exhaust the words afforded here and the duration of time I am able to spend with them. This reflective narrative storytelling is formed of an always overflowing capacity which exceeds my memories. A production, a dispersal, a gathering of connections with other forces and passions not actualised in the present, my nomadic self reaches a limit of endurance with Dr Readdy. Yet, meeting together as desiring machines creating connections, problematising desperation with questions of how, yields new modes of understanding through constantly and already changing webs of relationships. My nomadic subject as desiring machine becomes one of intermingling

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connections, forces and passions, sustained through an ethics of endurance. With Zoe, I experience Dr Readdy with care and warmth, and with new coordinates my nomadic self is actualised with new affective potentialities, becoming otherwise to what I once was, if only partially and for however long needed, to disperse for yet another throw of the dice.

Narrative (II)

I seek to make known a place, the Waitakere Ranges of West Auckland, where my nomadic subject wanders with human, non-human, and more-than-human forces. The Waitakere Ranges, a place of overflowing passions and flows, is where I gather new connections with other forces and passions not actualised in the present. This is a place of ancient volcanism in open ocean, of ever-changing coastlines and beaches where the sun bakes, rains flood, and winds sculpt. Here, the sun sets over deep blue seas at close of the world's first day. Residing in this precarious land is pupurangi, a giant land snail and voracious predator, which lives for decades, and kauri, the venerated son of the gods and a towering tree which lives for thousands of years. Gentle hills, carpeted a verdant green, roll inwards from ocean tides and beckon into steep, formidable mountains of lush temperate rain forests. Sweeping sand dunes interrupt the ocean's erosion of steep headlands hundreds of meters high, both of which in turn are carved out by rivers feeding reservoirs, providing habitat to animals and people with water. Caves along the beach provided shelter to tangata whenua on the path to war, and places to rest whilst collecting shellfish, prior to the arrival of Pākehā. The same caves, later throughout the 20th century, became dancehalls used by tangata whai in expressions of joy and merriment. These caves are now for visitors and locals alike, providing a place to visit glowworms whilst escaping the harshness of sun and wind.

Compiling a list of hills, rivers, beaches, and villages would not account for unseen taniwha, the water spirits roaming the treacherous riptides of beautiful desolate beaches, nor the forgotten shipwrecks strewn about by the turbulent waters along the coast. Mentioning kahakaha, the so-called "widow maker" known to fall and cause great harm to unsuspecting forest visitors, does not tell of cloistered spaces tens of meters high up in damp forest where this endemic epiphytic plant grows, providing for untold birds and insects. The scarcity of people in the small settlements of the Waitakere Ranges does not tell of the encroaching urban sprawl many fear, approaching their proverbial backdoor. A narrative account does not provide for ecological catastrophe and change, of a microscopic invader spread through flowing water and human movement amongst the forest, devastating ecosystems with the death of untold numbers of infected giant kauri. There is uncomfortableness and feelings of inadequacy with this approach, an immediate tension from always already missed opportunities to know otherwise.

Instead of aligning narrative with what Flieger (2000) calls "the central face of the majoritarian" (p. 46), a representative account of object identification and location, I write

where unknowableness gives way to possibilities of molecular forces and intensities of location becoming manifest and material. Describing (the Waitakere Ranges) as a thing yet not alive, where people and legends have a past, present and future, a majoritarian understanding of the Waitakere Ranges as a singular entity would close multitudinous possibilities of knowing, leaving nothing to fold, unfold and blossom. Instead, this narrative forms multiplicities of virtual possibilities of ethical encounters empowering me to act, brought forth by what Braidotti (2013a) calls “higher and larger forms of interrelation with multiple others” (p. 354). With this narrative writing, the identity of the more-than-human subject of the Waitakere Ranges remains unknown and never fully resolved, providing multitudes of possibilities of a nomadic self enduring the PGT process without embracing the neoliberal “commodification of the existence, culture, and genetic codes of multiple ‘others’” (2012, p. 169). Writing nomadic narrative, fruitfulness is measured with the continued unfolding of difference, yielding yet more possibilities in the not-yet written.



In writing ethical encounters with the Waitakere Ranges, I am reminded by Braidotti of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1994) *plane of immanence*. This non-concept, never derived from the identification nor differentiation of disparate parts of the world, provides a way to “find one’s bearings” (p. 37) within of an image of thought. Concepts and theories are not discovered, defined, or described, nor is a plane of immanence an ontological account of knowledge contained within the plane. As with Derrida’s (1989) monsters, these shall not be announced. Instead, a plane provides opportunities of ontological creation, to refract, reflect, and motivate linkages of concepts “from the thinkability of the future” (Braidotti, 2006b, p. 207), resonating within themselves and with each other, creating ever more multiplicities of possibilities.

Writing narrative of ontological creation, forming ever more possibilities of knowing, eschews privileging structural knowledge production practices where the Waitakere Ranges become known with knowledge derived through stable unitary representations. Instead, May (2005) suggests forming multiplicities of knowing, gaining from the overflowing and indeterminate nature of language itself, is akin to the medical practice of *palpation*. Using the senses of feeling and touch establishes knowledge of difference to discern unobservable parts of the body. In place of a knowability created from the identification of coextensive objects (the flora, the fauna, me) and normative subjects of

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interest (geological science, myth, archeology), the Waitakere Ranges will be known through a soil of “our libérations” (Deleuze, 1994, p. 24) from sameness. Nomadic narrative provides knowledge through experiences of difference, created in this writing with material processes in the unfolding of multiplicities of becoming, where difference is also experienced and felt. As a liberating vitality and substance from which possibilities of life are lived, thinking of difference in this way sets forth the possibilities of liberations from conformism, and as Braidotti (2013a) reminds us, difference becomes a generative creative force constructing possible futures with the virtual possibilities of knowing the Waitakere Ranges otherwise. The material being of difference in this work will not provide or represent knowledge itself. Instead, narrative becomes soil from which difference and resonation of concepts and becomings provide further elaboration of thought always immediately outside of our grasp, and never fully known.

Within a soil of difference and resonation, my nomadic subject takes form as a cartographic figuration. Following Braidotti’s (2017) imagining of posthuman thought, this figure is a “navigational tool” across the space and time of narrative writings, a subjectivity tracing “the actualization of intensive or virtual relations” (p. 84) with an assemblage of transverse rhizomatic nodes providing cartographic co-ordinates. These nodes, formed of concepts of difference, articulate and navigate *dynamic political spaces* where the Waitakere Ranges becomes known, overflowing and resonating with the possibilities of further narratives not yet written. Confronted with inter-generational suicide and the possibility of inheriting a terminal neurological disorder, writing with a nomadic subject provides cartographic figurations to navigate understandings of the Waitakere Ranges through my journey of undergoing PGT for Huntington’s Disease. With Braidotti’s figure of the nomadic subject, Life as Zoe extends past that of the individual and is determined in part by chance and a simple throw of the dice, transforming my outrageous fortune to “open up spaces of movement and of deterritorialization that actualize virtual possibilities which had been frozen in the image of the past” (Braidotti, 2008, p. 47). Tracing a neo-materialist assemblage of connections, passions, forces and flows, writing with a nomadic subject takes form as a multiplicity of sustainable figurations able to endure constant, non-destructive fluxes and transformations of change with the PGT process. Configured with the dispersal of “a unitary and rationality-driven consciousness” (Braidotti, 2013a, p. 343), writing narrative with a nomadic subject provides a sense of *becoming-monster* in response to asking questions of how one might know the Waitakere Ranges, how one might undertake and complete PGT, and how one might live differently.



I profess, this assemblage feels as if I am veering dangerously close to another representational space. Yet, Braidotti (2013a) suggests that in seeking to foster an approach where a multitude of solutions may take place within multiple and variable understandings, a nomadic subject neither signifies exhaustively what constitutes this place nor intends to coalesce a particular perspective of how (the Waitakere Ranges) must be known. Instead, I posit that to think nomadically helps to find one's bearing within the multiplicity of possibilities created in its own formation, bringing into being what Blaser (2013) proposes is "a certain political sensibility" (p. 55). In other words, Braidotti (2013a) tells us this assemblage will provide a road map within its own reality-making, exploring the political spaces opened up in how one might know the Waitakere Ranges in undertaking the PGT process. By focussing on "transcending the present state of affairs" (p. 347) with affirmative "transformative experimentation" (p. 356), Braidotti's figure of the nomadic subject is not an attempt at a moral judgement of whether one should undergo the PGT process, nor does a nomadic subject provide knowledge of how one might decide to do so. Engaging with nomadic ethics, as I understand it, does not provide an answer to how one might otherwise "succeed" in PGT process where others have "failed".

There is much to be said in Foucault's location of optimism in becoming aware of limits, and the limiting ways in which we live our lives, which are given rise from the political sensibility of our relationships with the world (Foucault & Kritzman, 1988). Foucault is careful not to advise or lecture on which politics one should espouse or how one might live life. Instead, he professes joy in an awareness of understanding how one might live in order to keep alive how one might live differently. Rather than the limits of how one might live being understood as natural and inherent to the human condition, and therefore requiring an individual self to remove or transcend in order to achieve freedom and liberation, Foucault claims optimism is situated:

"...in saying that so many things can be changed, fragile as they are, more arbitrary than self-evident, more a matter of complex, but temporary, historical circumstances" (p.156).

Returning to Blaser (2013), I understand the concept of political sensibility to mean “a political ontology, a problem space, and a modality of analysis or critique” (p.55). I seek to illuminate a problem space involving my inability to adequately answer a question using the normative practice of writing narrative of an individual unitary self, a question of how I lived with the presence of Huntington’s Disease to provide an account of undertaking PGT, whilst encountering secrecy, disease, and suicide within my family. To do so, this writing will create a political ontology of how the Waitakere Ranges might be known through resonating the soil of difference. With confidence of faith in Deleuze (1994), although we do not even know of what a body is capable, we can create and we can be optimistic with the presence of possibilities of what we might become. Furthermore, thinking with cartographic figurations of a nomadic subject can also provide a critique of how we constrain the possible. To think of difference *differently*, May (2005) extols, we may ask how one might live otherwise, and how we might also live differently. Although I do not even know of what I am capable, I can ask how one might live in undertaking PGT, creating further possibilities to how one might live differently to do so.



Huntington’s Disease has manifested amongst my family, across many generations and through many lines of descent. My father inherited the disease from his father, my grandfather inheriting it from his mother, who in turn inherited the disease from her mother. My grandfather committed suicide when I was two years old, my father approaching 40 years old at the time. My father committed suicide many years later when he was in his early 50’s, a few weeks after I turned 17 years old in 1995. Both men, diagnosed with Huntington’s Disease, developed neurological, cognitive, and psychiatric manifestations associated with the disorder prior to the emergence of a predictive genetic test. Neither were old men at the time of their respective deaths, years apart but the same result of a gunshot wound to the head. This disease, their illness, their subsequent deaths through suicide are not discussed within my family, and whilst taboo, have become well known to me through absence.

With an abundance of inspiration whilst living a few short kilometres from the Waitakere Ranges in Auckland, I started the PGT process for Huntington’s Disease, undertaking what I thought of as the endeavour of my 31-year-old life. Far from desiring knowledge of difference to construct an identity from which I would know "how to live", I am reminded of

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Patton's (2000) description of Deleuze's concept of *difference* as a process which requires "the elaboration of an ontology in which disparity or difference is the fundamental principle and the identity of objects is understood as something produced from the differences of which they are composed" (p. 28). Although I did not know how my grandfather and father lived, I sought to live differently, if only to die differently.

Configuring a process of difference, I am drawn to Braidotti's (2000) positioning of embodiment as "a piece of meat activated by electric waves of desire, a text written by the unfolding of genetic encoding" (p. 159). Surviving the death of my father whilst a teenager, and of years surviving repeated struggles of becoming unraveled and lost in the aftermath of his death and absence, I established a narrative of being a survivor of the multiple *grief experiences* of Bartik et al.'s (2013) normative subject. My desire to devise and pursue a way of escaping from my father and grandfather's escaping which had come before me, these escapes of mine proceeding ever onwards through life instead of death, I become embodied through survivor-hood and grief, and the preponderance of the term "survivor" swarming around me. As I enter into the Waitakere Ranges for the first time, with a genetic unfolding as of yet incomplete, this unitary subject is shrouded in solitude, positioned as lacking, yet I am motivated if not implored to undergo and endure a future PGT process by waves of desire, mourning a past and a future no longer possible but both requiring a reading of genetic coding to satisfy. It is with the Waitakere Ranges where I recall Bischoff (2009), remembering the lines of flight triggered by "the anomalous" survivor becoming otherwise, where "the other and the self become real simultaneously" (p. 123) in processes of becoming-monster.

Scuffman and MacMillan (2014), outlining characteristics of a normative subject who seeks to complete the PGT process, identify the future as always already-formed problem. The normative individual is motivated by a desire to survive a history by planning for a future which organises the present. This image of the subject, activated by what is lacking as a reason why to undergo the PGT process, brings forth memories of my repeated visits to the Waitakere Ranges. Repetitive trips over the same mountains and hills ensue over several years after arriving in New Zealand. These visits, eventually reoccurring as weekly visits, become familiar and routine in order to claim and preserve the past, whilst fighting the multitude of feelings, experiences, thoughts, and calamities that may unfold in the future to maintain a present. Suspended between the last visit to the mountains and the prospects of a visit that will not come soon enough, I am again reminded of managing the

linearity of time, of stepping ever onwards through hours, weeks, and days...again and again and again, reminding me of Derrida (2003), who speaks of surviving as “the other name of a mourning whose possibility is never to be awaited” (p.1). Entering the Waitakere Ranges with feelings of fear, I am mourning the past, clinging to the present in hope of surviving to a future that may not come to pass.

In this narrative, I am thinking of the anxious joy in saying “I have been to the Waitakere Ranges hundreds of times”, announcing that few places would be unfamiliar let alone unknown to me, in order to encompass all that I have found, gleaned, and come to experience of this place. This survivor of surviving, taking on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) form, adheres to a fixed majoritarian identity of domination and exploitation of all available resources in order to survive. How easily this flows into a statement of duration, a referencing of the time spent over many years, the months of time with my toes in mud, boots on rocks, and feet submerged in water. Time, accumulating with each visit, contains the vast expansive awareness of what I know of the Waitakere Ranges and how this knowing helped me in my journeys. The map that serves as my guide through the Waitakere Ranges, accompanying me on every visit from a singular first day, testifies with the cuts and rips marking secret locations and track closures, of all that has been around me and what I have been through to tell of these hundreds of times. This representation of (re)visiting the Waitakere Ranges privileges my presence over my absence in the park, my identity secure as a journeyman of the tracks.

Although I remember navigating these mountains with what Patton (2000) identifies as a “preference for the calm, ordered life of the soul governed by reason”, this calmness is elusive, and instead I (re)imagine memories to privilege “the disorderly and passionate life of the soul moved by poetry” (p. 28). Engaging Braidotti’s nomadic ethics (2012), I leave the secure, majoritarian identity of a normative subject, the journeyman, towards becoming an *autopoietic*, embodied nomadic subject. In the politics of life, Deleuze (1962) tells us of Nietzsche’s *good player* who prefers to roll the dice and “to dance on the feet of chance” (p. 26), whereas the bad player hopes to achieve a specific desirable outcome with repeated habits and actions, confusing chance and randomness with causality. The nomadic subject, a good player, embraces and lives immanently with chance, neither believing in the benefits of causality and probability, nor of a necessity to produce specific combinations of assemblages in order to achieve a desirable end. The cartographic figure of the nomadic subject tells ways of finding one’s bearings and avows the primacy of

chance in navigating a political ontology of change, rolling the dice whilst risking it all in the desire for becoming.

Breathing easier, my repeated visits no longer needed to represent the normative vision of the Waitakere Ranges, I recall Painter (2008) describing a normative vision of geographic locations with the concept of a *world-as-exhibition*. To make knowledge knowable to others, I understand this figure of thought requires one to “encompass more and more of the unknown or, failing that, of bringing elements of the unknown inside the fortress to be dissected and exhibited” (p. 346). With this calm breathing, I warm my hands in my pockets and remember my cold feet, standing in the lounge of my old house on a winter morning in August. Overlooking the Waitakere Ranges and the Manukau Harbour, I am dressed, yet unprepared for the long car ride out to the hills. Recalling a multiplicity of negotiations, I am regarding the weather with a suspicious eye as the sun rises over the back of the house, the near freezing temperature leaving the trees etched with frost. I gauge my capacity to endure isolation in the cold, dark, wet forests. This figuration of clothing and a little hot coffee will suffice to remember the fear of venturing forth into the mountains once more. As I enter the mountains alone, the limits imposed by my clothing, boots and jacket have been tested; I know of what I am capable, of what I must endure, and what exceeds me, as I prepare for limits of other figurations, never seen but none-the-less requiring negotiation.

Braidotti’s (2006c) nomadic ethics incorporates subjects structured through latitudinal (affects) and longitudinal (intensity/potency) forces. Coalescing into a subjectivity traversing these latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates, the nomadic subject is limited in form only by the affects sustained, and in duration by how much affect is able to be endured. Intervening periods of days, sometimes only hours, demarcate my visits to the mountains. Every visit to the mountains is followed by periods of absence, becoming durations of differences in intensity. Colebrook’s (2002) description of these intervals as a “divergent pulsation” (p. 43) speaks to my memories of the jagged running of time. No longer a container to be managed, time is disrupted, flowing in eddies, not lines, and unevenly tumultuous. The majoritarian figure of a lone individual, a conqueror with his hands in his pockets overlooking the requirements of the day, is disrupted by memories of intensities; fatigue, corruption, and strain mark out this territory as frequencies and speeds. No longer needing to recall the calm governed by reason, the intensification of time smooths out space. A life overtaken by memories both old and not yet formed, of

conversations with myself of how life is being lived and how might life be lived differently, experiences of Huntington's Disease and death begin to deterritorialize the individual neoliberal management strategies of my self, my body's capabilities, and my life. Daily life becomes an *affective choreography* of bringing people into the unfolding to help navigate the upwelling of pain and doubt, and I begin to wonder of an unknown future to which I stake claim. I share with others the suicide of those who have come before me, and the possibilities of death that loom large in front of me...over and over and over again.

Experienced through occasional lapses of letting my guard down or when I fail to maintain them, I begin to recognise some habits as excessive responsibilities to the management of life. Failing to uphold and maintain my self in the politics of daily life brings feelings of unfaithfulness, pain, confusion and loss. The present unfolds through what Braidotti (2012) refers to as "a process of orchestrated demolition of the self—a long deep crack" (p. 346), and I begin to disperse.



My nomadic subject re-articulates the lone individual's negotiations on that cold winter morning as "cognitive and sensorial mappings" (Braidotti, 2006c, p. 137) of what he is capable of sustaining and how long he is able to endure. I reimagine a long deep cracking, a corruption of the self extending along coordinates of self-management and discipline. Not knowing where this process is headed, I become aware of what got me to this place in life, to this place in the world, and to this place in time. These things will not continue to sustain me through to the end, and questioning how I endure, I head to the hills to hide, to repair, to explore what may come. And I do it, alone.

These memories remind me of primary school, all of seven years old, drawing battle tanks over my notebooks with care and precision. Images of tanks, my war machines, are inherently ready, perfectly formed with precision, with battle scars yet pristine, as if just off the assembly line. Situated on the paper, my tanks are foreboding and imposing, providing locomotion and weapons ready to enter battle at a moment's notice, ready for what lay off the edge of the page. Older, a teenager, I have survived the death of my father yet need to survive even greater transformations. I need my own substances and forms, the most unassailable anchors to become weapons when I get to my own edges; the men in my family have a tendency to die early. I want to be different from them, and at the edges, I seek anchors to pull me through, over the limits of the page, to what may come next.

Revisiting these memories, my nomadic subject understands limits of a younger self as providing weapons. Now I am re-imagining the journeyman, holding a choice, course of action or decision in his head, visualising change as “something” which becomes “otherwise” by enacting a *cognitive distance* to visualise virtual possibilities of action. An intimate understanding of limits, vulnerability, chance, and risk provide the journeyman freedom of movement in the present towards the future. Logic and reason provide differentiation, specificity, and precision as tools to explain and narrate understandings of options, avenues, and other possibilities of action. I remember these as a *spherical perspectival*, a cognitive distance in time and place surrounding an object of attention. The journeyman holds in his head a decision to be made with reason, a feeling to be recognised with logic, a risk to be measured with precision, all seen from a distance to protect the self.

Exploring the intangibility of the gene responsible for Huntington’s Disease, Hagen (2016) conceptualises body parts we have no direct experience of as *phenomenological nullpoints*. With a lifetime characterised by risk, the journeyman experiences nullpoints manifested in an extra set of fingers, variables in a new mathematical apparatus of knowing, and I put them to work in my employment. Safety and security for the journeyman is found in the grasping and gazing upon the entirety of a subject in one frame, rotating in time and distance, resolving accuracy and resolution to assess risk and make decisions. The journeyman gazes to the Waitakere Ranges with a variable-oriented approach to a risk assessment of life...*if...then...maybe...*This collage of nullpoints and cognitive distance becomes a social economics, a calculus of relationships, an algorithm of threats assessing the locations of refuges from harm. I wonder of the facilitation of life, contingent on the journeyman calling out answers whilst keeping the dice safely in the pocket. Cox and McKellin (1999) refer to this calculus of risk as the normative subject’s “metacommentary of what can and can-not be taken for granted” (p. 642). The nomadic subject feels algorithms as a bubble wrap around the virtualities of the future, protecting the journeyman from harm by minimising the feelings of distress that arise from chance and what is not known.



I resist returning to the cold of the journeyman. A heavy weight returns as I recall the economics of numbers wrapping the feet of the journeyman, protecting every step. With
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the isolation of the rareness of the disease, the taboo of speaking of it, and the desire to become yet more anomalous and get tested, the journeyman has the odds stacked against him in completing the PGT process. A successful tester has skills and attributes; he is adaptive with high levels of effective and affective coping strategies; he adjusts and wants to be successful in completing the PGT process. Further success comes in a negative result to the test, of not having the gene, removing chance and unpredictability from the future. Measured with the logic of a closely guarded past, where “intelligibility remained tied to immutability” (Olkowski, 2012, p. 60), the journeyman’s history rears up into single frames and moments in time. Death. Suicide. Survival. Life.

Travelling across continents, oceans, and countries on planes, trains, boats, automobiles, and crossing over and between countries on two feet, the journeyman learns the discipline of emotions is maintained through logic and reason. Ever in pursuit of the future, the present is occupied with observation and collection of assets and tools; the flotsam and jetsam of knowledge gleaned from everyday life lived out in the world. As the journeyman is unable to change his present and future figuration, both stemming from the past, what was once a free formed line of flight with no determined trajectory, I am reminded by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) of subjectivities which emanate a “strange despair, like an odor of death and immolation, a state of war from which one returns broken” (p. 229). With what Thoburn (2008) calls a *militant subjectivity* to escape the past in the pursuit of what may yet be, the journeyman becomes a ‘*cancerous*’ *body-without-organs*. Dangerous with the power of *molecular mass movement*, Holland (2008) describes this figure as “off alone into the void, without making any connections (p. 77). Sustained only by what lies before it, the journeyman is intent on re-territorialising the future with “the aim of striating, securing and expanding territory” (p. 81).



In his essay of *Why Am I Deleuzian?*, Villani (2006) warns:

...no word should be accepted without mistrust and without an effort to think it in depth, on Deleuzian terms. To work on Deleuze, without keeping in mind all these fundamentals is to enter the court without a racket, and to complain that this does not look at all like tennis. (p. 230)

I strain to imagine this unpreparedness, reminding me to nomadically wander again. I return to the Waitakere Ranges, in early summer of December. I know this because the heat of the day is cool against the intensity of my body, and no camera is resting against my hip or slung across my shoulders. I am alone, and do not wish to share these experiences with others. A heaviness is felt for the first time again, a weight becoming unfettered yet tethered through my body. I am beginning to confront boundaries and limitations that do not yield, that I cannot see a way around. Having travelled back to Michigan in July after several years of living overseas, Sam and I proclaim to my family our intention to undertake PGT on our return to New Zealand. We visit every family member, intent on asking questions, we hope for conversations of coping and strategy whilst discussing our experiences of living with Huntington's Disease and suicide. We meet with my mother, brothers, sisters, and all of their spouses, in their houses and cars, at the bar, over breakfast and around campfires. We turn to friends as well, visiting them to gather their strength. Although I thought of ourselves as prepared, I feel shame and resentment this summer day in the Waitakere Ranges. My family cannot, or will not, talk of these things. We are met with reticence, avoidance and tears, with fear permeating everything; no one is willing to discuss their own private problem spaces. Threats allege physical and emotional harm should we proceed to ask, discuss, and enquire, warning us against overturning what is carefully maintained by my family. Returning to New Zealand, bereft of rare knowledge I thought might be provided by my five older siblings, I draw my self close and head to the Waitakere Ranges, alone. I have told my mother I am no longer willing to carry my family's pain, I write to my family and tell them we are no longer willing to abide the harm inflicted upon us, that we are no longer willing to be let down with their silence and absence. I have told them all, no more. We will go through this alone, and only seeking others who will stand with us, there will be no more abandonment at a moment of need. There will be no more contact, and no more pain, with them. I hike to leave it all behind in order to go forward, to mourn, to survive.

Remembering these months with a nomadic subject, a terror erupts from the monstrousness of difference. The future pursued is no longer possible, changing what is needed in the present. I do not know what kind of son and brother to be with my family - so I will be none of them. Braidotti (2000) speaks of the Deleuzian nomadic subject as "a folding-in of external influences and a simultaneous unfolding outwards of affects...an enfolded type of memory...ultimately an embodied memory" (p. 159). Rage, not yet unfolded, becomes tethered to the Waitakere Ranges as I begin to visit hundreds of times.

I do not feel the rage yet, but begin to feel the peril of mountains and rushing of rivers, slick mud and razor-sharp grass, dazzling palm trees and stoic giant kauri, all wrapping around me as I begin to return over and over. I feel the unfamiliar...of limits reached and the ripples of cracking, the beginnings of uncontrollable rage spreading, of becoming unrecognisably unfaithful to myself. The journeyman, insulated from rage with the protection of social calculus, cracks as rage begins to evaporate language. I run through the hills faster, further and farther in tighter and tighter circles of repetition, to leave rage behind me.



I must pause; I am out of breath and must breathe, there is still much heat with this rage. Here, in an unrecognisable form, are possibilities in the beginnings of becoming-monster. Villani (2006) speaks of the possibilities of Deleuzian thought, imploring:

To not abandon this ‘too big’ – to be able first to see it (not every one can) and later on to bear it – therein lies a daily heroism that greatly resembles, in Kant’s sense, the mind’s defiance as it confronts the sublime that crashes it. The artist is joyful, because what crashes her also makes her live – gives her an insatiable appetite to create. (p. 232)

My nomadic subject resists the urge to leave the journeyman standing in the summer sunshine of the Waitakere Ranges, for this is when I remember first feeling *difference*. Having initially entered the Waitakere Ranges for reasons unknown, the journeyman returns time and time again with rage unfolding. This is his place, where he can roam the river valleys undisturbed, where he becomes ensnared by undisturbed cobwebs that cover the tracks, where the forming cracks of the self flex and seal over, only to be disturbed once more with each footstep. In leaving this place and time, he will remain, alone, yet staying with the journeyman risks returning to the feelings of rage, wrapping and unwrapping, and the familiarity of containment.

My nomadic subject continues on, for hundreds more visits at different times and with new figurations; I am reminded of camping trips to the glowworms in their caves, climbing rocky monoliths strewn along the beach, and hiking along reservoirs filled with rain. No longer alone, I come with others, they come with me, and we come together. The nomadic subject, which Braidotti (2000) positions as “counterpart and counterpoint” to the normative subject of the journeyman’s techniques of social calculus and bubble wrap, has become a monstrous body, an “indicator of the register of difference” (p. 162-163). It is here, embracing Braidotti’s (2006c) ethics of *becoming-imperceptible* that I take another line of flight.



Re-imagining the ethics of sustainability, Braidotti (2008) emphasises the nomadic subject is “not a structural limit, but rather the condition of expression...a threshold of transformative encounters” (p. 12) which are “grounded in full recognition of the co-

presence of pain in and through processes of political change” (p. 17). Looking at a map of the Waitakere Ranges as a series of transformative encounters, time as a container of the hundreds of visits becomes unknowable. Colebrook (2002), reminding me affect becomes unrecognisable to the normative subject without a linear container of time, suggests time must be understood through difference to envisage affect otherwise. Searching for other embodied memories, I am reminded of sulphurous fumes and dazzling light displays of my birthday; the Fourth of July, Independence Day, the birthday of the United States. Born on a day where sparklers twirl in the hands of children at night, every birthday I have ever known has been greeted with these images and smells. With the awe of a child, I remember learning that although a sparkler burns as a discrete point with such intensity that it cannot possibly endure, when spun the sparkle becomes blurred into a “movement-image” (Colebrook, 2002) of difference, as shapes forming in the movement in time. With this in mind, rage, a substance brought into existence and wielded by the journeyman, shifts from a singularly contained radiant point and begins to take shape differently to the nomadic subject. Expressed as a temporal process bound up with time, rage provides a generative force to the nomadic subject, bringing forth the inherent positivity of affect in transformative encounters.

Engaging Braidotti’s (2008) nomadic ethics, and feeling this rage once more, I understand affect through the imbuing of experiences with motion and change. Whereas the normative unitary self of the journeyman expresses rage as an “effect of arrest, blockage, rigidification” (p. 22), a passion that destroys the self and damages the capacity to relate to others, a nomadic subject reworks the pattern and repetition of events, with rage becoming an affirmation of the generative force of Zoe. Writing with a nomadic subject, rage becomes a force of change. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) envisage affect as a capacity to carry “the transformations of becoming or crossings of multiplicities always farther down the line of flight” (p. 275) towards new connections between human, non-human, and more-than-human subjects. In the desire to relate and connect with these others, the Waitakere Ranges, the pupurangi, the rocks and water over and through which I rage and toil, the journeyman exits from a fixed majoritarian identity of domination and exploitation, and becomes unrecognisable in becoming-monster.

As I try to find purchase, a place from which to write of becoming-monster, again I find resistance and slippage. With a desire to write of what is missing, of this time, space and pain, I search for a concept to enable me to write of becoming-monster carefully, signifying

a sameness of thought across a vastness of time. I cannot see it, the movement of becoming-monster appears too fast, and I seek to slow it down to implore the monster into being. Colebrook (2002) tells me seeing it, by grounding becoming-monster with the sedimentation of sameness, enables me to place it next to the journeyman, to stake its claim and express it as a subject position from which I can speak. Braidotti (2000) writes of monsters, which, "if not quite survivors, they are at least resilient in their capacity to metamorphose and thus survive and cope" (p. 163), to which Bischoff (2009) reminds me that in becoming-monster, unrecognisable transformations brought forth with rage disrupt and undermine my efforts to signify it. Again, Derrida (1989) recalls to me that I cannot name becoming-monster without turning it into a pet. Instead, I understand affective processes of becoming-monster with Braidotti's (2000) references to "the potentially explosive social subjects for whom contemporary cultural and social theory has no adequate schemes of representation" (p. 171), I return to nomadic ethics and nomadic wondering (and wandering) to find a "stickiness" to write of becoming-monster. In a world immanent with itself, where transcendence is not required for language to ascribe meaning to referents, signs and codes are still to be found throughout life. Colebrook (2002) contends signs are intensive (felt), prior to being representative of objects requiring language to ascribe meaning. The intensiveness of signs produce investments (organisations of experiences), which in turn produce assemblages of bodies. An immanent world is one where rhythmic sounds of percussion produce intensities of affect, in turn producing the formation of people coming together in a drum circle. With Colebrook's warning that investments can become over-coded and territorialized with social meaning, such as when drum circles come to signify spiritual occasions, I turn to Deleuze's (1986) concept of minor-literature, where figurations of minoritarian subjects have the generative capacity to create an identity through intensive assemblages, whilst denying an underlying essence in the expression of an normative minority identity.

In order for becoming-monster to endure in this writing, I begin to trace a figuration of a nomadic subject of enfolded signs, actualised intensities, and lasting investments able to be sustained whilst calling out and creating becoming-monster. I do not need to listen as my nomadic subject feels the rhythm of footsteps pounding over the hundreds of kilometres of hills and splashing through countless streams. My ears ring with a metallic pinging of hiking pole striking stone, my rasping breath rattling my chest. Layers and layers of feelings unevenly deposit over each other with intersecting transverse axes. Recalling the journeyman trying and failing to make sense of feelings of pain, leakage, erosion, and

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erasure, suffused within an embodied *whoosh*, I become-monster. Feelings do not relent in becoming-monster, as this whoosh does not rise and fall, shift or dislodge. Instead, the feelings become riven from each other, forming a multiplicity of new connections. The embodied whoosh of feelings become embodied as differences without perceptions of their similarity. Never outrun, the eternal return of (differences) feelings becomes a distraction. Each absorption, each return, each continuous realignment of distress along different axes and layers, feelings of explosion and incandescence erupt, seemingly with each footstep, water-drop, ping, rasp, and rattle. With a throw of the dice, the nomadic subject engages in process of change, reconfiguring with every explosion and eruption with feelings of catastrophe, and Life renewed with every experience of once more becoming unfaithful to a self. These catastrophes not yet exhausted, out of food and running out of sunlight, I am hungry. With the seeds stuck to my socks, the dirt crusted onto my shorts, the cuts on my face, and the burning of my muscles, I am stilled in the repetition of catastrophic moments of becoming-monster, and come out of the hills for the day. Leaving December and erupting into the first days of winter, putting the dice back into my pocket, I do not recognise my self.

Narrative (III)

Sharing a restful evening at the cusp of summer in Michigan, with paddling ducks floating in the reeds and hungry fish waiting for a fly to break the surface of the water, in June of 1997 two people meet, forming the beginning of a relationship now spanning 21 years. With this narrative, I write of this relationship, formed with experiences of undertaking PGT for Huntington's Disease. But as I begin, contingencies gush forth from any starting space. Whilst we are no longer married, Sam and I remain steadfast friends. Shall I begin at the end, so to speak, where only after finishing the brutality of the PGT process did the dissolution of our marriage follow from the tragic irony of subsequently losing a child, due in part to unrelated and unforeseen genetic anomalies within my cells? Or shall I return to a beginning, with the presence of my father, long dead and with whom Sam has never met, relating the influence of his death over so much of our lives together, or should I tell of Sam's parents, who brought much sympathy, empathy, and compassion to my young self? Should I write of our place within each other's journey, meeting whilst I was a foreigner in my own country but only a few miles from home, whereas Sam found herself at home in a foreign land with strange people, only having arrived in the American Midwest a few hours before?

How might I situate the day of receiving the PGT results, of my mother in-law and her sister being with us in our terror, whilst my own mother was missing? How should I signify relationships and taboos within my family Sam helped navigate, helping me not just survive and endure, but to thrive? Alternatively, I might begin with an outline of our struggles and successes, showing the visas of our passports as we travelled the world, together and on our own terms, with adventure and wonder our only companions. How would the places where we have lived and places we have left come bare in this writing, and what of the friends made and love lost over these years? If I was to document this relationship in terms of sexuality, how do I concern myself with fears we both held, of the possibility of having a child and potentially passing on the gene responsible for Huntington's Disease? What burdens do I take responsibility for, and what privileges do I bestow upon Sam; what treasures of life do I give up to improbable fate or attribute to dumb luck, with us as characters in each other's stories?



With this writing of people, places and things, as representations only needing to be filled by some imagined message or meaning, a tension arises from narrating with what

Colebrook (2002) calls *immobile cuts* of time. As precise, accurate, numerous or encompassing as these cuts might be, Boundas (2007) speaks to me of their shortcomings, as here they can only be “responsible for the hieratic and static world of Being”, as a narrative in this form is devoid of the “continuity and mutual imbrications necessary for an adequate characterization” (p. 491) of change. Represented as unified wholes in Western thought, Colebrook warns the changes we undergo and the changes surrounding us give form to and ground the flow of time in specific, singular, and static perspectives. A static perspective, derived from a sequential and linear state of affairs, is unable to account for the physical embodiment of movement and change in time. In these opening lines, Sam and I are both shifting before my eyes and always on the move, although never straying far enough.

As I begin this writing just after my 40th birthday, I am providing an account of a relationship that began when Sam was a few months shy of her 21st birthday and I was 19 years old. Confirming she will be joining a group of mutual friends for dinner, in a joint celebration of my 40th birthday as well as my girlfriend Hannah’s birthday, Sam relates a kindness shared between us many times over:

“I will be here until you tell me otherwise.”

Embedded in the word *here*, I stumble over a multiplicity of paradoxes contained within this statement of location. I read this sentiment as a reply, but also an invitation to maintain mutually shared space. With bodies described by Kaufman (2000) as “populated with things and flows and movements that would belie any static or absolute essence” (p. 130), I am reminded of Colebrook (2006) contending life (as *sense*) is the potentiality of “bodies – crossing another – the relations of those bodies” (p. 129). With prefigured locations of space created by an *us* as embodied subjects, Colebrook goes on to describe life as “less a space within which we think and more the possibility of the opening of these spaces” (p. 129). I experience comfort with these words. In divorce we continue to create new possibilities of space with new *invented crossings* of our embodied forms; we continue to become other than we once were, here.

I met Sam at a local residential youth camp near my home town, where I taught archery classes and she worked as a lifeguard. Together, sharing our lives together every summer from 1997 to 2000, we eventually co-managed the day to day activities of the camp, taking

on a legal responsibility of care for the 150 campers, counsellors, and staff members who lived on site each week. I remember these summers filled with the overflowing joy and intrigue of a summer romance, yet a time slowly and inexorably beset with the eternal return of immense pain, longing, and doubt. We were only afforded a few short weeks together after the camp closed before Sam's visa expired, forcing her to return to England whilst I remained in Michigan. As we parted ways and returned to university studies, we confronted the threat of an uncertain future as well. With no guarantee of future employment, every winter brought long distance phone calls to discuss the fraught negotiations of deciding if we were reapplying to the youth camp for the coming summer, in effect deciding if we were going to continue our relationship at all. Although each winter one of us would attempt to visit the other for a short holiday, to share space in these between-times required visas, kind friends and family with whom we would stay, and a large quantity of time and money neither of us seemed able to locate with regularity.

As the summer of 2000 drew to a close, we concluded it was time to move on. After our initial concerns were dismissed, Sam and I jointly contacted the state authorities regarding what we perceived as potential ethical violations by a member of the management team, which was met by the board of directors for the summer camp with threats to terminate our employment for drawing unwanted attention to the problems. Following this, neither of us wanted to return the following summer, nor were we likely to be welcomed back. We had "aged-out", retiring from the youth camp as many did at our age, allowing younger generations to take over positions vacated by older staff members. Sam remained in Michigan through the fall of 2000 on a student visa, studying at a university a few hours from my home town. Desiring more certainty in a future where we could live in the same country together, I proposed to Sam in January of 2001. We married in April, in a civil ceremony at a local court house in Michigan. Despite Sam acquiring residency in the United States, the complexities in sharing space did not subside. We negotiated living arrangements, deciding to reside in Michigan before emigrating to the United Kingdom in September 2002. We migrated once more in March 2006, travelling for six months over land through Europe, Asia, and Australia, arriving in New Zealand in September 2006.

On each of these occasions, my experiences of American, British, and New Zealand bureaucracies required us to establish the merits and potential liabilities of the economic productivity of our union, with immigration protocols requiring obligatory medical checks, which tested for communicable diseases and other ailments. I remember immigration

matters as an obligation to give an account of my identity, measured along Butler's (1999) normative heterosexual matrix, to secure immigration visas. To establish the merits and potential liabilities of the economic and social productivity of our union, we provided a performative account of our relationship, evidenced as natural, authentic and legitimate with photos, utility bills, and other personal narratives of our life together. We showed a union of two individuals becoming one, a relationship constitutive of and constituted by a framework of ethical and moral norms. Mindful of the comparative ease with which we progressed through various immigration matters, reflecting on the bureaucratic process of securing a permanent residence visa for the United Kingdom, I recall the playfulness of inventing an identity of masculinity, a performance dedicated to creating what Butler (2000) describes as "a compelling illusion...a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo" (p. 520). This illusory heterosexual identity only noted the possibility of inheriting the Huntington's gene, a legally mandated disclosure, and left unsaid experiences of otherness, and the thoughts and feelings with which I strove to locate a politics of a self capable of rejecting the hegemony of masculine ideals. With youthful memories of visits to consulates and immigration offices, these experiences are less concerned with fear of being found out, but rather feelings of exuberance whilst rejoicing in the success of some form of performative deception.



As we prepared to depart Michigan in September 2003, I hear the voices of a multitude of others, calling me to defend my intentions, of being asked:

Why would you want to live in England?

To account for the merits of my plans, such questions require an unflinching response using logic and reason, answering with accounts of how much money I would make compared to Michigan, if I could make more money elsewhere, and how long I would be away before we returned. Exasperated, the concerns of others are only apparently relevant to what I understand as the "oedipalized, socially productive libidinal economies" (Braidotti, 2012, p. 34) of normative thought. Other conversations would follow, demanding yet further accounts of what lies in wait, regardless of my responses. Unrelenting, these subsequent conversations become more antagonistic, questioning my patriotism and nationalism, commanding me to determine what I value that was not

available in Michigan, what I sought elsewhere, determining what about England is better than Michigan, or elsewhere in the United States. I remember the begrudging effort of providing a narrative of masculine heteronormativity in response to these questions, regaling others with a story of “following a girl” across the ocean. These accounts are often finished by others, surmising the thrill of the chase and adventure of romance is predicated on the expectation that once she was acquired or caught, I/we would return. As we prepared to move from the United Kingdom to New Zealand, other requests for further normative accounts, although less intolerable, still prevail. The accumulation of cultural experiences, a lifestyle blessed with better weather, and the potential of economic progress, is valued as an undeniable privilege worthy of pursuing, validating our plans to emigrate once more in pursuit of gaining what we lacked in Michigan and England.

Many years later, after separating from Sam and taking to my “refuge” in the mountains of the Waitakere Ranges outside of Auckland, it is within a conversation with my sister about my “failed” relationship that I recall my expectations of the sustainability of my now-defunct marriage being admonished. Espousing the prerequisites of a productive and lasting relationship, my sister relates the need to share the same interests and concerns as my partner, qualifying these remarks by asserting a positive and productive relationship is predicated on similarities, and of “being in the same place” by wanting the same things. Compromise is only required when partners are separated by difference; giving too much to the other, and not getting enough in return, are signs of dysfunction. I am reminded by Braidotti (2012) the normative relationship my sister addresses is formed to “ensure the governability of the very subjects they engender” (p. 34). I recall struggling with feelings of shame after being rebuked by my sister and others, for daring to believe we could invent a relationship not defined and confined by what is taken for granted as the natural laws of social contracts and normative ideals. I am chastised for being a “dreamer”.

Situated amongst political, cultural, and interpersonal locations within the dominant discourses of materialist values and norms of several Western countries and cultures, these questions posed to me are formed with representations of the normative subject privileging specific geo-political concerns. Defined by a neo-liberal individualistic notion of personhood, particularly of the unified *masculine heteronormative male figure*, my life is expected to become realised through decisions and actions predicated on an autonomous self. Intent on perfecting a life hell-bent on achieving maximum autonomy, this self rests on the security of comfort and pacification of pleasure. Braidotti (2013b) positions the figure of

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other against the normative unitary self, together forming a binary generative limit of knowledge production. The normative subject privileges skills in terms of assessing *cost/benefit, loss/gain, capacity/incapacity*, whilst identifying, navigating, and negotiating knowledge production practices in research on Huntington's Disease, and experiences of the PGT process (see Hagberg, Bui, & Winnberg, 2011; Pakenham, Goodwin & MacMillan; 2004; Smith, Stephenson, Jacobs, & Quarrell, 2013).

Instead, recognising what Braidotti (2012) terms "the impossibility of mutual recognition" (p. 305) of subject and other within the philosophy of liberal individualism, I seek to take lines of flight from these majoritarian specificities of location premised on the binary knowledge production practices of self/other. Reconfiguring my relationship with Sam through minoritarian understandings of a marginal, barely perceptible politics of location based on "mutual specification and mutual codependence" (p. 305), I write narrative with a nomadic subject to trace outlines of processes of multiple sustainable selves *becoming-other*. Capable of tracing new locations of new relations, nomadic subjectivity is capable of seeing what is *intolerable* to a normative subject, which, according to Bogue (2006), offers a "critique of the received truths and realities of the present...that makes visible new possibilities unencumbered by the past" (p. 219). Disturbing the neoliberal distinction between self/other, this multiplicity of nomadic subjects enables the capacity to create new *relations of bodies* across spatio-temporal distances, inventing multiple *here(s)* no longer limited to shared spatio-temporal space. Writing processes of becoming-other, this narrative creates new possibilities of seeing the intolerable together with Sam, creating a multiplicity of sustainable selves capable of enduring the transformative process of PGT together.



Writing narrative of unfamiliar spaces, I am immediately drawn to memories of a 17 year old man-child, being lost in the wild woods of Michigan.

Bestowed with the responsibility to guide and mentor the 12 year old son of a family friend, I carry a rifle suitable for killing deer and hope to be a role model. I am hunting in the stark surroundings of a frozen woods, but have become lost in the frozen wasteland of the swamp-forest of Northern Michigan. The terrain becomes unreadable and disorientating as the fading light quickens, the dark bark of tree trunks silhouetted by the bright

monochrome of the ice, contrasting against snow covering the ground and clinging to the naked tree limbs. Facing a long Michigan night, stumbling across frozen water-logged pine forests devoid of living creatures, we will not survive the low temperatures. In the fading light, I do not know how to guide the way back to our camp. I am relieved the air is so cold, the water frozen below our feet, keeping our boots from becoming wet and accelerating the rapid onset of hypothermia. Every 10 minutes, I fire off a round of ammunition, alerting others of our plight, whilst, as far as I can be sure, leading us off in one direction.

Between these concussive moments filled with the hope, I must calm myself and contain fear. To be unsure of directions, and show doubt of the likelihood of being found, would surely panic me and doom us both. Eventually, we stumble across a barely discernible gravel road cut into the landscape of the frozen forest - but I still do not know where we are or where we are headed. Panic begins to overcome my survival skills, with the cold dark of nighttime beginning to crowd out hope as the temperature plummets even further, I wonder of keeping warm at the side of the road. Now panicking, headlights greet us, revealing my brother and my hunting buddy's father. Both are clearly worried, yet, rejoicing in the experiences of our ordeal, both are also laughing.

Remembering how often I have shared this story, I tell others of the one time I got lost and desperate in the forest. I do not remember with fondness, this story does not cause me to laugh. Filling this narrative is a representation of a young man progressing towards the identity of "the great hunter", orientating himself through the skills and experience of encountering unknown terrain, navigating with wits, logic, and reason. Reminded of Braidotti's (2010) figuration of the normative subject as "an abstract concept and a normative ideal that can be implemented across space and time, provided the right preconditions are met" (p. 409), the great hunter is less a subject and instead a figure of thought of "how to be", particular to specific geo-political cultures. The figure of a masculine ideal is contrasted with the pitfalls of the *other*, the anxious and panic-stricken irrational boy for whom I was responsible, and I feared becoming. Through my performance in woodcraft, a training ground of learning how to be a hunter, power relations of this figure overlap with dominant hegemonic figures of heteronormative Western cultures.

Later, drawn from fragments of a session somewhere within the PGT process during the winter of 2010, I recall other experiences of becoming lost. Here, I am beginning a session with Pat, a psychologist who worked with me over several years through the PGT process.

“Where are you, Matt...?”
“.....?”

“I am here...Matt.”
“....(ahem)....!”

“Can you draw something to tell me where you are at?”
“....no...”

“What about these figures.
Can you use these to tell me something?”
“.....”

“It’s okay. I am here, Matt.”

“...don’t...want to...be here...”
“I know this hurts...”

“...where...is...this...?”

Having no memory of arriving here, and left with no sense of this place’s location, I imagine this place only with fragments of memories. Through subsequent sessions with Pat, unfolded further with Sam, I do not recognise the subject with whom the narrative is written. No longer wanting to hold myself responsible for maintaining different narratives protecting from feelings of abuse and neglect, taken for granted relationships with my family become unrecognisable. I have come to know this particular space and time through the experiences of re-imagining, the amicable relationships I enjoyed with different family members becoming different with an anger that still startles me. Dominant representations of a heteronormative subject are unable to navigate the politics of this location; recognition, knowledge, logic, and reason cannot guide me through these memories.



Against figurations of a unitary subjectivity, Braidotti (2010) situates the cartographic figure of the nomadic subject capable of resisting the hegemony of identity politics involving unitary subject formation. Nomadic subjectivity instead acts in locations formed in the “fleeting co-presence of multiple time-zones, in a continuum that activates and de-territorializes stable identities” (p. 408). Braidotti’s figuration of the nomadic subject is a “collectively assembled, externally-related and multilayered subject” (p. 409), a

cartography of memories capable of providing an account of a "materialist temporal and spatial site of co-production" (2013a, p. 358) forming the politics of a location. I understand the form of a nomadic subject, expressed in terms of a rhizomatic account of locations born at the intersection of specific geopolitical (space) and genealogical (time) dimensions, as a literal figuration of a subjectivity navigating and negotiating what is otherwise off-limits to the hegemonic figure of the normative self. In doing so, the nomadic subject provides me both the "methodological navigational tools and an ethical compass" (2012, p. 29) to trace the boundaries and contours of a politics of location constitutive of the PGT process that would otherwise be unrevealed in this narrative.

...I love the time and in between the calm inside me

As I continue to write, I am remembering exclusion and isolation, of difference and distance, in the lyrics of *Elsewhere*, a song written by Sarah McLachlan. A few weeks after meeting Sam in 1997, she contributed towards the purchase of a birthday present, a ticket for me to attend *Lilith Fair*, a music festival organised and headlined by Sarah McLachlan. I remember this concert less with the music performed, and instead with feeling discernible movement stemming from "thinking forces beyond the already actualised" (Colebrook, 2006, p. 216). There was no holding hands, or sneaky kisses out of the eyesight of others, there was only a feeling of drifting, a desire for things to become different. Already in a relationship with a woman who was also present at the festival, I construct memories of this relationship with feelings of denigration, permeating from experiences of being wanted as a normative object, a *boyfriend* with criterion of measurement and value that I had no interest in fulfilling. Thinking with feelings of unexplainable possibilities with Sam, I recall Deleuze (1988), describing the unfolding of *Superman* as:

"the form that results from a new relation between forces...the advent of a new form that is neither God nor man and which, it is hoped, will not prove worse than its two previous forms". (p.132)

A few months after attending this concert, I am remembering visiting my mother for the first time that summer, intending to tell her I was breaking up with my "local" girlfriend as I had met someone else. I tell my mother of abandoning arrangements to join my then-girlfriend at a bigger, more prestigious university where I intended to resume my studies at the conclusion of the summer camp. Sitting in my mother's living room, shifting in my seat as I announced to her I had fallen in love with a person whose name she did not know and

whom she had yet to meet, I tell her of my intentions to join this person in England. A briefest of hesitations greets me before my mother naively asks as to my sexual orientation, wondering if I had become involved with a man. Later, over the course of the following weeks, after similar pronouncements to others, including my siblings and family friends, these conversations also result in further enquiries if I was “coming out” as gay, followed by calls to defend my actions towards my by-then ex-girlfriend and explain the circumstances that led to this new relationship with Sam.

Returning to the great hunter, as a linear representation of knowledge gained rationally through experience, incrementally and progressively over time, Braidotti (2012) describes the normative figure as involving a “social process of subjectivization that functions by binary exclusions” (p. 48). Through a binary logic of difference, normative formation privileges heteronormative knowledge production practices of the great hunter, whilst polarising and excluding as undesirable, or at least less-desirable, a subjectivity of *other*. Binary subject formation reifies “normality, normalcy, and normativity...by transposing a specific mode of being human into a generalised standard” (2013c, p. 26) from which all can be measured. Whilst aspects of the other are also included within this process, this is through negation and exclusion of those characteristics and traits deemed as undesirable to the majoritarian normative ideal. The great hunter is not anxious, refrains from irrational decision-making, never out of control. As a 19 year old man who had unexplainably fallen in love, I am positioned as irrational, and excluded from the normative experiences of others. My decisions and actions are unknowable, relegated to alternative subject positions. As I am also pushed to the furthest margins of the heteronormative experience, I become an *other*.

Recalling the hurt of normative encounters, I sense the formation of a binary. Recoiling from the homophobia that attaches unorthodox and surprising behaviours to objectified categories of sexualised others, I also wallow in my own self-pity of not being “seen” in a moment of vulnerability where I have attempted to “open myself up”. Moving from what Braidotti (2008) terms the “rhetoric of the lament” (p. 17) of a unitary self, where I drown in self-pity and contempt for being subjected to this *other-ing*, nomadic ethics suggests caution. I am reminded by Braidotti that the nomadic subject “clashes” with the heteronormative figure, suspending the binary opposition of subject formation and critique. Activating the creative resources of affectivity and relationality to destabilise the conflict, the nomadic subject imagines the capacity of affectivity to actualise a multiplicity of

displaced, non-linear, and *other-ed* identities not afforded constituency within unitary normative subjectivity. Braidotti warns that such subjective transformations of change are processes of dis-identification and defamiliarization, through which pain and conflict may result from the “loss of cherished habits of thought and representation, which can produce fear, a sense of insecurity and nostalgia” (p. 19). Pausing, I feel resistance to giving up this hurt, as it equally forms subject positions I have ascribed to my family, and I risk getting lost once more.

Braidotti (2012) tells me a nomadic subject is able to navigate and embody both memories and counter-memories “across multiple, unexpected, and often contradictory variable(s)” (p. 212), taking up potentially overlapping and contradictory positions of location. As a “zigzagging, not linear and process-oriented, not concept-driven” (p. 217) figuration, the nomadic subject is an identity taking place between the binaries formed of the normative figure and *other*, the in-between of binaries of male/female, past/future, black/white. No longer a participant in identity politics of normative Western representational thought, it is the in-between zone of the static calm at the polar ends of the binary figuration that nomadic subjectivity takes form, between the thresholds of self/other that become the potential locations of transformative encounters of multiple selves. Both relational and driven from the outside, the nomadic subject inhabits creative counter-memories, counter-images, and counter-figures to produce alternative figurations of these locations. Foregoing the negativity of the rhetoric of lament, the repetition of these counter narratives instead becomes “a massive exercise in transformation of negativity, into something more sustainable, more life enhancing” (2008, p. 23) than contempt and self-pity, fear from loss and being lost, of being unrecognised and unseen.

...the quiet child awaits the day when she can break free the mold that clings like desperation

As I approach turning 40, in moments of guarded and unguarded testimony to friends and family, I have related my overwhelming excitement in achieving “an age of importance” to the normative subject position of my specific geopolitical location. Having children, a partner and marriage, already educated with a vehicle, potentially owning a property and holding a mortgage, or if fortunate enough possessing multiple properties/children/vehicles, these are often the encumbrances and expectations that drive the daily life of others around me “turning 40”. Whilst the hegemony of Braidotti’s normative subject might be less relevant or in crisis in different locations of Western thought, where the politics of the present moment may have progressed beyond these expectations, Rose (2017) reads

contemporary political upheavals across the United States and elsewhere in Europe to suggest the unitary subject of emerging post-neoliberal governmentalities, though mutated, indicates a rapprochement to normativity. I understand the populism of Trumpism, a politics bestowed with and arising from a fervour to *Make America Great Again!*, with a new realignment of individual liberty and freedom to return to a historical normative ideal that is felt to have been lost. Security in these new governmentalities is freedom from the vulnerabilities of difference, which, managed as risks, are construed as unplanned and troubling barriers limiting fulfilment of the normative self.

Not content with nostalgia of the past, Braidotti's (2006b) nomadic subject draws from the yearning for sustainable futures yet to come. This yearning, an affect providing the strength and motivation for the nomadic subject to create the possible conditions of a liveable present, dwells in the nomadic philosophy that to be sustainable is to think "the present is always the future present" (p. 206). As I return to previous birthdays, of my 32nd birthday in the midst of the PGT process, I recall living in Auckland, surrounded by friends with feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and terror abounding on this cold, wet, winter day. I reimagine my 28th birthday on a similarly wet and cold day in Hobart (Tasmania), homeless but on my way to New Zealand with Sam, nothing but our backpacks full of clothing and a few well-worn books to our names. Labouring under the upheaval surrounding my 25th birthday, Sam and I are winding down our lives in Michigan on a scorchingly hot summer day, shedding ourselves of our meagre possessions in preparation of moving to the United Kingdom. As the eternal return of difference, Braidotti (2009) says the future "propels us forth and motivates us to be active in the here and now of a continuous present that hangs on in between the 'no longer' and the 'not yet'" (p. 8). Reflecting on my 40th birthday, sharing the day with Hannah and Sam and a larger group of friends, these previous birthday celebrations draw from the uncharted territories that I inhabit now, of *life after testing*, in order to sustain my then-present self. As I approach my 40th birthday, I am left gasping; the years of drawing heavily, of futures of a multiplicity of previous selves, have not reduced nor depleted the feelings of these present times. I feel unbounded.

As a neo-materialist assemblage of connections, passions, forces and flows, the nomadic subject is a specified figuration stable enough to sustain the constant, non-destructive fluxes and transformations of change across these birthdays. Eschewing identity politics, my figuration of the nomadic subject favours positive and empowering relationships to

human, non-human, and more-than-human entities through “cognitive and sensorial mappings” (Braidotti, 2006c, p. 137) driven by affect, relishing joyful acts of subversion in scrambling the established status quo and normative forms of relationships. Remembering these birthdays as “squashed between a stolen present and a frozen past” (2009, p. 7) as I write with a nomadic subject and the immanence of relationships, I exist between the imperative of a future proceeding ever-onwards towards completing an unknown process of unknown duration and outcome. The death of my father, and his father before him, lie permanently behind as well as before me.

Although no longer a slave to rational thought and beholden to the frozen past, Braidotti (2009) figures her nomadic subject as “a present-based practice, which reactivates both past and present” (p. 8) to acknowledge an individual’s obligations to future selves and sustainable possible futures. Remembering the multiplicities of complex change throughout the PGT process, I no longer feel alone. I envisage these birthdays with social relationships, emerging transformations of change resonating with collaborations of many. These experiences of change, as part of the PGT process, would have only occurred as they did whilst Sam and I come together and become together with these specific memories. Situated as they are in the “political and ethical agency” (p. 9) of our relationship, this is not always readily apparent to ourselves, let alone others. These birthdays are future-based as we create multiplicities of futures together. Described by Braidotti as the “daily practices of interconnection with others” (p. 8), our relationship is the affective strength of our struggles to actualise resources, imagining without being able to see what we visualise, informing life we share, together.

...in the space where I can breathe I believe there is a distance I have wandered

Braidotti (2013b) argues normative subjectivity institutes and regulates practices of exclusion and discrimination, with the generalised normative subject of Western thought constituting and privileging specific geopolitical power relations and concerns. The restrictive (potestas) and productive (potentia) forces of normative subjectivity condones and restricts particular political and social modes of action and representation. Specific rights and responsibilities are granted to the dominant normative subject, privileging the ideal subject “positioned at the pinnacle of a hierarchical scale”, a process which rewards “zero-degree of difference” (p. 28) from associated practices of a hegemonic norm. In the individualism of Western thought, normative subjectivity values the personal attributes and

skills required to traverse the hierarchical scale as well, the other-ed subject, therefore, expected to strive, to labour, to desire the acquisition of what it does not (yet) possess.

Braidotti's nomadic theory is not concerned with mutual recognition and the struggle for sameness through rationality, negation, and exclusion. Instead, I understand Braidotti's (2013a) nomadic ethics as concerned with "the ways in which otherness prompts, mobilises and allows for flows of affirmation of values and forces which are not yet sustained by the current conditions" (p. 343). Through an ethics of ontological relationality, affectivity and endurance, Braidotti theorises the devalued and marginalised minority locations of the other as a privileged, and empowering, source of affirmative qualitative creativity.

Returning to conversations with my mother, the feelings of hurt trouble me in being positioned at the fringes of heteronormative subjectivity, with feelings of otherness at being thought of as unknowable. Braidotti (2006a) asserts nomadic ethics does not call for the avoidance of this pain, nor for one to ignore these feelings or turn the other cheek. These forms of self-protection are criticised by Braidotti as self-destructive, promoting a negative affect that arrests or blocks the potential for transformation of the self, a process in which vulnerability and pain are useful in understanding the "actual material conditions of being interconnected and thus being in the world" (p. 14). Instead, nomadic subjectivity requires one to become ethical in order to gain freedom associated with being aware of limits of the self. Braidotti's nomadic theory embraces the affirmative positivity of affect to empower and sustain one's self. The affectivity of a nomadic subject is celebrated as the capacity which "increases one's potentia and creates joyful energy in the process" (p. 4). To become ethical, Braidotti (2006c) implores one must consider pain as not only an obstacle but a possible ethical moment of potential transposition, to rethink the normative subject "in terms of affectivity, inter-relationality, territories, eco-philosophical resources, locations and forces" (p. 133-134).

I do not feel a closeness in this event, of a *her* and *I* together, remembering how I have remembered this event as an abandonment of hope for mutual recognition. No longer expecting to be seen by my mother, similarly, I no longer see her as she no longer makes sense in the rationality of these desires with which I seek to express, demonstrate, and share. With that the loss of the vision of mutual recognition, equally troubling is the loss of *mother* and her *role* as "established references" in a "radical repositioning" (Braidotti, 81

2006a, p. 7) of subjectivity. With the affirmative imperative of yearning to move beyond the pain, what other guides, markers, factors or forms will help me navigate the dark of the night, when *mothers* are meant to be the comforting voice of reassurance? Braidotti's (2006a) nomadic ethics suggests all subjects of becoming-other share "a common ground on which to negotiate the interests and eventual conflicts" (p. 4) inherited in these feelings of loss. Writing narrative with a nomadic subject, these feelings of pain and loss become a locus, a focal block of becoming-other, where pain forms a rhizomatic node and loss a stepping stone to traverse difference and a dispersal of the self in *becoming-molecular*. With this becoming, I hear Colebrook (2002) describing normative subjects as "unchanging perceivers set over and against life" (p. 128), which, to become more than itself, must disperse "in the flow of life's perceptions..." (p. 128-129). Freed from a singular point of view of the unitary self detached from life, I am free to join Sam once more. Although not physically present in these conversations with my mother and other family members, Sam returns in the repetition of a counter-narrative. Feeling the confines of a mold adhering around me, the normative subject always already fails to contain me and supply the comfort of a form-fitting. Memories of an occasion with my mother become the cracks which resonate throughout the narrative of becoming-other.

...to touch upon the years of reaching out and reaching in holding out holding in

I do not know what awaits me in England. Remembering the summer as a 19 year old, falling in love and choosing to leave all that he knows behind, when reimagined with a nomadic subject these negatives of absence are not prohibitive or restrictive, nor simply about gain and loss. Not having a passport only means that one might one day get his first passport, not having flown on a plane only means that one day one might see the azure sky above the clouds. I recall sitting on the dock of the boathouse at the summer camp, Sam and I talking our way through a summer with thoughts of the past; of death as a way to know of life, of dying as a way of knowing how to live, of loss if only to know of what may become of us as individuals with pasts and virtual futures. Sitting and sharing space of mutuality and hope whilst overlooking and passing through the beauty of Michigan summertime, these memories shoot outwards through the blossoming of friendship and desire to become-otherwise. I become lost in these memories of a summer of youthful invention and possibilities, where in the disestablishment of my self I give over to the possibilities of the "the unstable result of experimentation and artifice" (Boundas, 2007, p. 499), of futures becoming unbounded.

I am reminded by Bogue (2006), that to see deeply, to see the intolerable, is a process:

...that is, to engage in a critique of the received truths and realities of the present... but one also that makes visible new possibilities unencumbered by the past. The hold of history, of the forces that have shaped our present, is broken, and the actual of what we are becoming surges forth. (p. 219)

I remember questions from my mother and others, requiring an account of what lies in wait for me in England. Questions beg for me to explain what I will do for employment and support myself, questions asking to whom will I look to for support. Asked to forecast all possible future possibilities, which Colebrook (2002) reflects is a normative expectation that I am able to account for the total “experience of some being or some ultimate subject” (p. 87), I am asked what happens to me if I fail in this experiment, and plan for these eventualities. May (2005) tells me my mother’s inability to grasp the unbounded possibilities of an intolerable future is the mistake in thinking the virtual is the same as the possible, reminding me the “distinction between the virtual and the actual is not the same as the distinction between the possible and the real” (p. 48). I am unable to answer questions pertaining to the possibilities of failed experiments, which I am told is a sign of naivety and poorly thought out planning. My plans, such as they are, are unbelievable and scoffed at by others. But I do not desire the possible, only the virtual. In desiring virtual possibilities, I depart from a *simple empiricism* of normative subjectivity, and associated fear and trepidation of the “what if’s”, with safety maintained through planning for potentialities. Instead, I seek and desire a *radical empiricism* where there is only experience of difference, of becoming-other in what Colebrook (2002) describes as the “flow or multiplicity of experiences from which any being or idea is effected” (p. 87).

Here in this flow, I find my self with Sam seeing deeply, inventing and creating, no longer wanting to simply exist but becoming fractured with desire to become-other, dissolved and dispersed in becoming-molecular, entering the flow of the virtual becoming the actual. My mother looks towards me and asks what drives these decisions, what is inside me questing after these possibilities, why do I want to do these things and not others (preferably) closer to home...but I do not even know what a body is capable, or our power together as Sam and I *become-together*.

Remembering these memories of my mother with Sam's absence and returning presence, writing with a nomadic subject disrupts the temporal dimension of this *event*, and I find a new, different self with each (re)membering. No longer beholden to immobile cuts of time, Bogue (2006) writes of the *event* as "a time set free from the narrative causality of history and undetermined in its relation to the future" (p. 219). Remembering these memories of my mother with my nomadic subject, I imagine futures of becoming-other with the "myth-making power" (p. 218) of the event to create "haunting images" (p. 207) of a *clairvoyant vision of a people yet to come*, thoughts of *co-becoming* with Sam inducing me to action. I recall attempting to share how I do not know what will become of us, instead asking my mother if she could know the potency (potentia) of a future (*conatus*), of the power of an *us* that is yet to come - and a future that is more than I can imagine of what is yet to be. With memories of a summer of fabulation, which Boundas (2007) stipulates is only possible when "imagination is given the task of training sensibility, memory, and understanding...from the vantage point of a new life praxis...and the fair redistribution of the insights of discordant Reason among all faculties" (p. 501), I disperse, only to join with Sam, and myriad others that I cannot imagine, in the molecular flow outwards in a line of flight towards virtual possibilities of the future.



Sitting in Sam's kitchen is a dining table we purchased together when we first moved into the house she currently occupies without me. It is a heavy table of imported wood, solid and firm with dense timbers pulled from shrouded rainforests of Asia. We bought it second hand, our consciences unencumbered by the plundering of the rainforest. Instead, we inherited the debt, intent on making it right, through our time spent doing good in other ways. In the middle of this table is a round burn mark, the exact dimension of a plastic bucket one might use in mopping a bathroom floor. Embedded in this burn are actual remnants of a plastic bucket, not used for mopping but instead the container in which ash from a fireplace, thought to be long cold, was deposited. Overlaid on the burn mark, a mosaic of small square stone tiles now functions as a hot pad for serving platters. The table came to be this way during the winter of 2010, as we progressed through the PGT process together. I still regard this table when I visit with Sam, attending to the hate and shame for which I cannot account, nor erase. Each time I revisit this burn mark, or attempt to make sense of it, the narrative changes, and I become lost in another unknown location, bringing me nearly to tears.

Renovations of many sorts were occurring. I began outlining walls in two bathrooms of the house using anti-geometric mosaics of broken pieces of tile, a response to the inadequate equipment used to cut the tiles but which shattered them instead. The initial efforts to retiling the bathrooms added some texture and colour to otherwise-unbearable white plasterboard walls surrounding the bathtub and shower. Baths with oils and salts, whilst listening to music with a glass of wine in hand, had become one of the few ways of alleviating pain, of confronting how I had been living life as we progressed through the PGT process. Coming to terms with the relationships of my absent family, and realising I was more reliant on others than I allowed myself to be, nearly every day became filled with practices of revisiting my life circumstances and my father's death, the feelings of abandonment and constant flows of physical hurt culminating each evening in unbearableness.

Yet, with a renewed determination to proceed, each night I sought to do otherwise than my father, my grandfather, and my family before me. But, what I thought had saved me from despair whilst forging a way forward after my father's suicide, what had provided me with employable skills, what had got me to this point in my life was beginning to erode - with no new skills or strategies to arriving to replace them. Despairing the possibility that things will only get worse, anxiously entering yet further unknown locations every day, in the winter of

2010 I emptied out the fireplace, putting the ashes into a bucket that was close at hand, moving it out of the way to empty later.

The bathroom tiles were a masterclass in eclecticism, for randomness as much as beauty, and I showed off my work to those who came to visit us in our home. Explanations of the reasons these mosaics came about were easy. I needed a project to help me pass the time on the weekends, to help me cope with the strain I was feeling. I could show traces of my fingers literally left in the plaster on the walls in the form of fingerprints, as well as the traces of skin and blood left between the jagged, shattered tiles as I plastered around them. I was proud that I was coping. Every time I sat with people around the burn mark, though, as this object of pain sat uncovered for many weeks, I could not explain how the fire happened. I immediately began to feel hate with the smell of singed wood and burnt plastic, lamenting what I had left behind as I progressed with the PGT process. Setting fire to one's house is something that seemingly should be remembered and explained with ease. Needing to "cover" it for fear of showing the anxiety troubling me, I chose stone tiles for a mosaic.

*In this narrative of immobile cuts, I am struggling with my identity disappearing, yet coping through the embellishment of the bathroom. I am unable to abide the charred remains of the table, testifying to some new event that I must be able to explain. I must be in control, narrative of life itself must be explainable. Thinking must make sense of my body, so that my body must be forgiven. Following Colebrook (2002), this narrative of a normative subject is reliant on a mutual recognition of "the limits of each thing's duration in relation to other durations" (p. 51), the alternative is erasure. I write with a nomadic subject to disrupt the temporal dimension of time of these events, to write a narrative of durations extending past that of the individual with *Life as Zoe*, and think of the materiality of difference that remains unwritten in narratives of becoming-other.*



Returning to Braidotti's (2012) nomadic theory, I understand writing with a nomadic subject provides alternative accounts of narratives in positive and affirmative terms, of *nomadic becomings* disentangled from the negativity of lack present with normative subject formation. Nomadic becomings, as I understand nomadic theory, are not reducible to a critique or dialectical opposition to normative subject formation, nor are they

representations of “the unfolding of an essence in a teleologically ordained process supervised by a transcendent consciousness” (p. 151). Whilst acknowledging the impropriety of strictly distinguishing certain patterns of becoming from others, narratives of nomadic becomings emerge from a “zigzagging itinerary of successive but not linear steps” (p. 35) forming thresholds and patterns of “immanently actualized transformations” (p. 36). Tracing the politics of changes and transformations of the PGT process with narratives of *becoming-subjects*, writing with a nomadic subject involves a self-reflexive process prioritising creative non-dialectical paths, repurposing memory as a non-linear “faculty that decodes residual traces of half-effaced presences...of leftover sensations and accesses afterthoughts, flashbacks, and mnemonic traces” (p. 2). Writing narrative with a nomadic subject, I take lines of flight from majoritarian unitary subject positions of self/other, and capable of undoing habitual practices without engaging in “discourses and practices of otherness in a mimetic or consumerist manner” (p. 34), my figuration of a nomadic subject is sustained with a multiplicity of non-linear, *other-ed* identities, displaced and not afforded constituency within unitary normative subjectivity.



Disembarking the plane in Chicago, I recall the feelings of certainty in my motivation, capability, and desire to engage my family in a full-throated dialogue of how one might “live life” with the spectre of Huntington’s Disease on the horizon. As I approached my 31st birthday, Sam and I felt secure in our financial and professional circumstances in New Zealand, and reserved a month to visit with my family in Michigan, to share the lives we had started to live separately from my family. Moving to New Zealand brought greater financial pressures to bare on Sam and I, and greater distances to travel, to keep in touch and visit my family, whilst we also maintained relations with her family in the United Kingdom. I saw my family, and the way they lived their lives whilst being at risk of having the gene responsible for Huntington’s Disease, as fonts of knowledge. Although we had differing ideas regarding our beliefs and opinions, and filled our lives with different objects, activities and experiences, I sought their expertise. Using Braidotti’s (2012) figuration of the normative subject, I understand these experiences of my family as representational, treating them as “a huge data bank” (p. 31) of knowledge, with the assumption and expectation that this would be made available.

My five older brothers and sisters, successful with their children, mortgages and homes, education and employment, with their happiness they would obviously know how these things came to be under the circumstances we all faced. They appear normal, which Braidotti qualifies as “zero degree of deviancy or monstrosity” (2012, p. 28) from the normative figure, although I saw each as uniquely themselves within this singularity. All of us were of an age where the onset of symptoms of Huntington’s Disease would become ever more likely. Although, to my knowledge, none of us were sick, ill, or developing symptoms, all six of us faced potential futures laden with the onset of Huntington’s Disease. We sought to explore how they got to this point and time, and how they planned on proceeding, ever onwards, each day bringing us closer to the possibility of our faulty genes becoming unavoidably known.

It is difficult for me to recall memories of this trip without immediately launching my self back to the Waitakere Ranges, to run the hills of West Auckland to hide and dissipate the heat of remembering. The memories are still *too hot*. When this writing reaches them, I wonder of their recollections of the tears shed across campfires, coarse language and threats during long cross-country car trips, how do they remember the physical and emotional harm threatened - should their carefully maintained secrets be pursued or overturned? Do they remember these moments, when we enquired of them and their lives? Did they observe our reactions, of the hurt I felt when scolded, turned away, and ignored? Did they see Sam attempting to console me, ever vigilant in containing her own anger, yet spurring me forward? Did they see us try again with another sibling, or their spouse instead, resuming a search and resisting the allure of capitulation? Running to the Waitakere Ranges, here my rage can be dispersed in a safe place, set in a location free from their protests of remembering otherwise. I am fearful that my memories and recollections will become taboo as with the discussions of Huntington’s Disease that did not take place.

Whilst I understood my family were far from perfect as I landed in Chicago, on the long train ride from Michigan to California and through the long flight back home towards New Zealand, I began to see their limitations as monstrous and dangerous to my ability to sustain my efforts. Yet, hope was still available for me through self-regularisation and self-actualisation; I could do more, we could do it more perfectly, the testing could still be done. As we rode the train across Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, the entirety of my grandfather’s photographic slide collection sat at my feet,

abandoned by everyone else in the family. I wondered of his choices, of him shooting himself in the head in my grandmother's basement, of the choices made by all the individuals captured in the hundreds of slides for which I was now responsible, and how Sam and I might be different.

Binary dialectics return on our arrival back in New Zealand in late July. Declaring unacceptable the failed phone calls or attempts at any regular contact, I began to criticise my family's lack of awareness of our commitment, and casual disregard of our efforts, to remain involved in their lives. We sought, encouraged, and desired for them to be involved in ours, and spent thousands of dollars, and many months of time, returning to visit every few years when we may otherwise have travelled the world. They failed to take up any opportunity to visit Sam and I in the wondrous places we had lived, apparently not interested in sharing in our lives. I rejected my family's inability to converse with me on terms that were mutually recognised and acceptable.

I sought to call out the monstrosity of their continued absence from our lives in the closing months of 2009. With anger and rage, I felt abandoned in our moment of need, and could not continue to abide their inability to be with us as we sought a way of see deeply and greet the intolerable together. To be in charge of our relationships with my siblings, we would no longer be reaching out, generous with our time, money, and love, putting distance between us and deny them the possibility of being absent. No longer content to make ends meet with such meagre offerings of friendship and love, and no longer able to afford the pain of remaining connected and in touch of them, we had had enough. They would receive no more phone calls, emails, or visits back to the United States, until some form of reciprocal efforts were undertaken on their part. My family would be responsible for salvaging any future relationship. All this in a wretched email, sent to my family a few months after our return.

I have become troubled by the email, lost in the years since. The words describing my feelings, intended as a form of rebuttal and reject my self as different, become an embarrassing subjectivity, a closed process resulting in what Braidotti (2012) describes as "dialectical role reversal that usually sees the former slaves in the position of new masters" (p. 43). Taking on a subjectivity that "feeds structurally upon the bodies of devalored others" (p. 28), the words become situated, cohere and harden into my own failure, of an attempt to abide the moral standards of mutual recognition and respect. I recall Sam's

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concern for the complexity and variety of the situated experiences of each of us in my family, of the differences of our passions and capabilities, of the needs of our spouses, children and jobs. But I send the email and walk away from my family...I walk away for five years.



Writing as a nomadic subject allows me to revisit these feelings of rage, embarrassment, and rejection. Reflecting on believing them to be moral failings to be excised, or a commodity to be learned from and moved past on the way to another attempt at transcendence of the status quo, Braidotti (2006a) reminds us a Kantian universalistic ideal of moral imperatives is a “more or less invented philosophical tradition” (p. 2). Elaborating this narrative in the terms of the negativity of moral failure, futility, and abandonment that requires transcendence, I understand these experiences as harming me as well as my family. The negativity of this harm, Braidotti (2012) says, is the reduction of our ability to “take in and sustain connectedness to others” (p. 95) through the “loss of potentia, positivity, self-awareness, and inner freedom” (p. 303). I do not wish to apologise for my actions, nor forgive theirs, but desire for a difference in understanding so that I might otherwise live, and stay connected with my family.

Braidotti’s (2012) nomadic ethics acknowledges the impossibility of mutual recognition in the “persistence of emotional, irrational, spiritual elements” (p. 194), whilst embracing a positive ethics in an affirmation of the productiveness of all affect. Providing for disentanglement from the taken for granted morality strewn throughout the discourses of moral failure and transcendence formed within normative subjectivity, and the “dimming or slowing-down effect, a dampening of the intensity” (p. 95) of the self that results, narrative written with a nomadic subject forms from ethically accurate accounts of the embodied situatedness of the politics of my location. The nomadic subject enables connectedness, interrelationships, and the formation of community through the productive nature of affirmative positivity of affect, whilst not precluding the possibility and presence of conflict, disagreements, tension and violence. Through a process of transforming negative affectivity into positive passions, nomadic subjectivity is “a radical repositioning or internal transformation on the part of subjects who want to become-minoritarian” (2006a, p. 7). The productive positivity of affect thus becomes an expression of conatus, a form of self-

preservation where the subject's drive to become-otherwise is "the actualisation of one's essence" (p. 240).

To disrupt binary dialectics of normative discourses, Braidotti (2012) links nomadic memory (*remembrance*) with "a radical process of defamiliarization or disidentification" (p. 33) with majoritarian ideals of unitary subject formation and representational practices. I am remembering that Braidotti (2002) elaborates remembrance as an intensive activity. Likened to a "choreography of flows or intensities", the iterative nature of remembrance with affective memories is a generative force propelling itself, creating imaginative lines of flight opening up "spaces of movement - of de-territorialisation - that actualise virtual possibilities which had been frozen in the image of the past" (p. 13). No longer beholden to a unitary normative subject unable to account for the intensive memories I encounter with the PGT process, writing narrative with a nomadic subject I am able to trace the residual presences of others with remembered affectivity, a cascade of individuals on the fringes, positioned as the *privileged other*, of whom I can learn.



My professional life began in semi-secure psychiatric environments in the United States, working with exquisitely violent children labeled with emotional and psychiatric disorders, teaching them social skills to reduce the frequency of their violent behaviours. I have supported men with acquired brain injuries and severe mental health issues in adult foster care homes, all of whom endured chronic circumstances that stem from car crashes and suicide attempts. I have provided interventions to long-term heroin and crack users, arrested for drug-related crimes in some of the most impoverished areas of the United Kingdom. I spent many years conducting risk assessments and supervising sexual/violent offenders throughout New Zealand, involving mostly men released from prison into communities from which they did not originate. Within this body of work, however morally acceptable the community-oriented ethics informing my practice, Braidotti's (2012) figuration of the normative subject situates me in a binary dialectic of "not them", providing a "dualistic reduction of difference to a subcategory of Being" (p. 39). What is needed instead, Braidotti explains, are molecular political gestures to disrupt the normative practices and discourses of subjectivity providing for "the social construction of different desiring subjects...who desire differently" (p. 34).

I pause here and consider Braidotti's (2012) nomadic theory, which warns of the dangers of such political moves having a "high risk of colluding with the strategies of advanced capitalism" involving "homologation" and "vampiristic absorption" (p. 120). Should I pause here too long, I find lament. For much of my career, I have been afforded a particular social standing, and, for the most part, commensurately paid for my skills as a result. I have experienced this as desire; I have what others do not, and am valued as such. Proceeding to write with a cartographic figuration of the politics of location, Braidotti suggests becoming-nomadic requires "forms of resistance", bringing forth activities of "empowerment and the enhancement of what subjects can do (their potentia) for the sake of nonprofit" (p. 120). These forms of resistance bring into being a sustainable nomadic self, able to transgress these limits and desires differently without succumbing or colluding with advanced capitalism and a culture of commodification. A reading of Braidotti (2010) suggests, in writing narrative which explores the inexhaustible virtual possibilities afforded to the immanent nomadic self, nomadic subjectivity tolerates a multiplicity of cartographic figurations as a creative method to provide counter-identities, to resist to the hegemony of unitary stable identity formation. Political movements which appear colluding with normative subjectivity, where otherness is monetised and becomes marketable, can resist and form innovative subjects by eschewing profit and advancing a "strategy of inserting motion, acceleration, and hence disruption within the processes of successive de- and reterritorialization that are induced by the flows of capital" (2012, p. 121).

The multiplicity understandings of cartographic figurations brings me back to the kitchen table once more. As Sam and I returned from the United States in 2009, I took on a new job as a manager in the Department of Corrections, moving from a practitioner (responsible for supervising child and adult sexual offenders in the community) to being responsible for an entire office of practitioners doing the same. Sam, meanwhile, was managing the crisis services of a community agency providing interventions and supports to survivors and victims of sexual offending. Dinner conversations would rarely converge on the details, but meals were frequently over-shadowed by the unspoken acknowledgement both of us spent our working day engaged within a chain of events outlined on the evening news. Conflict arose in discussions such as funding, where in the political climate of the day the government agency that employed me was getting very large funding increases, larger in fact than almost every other Government department. Sam, meanwhile, was consistently obligated to validate the work done with survivors and victims of the offending I spent my day trying to prevent, and faced budgetary extinction on

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numerous occasions. I do not recall these conversations as competing arguments of moral and ethical priorities of the value of each other's work, of pay equity between our respective careers, or other binary arguments and counter-arguments involving our professional or ethical obligations. Our conversations instead became possibilities of thinking of our professional worlds as territorialised and reterritorialised spaces of inclusion and exclusion, resonating with Conley's (2006) elaboration of striated space as "...replete with barriers and borders that are part of an 'arborescent' mentality...cross-hatched by psychic or real borderlines drawn by the state (social class, race, ethnicities) or by institutions (family, school)" (p. 95).

Although Braidotti (2012) puts forward the possibility of becoming-other through minoritarian paths of "identity politics and feminist strategic essentialism" (p. 121), I am not content with the limitations of such work, of seeking any such fixed unitary identity. I envisage our conversations as tracing barriers and borders constructed by and constructed within our work, preventing new ways of thinking of violence, victims, and offenders. Conley (2006) proposes the politics of location, carved out of striated space by rhizomatic thinking, is sustained by eroding inherited barriers and boundaries and re-instituting porous borderlines from which lines of flight and becomings are made possible. Imagining our dinner table conversations through the construction of new territories of resistance, we seek to establish new open spaces from which new locations of affirmation sprang forth, supporting our clinical praxis and forming resistance to the incapacitating effects of the industries within which we worked. Concerned with possibilities of the *social dis-ease* brought forth and sustained within our work of managing and responding to risk, argued by Arrigo's (2013) *Society-of-Captives* thesis, I am re-imagining our politics of location. These locations are based on mutual specification and mutual codependence, as unstable and vulnerable subject positions we inhabit as we continue "journeying nomadically as an unfamiliar people yet to come" (p. 687). My work, sense of self, and politics of practice become stretched and unhinged from specific normative subject positions of offender-centric and victim-focussed identities. Although concerned in relation to the normative offender and victim-related issues because of the requirements of our pay-cheques, we sought to find common grounds to discuss the lines of re/territorialisation constructing offender reintegration and victim related issues within which we felt trapped in our work.

The territorialisation of space within society erects oppositions and competing needs between offenders, community safety issues, and the Government's decisive, and divisive, portrayal of its perceived responsibilities in these areas. I recall both of us, for different reasons, becoming dissatisfied with the media saturation overwhelming the public discourse of offender rehabilitation/reintegration issues and victim rights. These groups are other-ed for their difference, Arrigo argues (2013), in part because this difference is "the presence of disease, deviance, and danger" (p. 674) from the normative subject, whilst the needs for recovery or reintegration, let alone the causes of this otherness, are made to appear "largely unimaginable, unspeakable, and uninhabitable" (p. 674) to society at large. Sam's role required her to take to the media to set the terms of an array of social justice outcomes, including removing stigma of victim otherness, and to press the imperative of funding needs in order to meet these outcomes. My professional practice required keeping the identification, management, and elimination of risk central to all offender decisions and organisational policy development, thereby excising the possibility of catastrophic *incidents* of crime and violence the news media is all too eager to broadcast.

I understand the normative ideas of identity saturating media messaging, providing subject positions of offender, victim, and community, as "axiomatic categories to be contained or controlled" (Arrigo, 2013, p. 684). The media coverage delineates offenders and offending behaviours, and the risks posed by these *individuals*, as well as victims and their rights, and the cost of compensating and/or supporting these individuals with therapy and other treatment. The media draws on and informs the sense making of society, determining what can only make sense with the envisaging of criminal justice and victim rights perspectives within tight, restrictive normative ideas encompassing a vast range of individuals and differences. Arrigo (2013) argues, as professionals confined within our ability to celebrate and act through our practice on the "potential of being human differently and of making a difference innovatively given this humanness" (p. 674), we risk becoming party to a *totalising madness* of the Society-of-Captives as both captive and captor.

The media portrayal of constricted normative images curtails public dialogue and conversations of violence. Media and government messaging embed the public's concern as one of whom is deserving of rights (the community but also the tax payer) and those whose rights are rightfully excluded (offenders as well as victims). Removed from the need to validate or defend differentiated positions within identity politics, Conley (2006) suggests in becoming-molecular we are able to travel in space created "between identities, not so

much to undo them but rather to question” (p. 107), permitting us to become critical of structures that, instead of bringing forth new connections and subject positions, confine dialogue and erect oppositions of thought. I feel these conversations with Sam as filled less with opinions and beliefs confining us to *view-points*, and more as movements of affective flows, where we struggle, resist, and reject becoming enveloped within the Society-of-Captives, choosing to disperse our selves instead. In writing narrative of becoming-molecular within a politics of location, I remember inventiveness in eroding the impenetrable totalising madness where difference, Arrigo (2013) explains, is “assigned the status of lack, deferred and postponed, and made docile” (p. 696). Sustaining the nomadic subject that cracks with the totalising madness, I recall with our frustration also feelings of joy as we create new politics of locations. This joy generates imagined possibilities brought forth with lines of flight, which Arrigo (2013) argues emerges with an ethics of practice where “dynamic potential and human productivity are celebrated innovatively” (p. 687).



Following along with molecular feelings of rage, and no longer needing to be morally repentant or ethically superior in my dealings with others, I revisit my pleas to Pat to help me cope in our ongoing therapy sessions through 2010, in the months after I send the now troubling email. Provided with her exhortation to look after my self, I can once again feel the effects of submerging. Baths become recurring common daily immersions in water. Relieved from the pressure of a morality that compresses rage as a substance from which I require relief, to be washed off and out of me at the end of each day, I am also no longer bound to the unitary identity of an other-ed subject, formed in the opposition of the morality of my family. Baths, no longer simply a tool or coping strategy defending and protecting myself from the onslaught of pain and tumult, become nomadic *anti-memories*, defined by Braidotti (2006a) as processes of negotiation and exploration “in the pursuit of active modes of empowerment through experimentation” (p. 5).

Writing with a nomadic subject, Braidotti (2012) stipulates a “job of remembering is the capacity to engender the kind of conditions and relations that can empower creative alternatives” (p. 33). I recall these baths as lonely times, yet I was not alone. Water becomes the location where the feelings of conflict, pain and misery are met with compassion in “overcoming the self and stretching the boundaries of how much a body can take...but also an active desire to work through it and find a way across it” (p. 231).

The bath becomes a location without inhabitants but of multiplicities, where the forces form and stretch subjectivities in the folding and unfolding of the nomadic subject as “a collectively oriented, externally bound, multiple subject whose singularity is the result of constant renegotiations with a variety of forces” (p. 79). Reflecting on the singularity of my certainty as we arrived in Chicago, the confidence of accessing other’s knowledge for my own benefit, the nomadic subjectivity formed in the memories of these baths is materially affirmed, yet vulnerable, less defined and unstable. Expressed through the embodiment of becoming-molecular and *becoming-animal*, I understand the nomadic subject as a sustainable embodiment of affective flow, a molecular politics of a location of difference, constructed in relation to, with, and through encounters with others.



I recall experiences of exploration and experimentation in our efforts to inform and enlist a multitude of others to support us in undertaking the PGT process. We tell myriads of friends and neighbours, colleagues and coworkers, therapists and counsellors of our plans, and our fears of Huntington’s Disease and genetic risk. Enlisting others, a paradox arises. The more people we tell, the more I fear the process; I cannot stop, I cannot fail, I must proceed. Constituting assemblages of interconnected encounters and relational linkages, the multitudes cohere and form into a *community of others*. With this community, our journey transforms into something otherwise different to a test that one decides to take, as a test that one must pass or fail, a test that must proceed or stop. As we become community of others together expressing the flow of life, I feel my self disperse.

As the summer of 2010 draws to an end and the PGT process becomes debilitating, I remember orchestrating a dinner gathering to inform my friend Bruce of my lingering sadness and fear, and to tell him of my need for his help. Having only met a few months before, everyone in the house knows of my intentions as he and I leave the house and go to the beach at the bottom of my road. We watch the sunset together as I divulge my genetic heritage, and tell him of my fears. Remembering other meetings at work, with my supervisors Carl and Heather, I explain the imperative of coming to work in order to do something I know how to do, when everything else happening around me is unknown - and becoming more unknowable. Marianne, a neighbour, welcomes the misery and sorrow that resides next door to her, contrasting these feelings with food and compassion in her home. Without needing to exchange words or invitations, she provides comfort to the

uncomfortable. I tell others that I do not know of what my body is capable, and invite them to become aware of the politics of these locations I am traversing, for I do not know what I can sustain and the limits of my endurance - but I only know I may endure more with them. These individuals come in from elsewhere, enfolded and involved in the unfolding of different figurations of my self.

During the day, every day, I work with Joyce as a manager in the Department of Corrections; we work to see deeply together, providing supervision, management and support to those whose offending also does not represent normative ideas of humanness. With Wiremu, Joyce's partner, I make picture frames, play video games and watch movies, whilst drinking copious amounts of alcohol. Together, my friends distract from everyday living, providing comfort with whatever I need to get through the day. With Sam, the four of us roam New Zealand on holidays, and sustained with a multitude of selves, I endure the "impersonal forces and intensive resonances" (Braidotti, 2012, p. 74) of affective memories and experiences of my family. Learning neither life nor my non-unitary self can be represented by normative images of thought, my nomadic self figured here becomes patterns of repetitions of difference, expressing a posthuman subjectivity with the "rejection of the principle of adequation to and identification with a normative image of thought" (p. 84). A community of others, enfolded and involved in the unfolding of different figurations of sustainable selves, become-molecular with the expression of the hope, sorrow, fear and anxiety, propelling my different nomadic selves ever forward with Zoe.

Returning to the mosaics of stone and tile, I re-consider the brutality of the PGT process. I seek to give up as insufficient the normative self's "self-perpetuating Being" (Braidotti, 2012, p. 29), of needing to cope and maintain a self with the repetition of existing patterns of logic and reason, with life as bios confined with its own governmentalities. But as I struggle with these processes of molecular politics and qualitative affirmation, of writing with multiple sustainable selves, I am beset by the speed at which these blocks of becoming form. I feel the sensation of becoming lost as I realise that life, no longer conforming to the rational, is not given nor is it simply made. Following Braidotti, writing nomadic narratives of molecular politics of becoming trace "transformations with multiple others in the flow of monstrous energy of a "Life" that does not respond to our names" (p. 53). With undertaking the PGT process, all I can hope for is the pace of my life and resolution of my death, no longer bound by rational decisions made by an individual self, become adequate to being worthy of the present. In the present, no longer reliant on

reacting to events as they appear, I hope to continue to form creative concepts that counter-actualise events, processes, and experiences that define possibilities of futures yet to come.

To endure these processes of change and transformation, my rational self becomes displaced, dispersed as I write of processes of becoming-monster, tracing figurations of en fleshed signs, actualised intensities, and lasting investments. I recall, once more, the rhythm of footsteps, splashing through streams, the metallic ping of a hiking pole, and the rasping of breath forms the language of becoming-monster as I roam (the Waitakere Ranges of West Auckland). Experiencing becoming-monster with an embodied *whoosh*, the eternal return of these feelings distracts me with the repeated pattern of difference. Patton (2000) reminds me, the eternal return of difference “favours those forms of interaction associated with productive, affirmative modes of interaction at the expense of restrictive, negative modes” associated with normative identity formation. Each return of rage, sorrow, and fear becomes a realignment of distress along different axes and layers, never predictable and never settled in place, as incandescent explosions erupt with each footstep, water-drop, ping and rasp. With these explosions and incandescences, each a throw of the dice and a joyous dance of chance, I endure as Life is not my exclusive property to do with how I choose; life, as Zoe, carries on regardless.

In redefining my self as a process of attachment and connection within “multiple ecologies of belonging” (Braidotti, 2012, p. 94), I revisit the pain, misery, and suffering gradually intensifying as I remember coming towards the conclusion of the PGT process. Feelings of being left behind leave me unable to breathe. I recall recurrent nightmares, absent when I was a child, from which I now wake shouting and screaming, as life carries on. I do not dream of death, but dream of dying. Anxiety, having made itself at home within me during the day, becomes sleeplessness keeping me awake in the evenings, a companion at night that greets me at dawn. I remember drinking, a lot, often. I think, again:

Anxiously moving forward, my efforts are too slow to fill up the hours of the day as I run out of minutes before this time is up. My days become preoccupied with treasonous doubt of myself...hurting so much, all the time, that I feel nothing else...I do not know if I could actually hurt any further...I feel my self dispersing. There is nothing to hold me intact, together, except this constancy of difference...and I

am not yet done with the testing. I am scared... Consumed with fear, of potentially having the gene and a life of not having the gene... I am overwhelmed with experiences of choosing with whom to travel the pain and fear, of abiding those who have chosen themselves to be with me, or those that cannot... I am overflowing yet the process requires more... Anxiously moving forward, my efforts too slow... I cannot control this.

I now remember the community of others around me differently, on whom I do not lean nor simply rely. Writing nomadically, we are not separated by “an essential distance” (Braidotti, 2012, 332). Instead, the community of others becomes a frame of my embodied self that endures, and I become radically immanent with it. With the passions and forces of actualised multiple ecologies of belonging, forming an immanent *territorial space* of a shared world, I write of becoming-animal, expressing a posthuman subjectivity of transformation “in order to acknowledge the collective nature and outward-bound direction” (p. 224) of the nomadic self. I do not remember how, but I carry on as a community of others, empowering itself to endure the PGT process, and so I endure, to continue on for one more day. We become coextensively bound together, created upon and transmuting the flows of forces and transformations of our collective selves towards our possible futures, coalescing through the sustainability of shared interconnections.

The last vestige of rational memory is of giving blood with Sam at Greenlane Hospital in Auckland. I do not remember this place as a date, events are disjointed and do not flow in my memory. A hospital report records the day as 2 September 2010. Having no memory of a rational choice as we travel to the hospital to give blood and offer up my self for assessment, knowing we must wait and return many days later to collect the results printed on a piece of paper. I cannot recall how events have become realised. Thinking is not something done inside of myself, inside of my brain and body, or between myself and another. Colebrook (2002) reminds me of the possibilities of “prepersonal perception” to recall some of the intensities of the “common space” (p. 38) within which these events occurred, forming traces of affective perceptions to remember. With the dilemma of having nothing left to do, but the knowledge that there is yet more to endure further, I only remember the day through pain and struggle, my self willed forward in becoming-animal. Toiling to breathe in and out, I remember feelings of public distress, the warmth of the tears flowing down my cheeks shown to people walking by. Walking to a medical services

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clinic in the hospital, we provide a blood sample. Although I do not recognise my self in these memories, I remember Sam's physicality as a difference before me; her body heat and smell providing a warmth to my cold body; the depth of brown to her eyes and the feel of her narrow fingers grasping mine reminding me of how we got here. To follow her out the hospital doors to the car, I only have to remember fear.

With pain, misery and suffering, caught in processes of transformation forming with the complete dissolution of my self, I remember these experiences as *too much* and I fear I can do nothing more. The virtual has become the actual, the present becomes an event set free from the causality of history, and an unpredictable present bearing no relation to an undetermined future. No longer simply existing within a place and time, but dispersed and displaced in becoming-animal, I enter the flow of the last few weeks of the PGT process, trying to endure, maintain and sustain with the eternal return of a community of others each day.

I do not recall fear and panic, and do not know of this time at all. I do not recall conversations of needing others to support us, but something is communicated to Sam in these last few weeks. I must have communicated something more, something else, some otherwise nonlinguistic communication or mode of thought that suggests the current figuration, the present community of others, is not sustainable. In these last few days, Sam's mother and aunt arrive from England. Somehow, together we wait. A desiring machine having become-molecular/monster/animal, in dispersing I become what Braidotti describes as an "embodied, affective, and intelligent entity that captures processes and transforms energies and forces" (p. 101). An immanent community of others, we endure, and continue to desire of an intolerable future not yet imaginable. It is in this space that we touch upon the years of intense transformations, making sense of fields and forces to deny the authority of the past. From the summer of fabulation, we have invented, rolled the dice, and danced through Life, as Zoe, together. I recall once more, as a gesture of hope, from Sam:

I will be here until you tell me otherwise.



Bookend (II)

Here, nearing the end, I begin again in the middle. Although these narratives have strayed far, to coordinates not easily re-found, the politics of their locations are also never the same on return. Writing a thesis with Braidotti's (2012) nomadic subject creates narratives, which, eschewing conceptual stability, do not tell how one has lived or should live. Formed of multiplicities of virtual sustainable selves, nomadic narratives become *our* ontological creations of affective change. Following May (2005), in response to an ethical question of how one might live differently, *our* accounts of the PGT process privilege a multiplicity of "possibilities as yet undreamed of, one whose soil is far richer than those plants to which it has yet given rise" (p. 23). I understand the rich soil of nomadic narratives with the dispersal of a normative unitary self, reformed in a molecular multiplicity of the intermingling of human, non-human, and more than human forces and flows, setting forth the possibility of liberation from the polarising binary logic of difference and excluded *other*. Without the moral judgements of a unitary self, providing the imperatives, duties, and obligations to traverse a hierarchical scale predicated on a conforming normative subject, nomadic theory provides for an alternative ethical figure of thought, of a *radical empiricism* where life encompasses and exceeds beyond the individual, and inhabits the time of Aion. Transgressing the limits of representational thought with lines of flight, and existing in smooth space where life as Zoe is a generative creative force, the nomadic subject is only experienced in the virtual possibilities of difference, in a process of becoming-other.

Narrative can be repetitive. Reflecting on the iterative experience of experimenting with writing nomadic narrative, and the vastness of the smooth space created in this process, I return to Deleuze (1994), who tells us:

There is a crucial experience of difference and a corresponding experiment: every time we find ourselves confronted or bound by a limitation or an opposition, we should ask what such a situation presupposes. It presupposes a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free, wild or untamed differences; a properly differential and original space and time; all of which persist alongside the simplifications of limitation and opposition. (p. 50)

Writing of molecular revolutions, Garo (2008) cautions that one must not measure Deleuzian politics "in terms of its potential descriptive pertinence or its influence, but rather it must be measured by its current efficacy" (p. 55). Reflecting on a multiplicity of possibilities created with smooth space of these narratives, new modes of thinking bring

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forth new political gestures that occupy space forming from active disengagements with existing political operations. For reasons that exceed financial necessity, almost two years have passed since I returned to Corrections, where I now interview men in prison who have been remanded in custody following conviction, and prepare reports for the Court's consideration at sentencing. The un-sustainability of my previous employment as a manager is rivalled by the joy I now experience as a Probation Officer, in one of many entry level roles in Corrections where I began my career.

Situated along an axis of retreat and resistance, I understand Braidotti's (2012) nomadic subject not as a metaphor or dialectical criticism of normative thought, but a methodology of becoming worthy of the present, embracing "the neo-vitalist immanence of life" (p. 222) in an effort to map and explore Deleuze's swarm of differences "beyond the empire of the sign" (p. 84). The nomadic subjects emerging from these narrative windows are specific temporal and spatial cartographic figurations, creating "sustainable alternatives and affirmative modes of engagement with the present" (p. 8) enabling accounts of undertaking the PGT process crossing limits of normative representational thought. Reflecting on experiences of interviewing hundreds more men the last few years, questions of sustainability come to the fore in relation to my continued employment as well. No longer posing a question of personal alignment with political objectives, my work is not contingent on a normative subjectivity imbued with capacity and capability, of managing risk whilst molding offenders into a law-abiding and productive citizenry through recognised professional practice.

Fearing a return of representational thought, I begin to hesitate; language here remains unfamiliar territory, not easily reproduced for others without filling the space with co-extensive figures of thought. I understand possibilities of smooth space with my work in Corrections through the inducement of different understandings of joy. I understand my work with the co-creation of processes of change, engaging with men to (re)imagine an affirmative capacity to act through the invention of possibilities. These processes of change are wrought with *co-presences* expressed with interconnectivity and interdependence of multiple others, transforming "negative into positive passions... reintroducing time, movement, and transformation into a stifling enclosure saturated with unprocessed pain" (p. 314) to crack specific figurations of the men's present selves and *become-other*. Although the normative practice of the legal system requires that I write *for* Judges presiding over the Court proceedings, I write *with* the men's whānau and other

willing supporters, such as employers who stand with the men as they come in and out of custody, and the interconnected community of others with whom the men live. No longer measured through the pinpoint accuracy of a risk assessment that foresees every conceivable possibility, joy in my work is a familiar whoosh arising as we become embodied together, seeking lines of flight from the identities, offender or otherwise, imprisoning us all. With forces and flows less conspicuous to Western thought, the men's whakapapa and ūkaipō become possibilities where daily practices of interconnection can emerge, where limits of the men's present selves can be explored as possibilities of change. To become worthy of the present with these men, my report writing emerges from a knowledge we must grapple with other histories, of relationships with Probation Officers and others who they have worked with, and will likely continue to work with in the future. I write reports to invent future possibilities of becomings that transgress the limits imposed by a Society-of-Captives.

Returning to narrative windows, the figurations that crack in these accounts indicate the limits of a specific figuration, yet with Braidotti's (2012) figurations of nomadic subjects, a multiplicity of subjectivities endure with possibilities of different actualised becomings of other virtual selves. The nomadic subject is a multiplicity of differences; a desiring machine "facilitating interrelations, multiple connections" (p. 62) to embody affective forces and molecular flows of desperation; the "field of forces, a quantity of speed and intensity" (p. 85) coalescing in the non-representable becoming-animal through the sustainability of shared interconnections with a community of others; and becoming-monster, a "fantasmagoric diversity" (2010, p. 172) of intensive differences which "simultaneously attract and repel" (p. 166) in processes of transformation. These narrative accounts evoke yet further multiplicities of subjectivities, opening up possibilities of a sustainable self unrepresentable in conventional narratives.

Formed in the fabulation of "untimely visions, becomings and powers...and hence temporal forces that may generate stories" (Bogue, 2006, p. 220), a nomadic subject emerges from the possibilities of intensive differences and affective flow. By actively deterritorialising thought, a nomadic subject creates smooth space in order to "break the continuities of received stories and deterministic histories" (p. 221). Nomadic subjectivity is not produced from normative history and time as Chronos, but is an affirmative embodiment of affective change, which Lundy (2009) suggest, acts "in order to serve life, in order to activate the healthy life of a person, a people and culture" (p. 200). History is

not the inescapable past, for it is only the points in space and set of conditions from where the nomadic subject can emerge as an interval, a line, a change of vectors, directions, frequencies, and speeds. Following and extending Deleuze's formulation of fabulation, Mengue (2008) warns the deterritorialisation of thought is never absolute. In a loop of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, the nomadic subject who takes a line of flight, forming new smooth space, must always bring "some code, some land, some stable segment" (p. 232) of thought with it, to "connect itself, in actuality, to absence and to what is 'to come'" (p. 229).

Writing narrative with a nomadic subject is a process of contending with these codes, where one must embrace the frustration of *recalcitrant residues* whilst wistfully desiring vanishingly *familiar remnants* of a normative self. Remembering with feelings of embarrassment, I recall initial supervision exchanges beginning with (what seem to be) small processes of change, emails beginning iterative processes of learning how to remove the *I's* and *my's* denoting extensive objects within a sentence structure. From these small spaces, the possibilities of smooth space emerge. I am now thinking of how Sam, Hannah, and I celebrate possibilities of resisting the normative subjectivities imposed with the terms of husband, wife, girlfriend, marriage, and divorce. Startled with feelings of other-ing brought forth when I am asked to compare the strangeness of my girlfriend being friends with my ex-wife, I ponder Sam and Hannah's friendship, a process that now involves a fabulated origin story of intrigue and adventure, describing how they met in a place, time, and with circumstances not involving me. I do not understand this anecdote as a story of my erasure, but an account of creation with affective flow emerging from our interconnectivity in the time of Aion.

Remembering how we were recently invited to participate in a programme for an asylum seeker and refugee resettlement community, Sam and I are no longer current and former partners, divorced or currently together. Sam and I teach Hannah folk dances we learned at the youth camp in Michigan, the three of us, in turn, teaching folk dancing to dozens of young adults involved in the resettlement programme. Remembering the tiredness, breathlessness, and joy of creating new political gestures of coming together as a 'dance company', smooth space forms from active disengagements with the normative subjectivities that others have expected of us. I notice the feelings of difference mingling with our folk dancing, a process of becoming-other with the possibilities of affective flow,

and in the dispersal of a self embodied once more with the familiar feelings of an unbounded *whoosh*.

With nomadic writing, I understand smooth space is created with powerful departures towards other becomings, formed with a fullness of a multiplicity of selves dispersed in molecular flows. I recall writing with lines of flight following *suicidal trajectories*, orphaned when thought no longer wanders nomadically. I remember these too as processes of transformation, remembered as stifling enclosures, trajectories seeking the smallest psychological moments of individual life. My body becoming immobile with feelings of lack, I remember seeking recognisable elements of shared interconnections with others whilst writing narrative of becoming-animal. I struggle(d) against a *neoliberal imperative* to striate space as I remember unrepresentable processes of capturing affective flow with precise, rational and conscious memories. Goodchild (1996) suggests this is a struggle brought forth by the capacity of capitalism to “fragment, privatize, and segment the socio-economic field” (p. 196) in the process of over-coding memories, to turn the past into capital for the purposes of consumption. I understand the work undertaken in writing nomadic narratives is not in remembering facts and being certain of chronological events, instead these are reflexive exercises in remembering affective change and the creation of new smooth space. It is here the nomadic subject can resist capitalistic striations with the transposition of memories into “material for a new mode of expression” (p. 200). The possibilities that spring forth from nomadic narrative windows form with experiences of dangerous passions, such as desperation and incandescent rage, remembered in the process of writing the dispersal of a unitary self and becoming-imperceptible with a multiplicity of others. Always returning to a new middle along entangled lines, these memories are not axiomatic nor must they be capitalised; nomadic memories become the past only as I remember events of the testing process with the possibilities of affective change, enacted through a subjectivity of intervals, lines, frequencies and speeds.

Braidotti (2012) speaks to the pain involved in becoming unfamiliar with, and unfaithful to, self-prescribed normative identities, processes necessary of becoming “worthy of all that happens to us—in order to affect qualitative changes” (p. 19). I am reminded of struggling against no longer identifying with the subjectivity of a young man who confronts the suicide of his father as an object of trauma. This subjectivity is now unsustainable, yet familiar traces in practices of how this young man knew the world remain - and are difficult to give up. Writing nomadic narratives of a dispersed self forming in the politics of location, I have

become familiar with the bodily strain felt in the quickness of the heart and slowness of breathing, the present self cracking and fracturing as I write of unrepresentable processes of affective change. Yet, the stillness of the hand and the *whoosh* of rushing towards other becomings become themselves enabling, yet problematic, processes in that they are not representable. My memory, no longer coherently linear, destabilises in these processes as the past becomes “the seed which can actualise itself only in memory” (Grosz, 2000, p. 223), reconfigured in a history of difference, change, and transformation. In these late hours, as I wander into bed with nervousness and confidence in an abundance of possibilities, I have been kept awake. *Am I doing this right? What are these feelings that still me? Where has this come from, and where will this lead me? What am I meant to be writing of and is this what I am meant to be doing? How have my words brought this forth?* I cannot help but to ask myself, again and again, are these the right questions?

As this thesis concludes, I return to the feelings of fear as I began this writing process, of repeatedly asking *who am I to write of theory* and *what makes me think I can do this*. I understand fear as an affective extreme marking the limits of normative subject’s knowability in undertaking a theoretical research project. Past these limits is unknowability, from which difference becomes the soil that gives forth swarms of virtual cartographic figurations of different selves. Writing with a nomadic subject, fear can become comfort to a self no longer reliant on reason or logic to cross these limits. A nomadic self can embrace fear with imagination, transforming virtual possibilities of difference not yet envisaged into new cartographic figurations of a self who endures, to carry on, if only for one more day, in writing a theoretical thesis. Fear becomes an *ethical activator* of the past, mobilising resources sustained with untimely visions of limits to a nomadic subject’s radically immanent flesh, the untamed differences of affective flow creating possibilities of “alternative social relations and other possible worlds” (Braidotti, 2008, p. 12), becoming the politics of locations where virtual nomadic subjects roam. I once again remember Mengue’s (2008) warning that the deterritorialisation of thought always returns to codified, striated spaces, even as an *I* becomes a *we*.

No longer predicated on knowledge as a static and stable object to be lacked, desired and obtained, I struggle with other limits of a dispersed self whilst writing narrative windows with embodied processes of difference and repetition. Writing nomadically, each revision of a window becomes an iterative process of accounting for the work done in disentangling threads and maintaining affective flow, a process never complete. Wondering how well I

have resisted untangling each ungainly thread, leaving a multiplicity of spaces left unexplored, a tension arises with normative expectations of academic practices. Reflecting on writing nomadically, the work involved only appears in the form of one revision of a bookend or narrative. Bounding incomplete processes involves reading and rereading the literature, “cleaning” narrative to remove errant representations, eliminating inaccuracies and polishing sections, and including more robust theoretical understandings as the writing process proceeds. Again, writing nomadically is a process never complete, and I fear judgement. Others may see these traces of thought as discernible, yet incomplete, narratives, or understood as partial, and therefore lacking, representational accounts of my experiences.

Instead of a representative measure of how one might successfully account for the possibility of resisting, I hope the audience of this thesis might find other possibilities of “success” in the creation of further ethical encounters. Challenging the insurmountability of capitalism and the limits of representative thought, Valentin (2006) describes a possibility of Deleuze’s political philosophy as creating “a political reflection that will no longer be pursued in terms of application or representation...but a creation for nothing” (p. 199). Neither error nor omission, the uncontrollability of creating for nothing is an ethical encounter to be worthy of the present, with narrative windows of this thesis an experiment in creating possibilities of open smooth space outside of what is imaginable to me. Writing with a nomadic subject, these narratives leave space unexamined, opportunities unsaid, and possibilities unexplained, left for others to break open, untangle, and follow further on other lines of flight. Writing with a nomadic subject, the surprise of finding comfort alongside doubt, fear and uncertainty has not dissipated as I near the end of this thesis work.

Working with the molecular possibilities of Deleuzian philosophy and Braidotti’s nomadic theory, I understand the becomings of narratives yet written, or narrative yet able to be told, with the possibilities of persistently disrupting “segregational majoritarian patterns” (Braidotti, 2017, p. 92) of knowledge production. Sharing experiences of writing nomadic narratives with my family, we reflect on the unfolding possibilities of theoretical philosophies of difference, and the joyful life of embodied reflexive processes of change. Yet, crucially, I have not shared the narrative writings, for I fear the work will not be tolerated. I hear their quietness as I share the work’s importance to me, feeling the limits of what they find tolerable with their absence of participation in conversation. We talk of their

now, and rarely of their future, whilst I do not know how to talk to them of my present, only the possibilities of other becomings. Feeling the return of categories of *risk*, I do not know what might result from sharing, and hesitate to proceed any further, staunching a process of affective flow.

Writing politics of becomings, I am reminded by Valentin (2006) that care must be taken in creative processes of change, as “involuntarism is often thought to be the cause of paralysis (p. 195), whilst Thoburn (2003) warns of a threat, that in confronting the majoritarian, one may “carve out an autonomous identity against them, shoring up their own particularity against the world” (p. 86). Both caution against processes resulting in a reterritorialized identity of excluded-other. To sustain deterritorialized becomings and creation of smooth space, Thoburn describes the possibilities of an “incessant bustle’...a continuous process of interrogation, intrigue, and invention” to overcome the threats of reworked minority identity formations, and the paralysis of involuntarism. Responding to the limits of normative representational thought, Morgan (2013) arouses hope that experiences with my family can continue to be embodied differently. Engaging cartographic figurations of a nomadic subject, Morgan disrupts discourses inscribing the normative unitary figure of academic scholarship, exploring the limits of collaboration with the creation of a relational nomadic ethics. Thinking nomadically, Morgan attends to “moments of resistance to a whole: remembered moments that connect” (p. 172), creating new sustainable possibilities of collaboration with others in the time of Aion whilst evading the binary logic of self and excluded-other. I understand the moments of resistance and connection as rhizomatic nodes figuring a nomadic subject, forming the politics of locations with nomadic ethics to create smooth space and molecular becomings, warding against the paralysis of involuntarism to create new forms of thinking collaboratively.

Reflecting as I write of possibilities of collaboration, I become weary contemplating the continued pursuit of normative relationships with my family, recognising the unsustainability of being either present together or absent apart. Nomadic ethics challenges normative discourses of absence, leaving the self vulnerable to paralysis, immobility and sameness of thought, allowing me to resist the neoliberal normative expectation that the pacification of lack and acquisition of a desired relationship will provide comfort. Writing nomadic narratives of the PGT process, following Deleuze (1985), I have tended to shy away from specificity to “hijack speech...to create vacuoles of non communication, circuit breakers” (p. 175), precipitating events that elude control.

Untangling these lines further, exceeding past the limits of a thesis, I am imaging nomadic thought providing openings for departures toward smooth space, where a nomadic subject listens to a quietness I experience with my family, creating possibilities of *breaking a stasis* imposed by hesitation and sameness of thought. To create new ethical encounters with my family is to invent new modes of thinking relationships, formed with the forces and flows created together, where I embody multiplicities of relationships as I find my way towards other new embodied becomings. The dispersal of a unitary self brings forth a figure of thought cohering with multiplicities of intensive concepts of affective difference, which Boundas (2006) affirms need only be “adequate to what ought to be thought and sensed” (p. 11). With nomadic thought, I imagine changing limits of tolerability I experience with my family becoming a soil of difference, a resonating source and location of knowledge. The possibilities of affective flow form differences, affirming new spatial and temporal coordinates of cartographic figurations capable of enduring past these limits with other becomings. Experiencing joy with the possibilities of writing ethical encounters with others, I find comfort with the incessant bustle of keeping all things open, creating possibilities of unimaginable future becomings. In this new middle, I continue asking how one can become worthy of the present, and begin again. Listening and writing, I still do not even know of what a body is capable.

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