



Constantly Becoming With

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This video article is composed of footage drawn out of Sheehan's Educational Doctoral Thesis which included four Video-Wonderings that were presented as an Analysis chapter interwoven with written text. The thesis examined the use of Intuitive Movement as a tool for eliciting information about Professional Identities with those working in the helping professions. This article re-reads the Video-Wonderings to think further into the method of using video to intra-act with theory, research activity and researcher self as a mode of 'becoming with' information. This piece falls within an Educational Research paradigm building on/with the work of Posthuman arts based feminist new materialists that have used ideas around embodiment as transdisciplinary, diffractive, pedagogic, social research methods.

Keywords: intuitive movement; dance; movement; posthuman; feminist new materialism; embodiment; identities; diffractive analysis; affect; transdisciplinary; education; pedagogy; situatedness; arts-based methodology



VIDEO ARTICLE

Available to view here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.9247>.

Available for download here: <https://doi.org/10.16995/jer.9247.mp4>.

STILLS FROM THE VIDEO ARTICLE



VIDEO ARTICLE TRANSCRIPT

[Note: This is a transcript of a video article. Onscreen text appears left justified, while spoken words are indented. Individual elements from the transcript, such as metadata and reference lists, may appear more than once in the document, in order to be properly read and accessed by automated systems. The transcript can be used as a placeholder or reference when it is not possible to embed the actual video, which can be found by following the DOI.]

[0:10]

Title: Constantly Becoming With

Author: Dr. Kieran Sheehan

please pause the video if you need more time to read the following quotations, tables and abstracts

What is wondering?

Wondering the world directly, in movement, is to participate in an enfolding that challenges the centrality of the I. It is not 'I' as self-enclosed subject who is creating movement, but movement itself that is in the process of recalibrating an 'I' that will eventually emerge, unmoored. Not 'I am wondering' but 'Where does this movement wonder me?' A body is never in advance of its moving.

Erin Manning, 2014:167

Abstract:

This video article is composed of footage drawn out of Sheehan's (2022) Educational Doctoral Thesis which included four Video-Wonderings that were presented as an Analysis chapter interwoven with written text. The thesis examined the use of Intuitive Movement as a tool for eliciting information about Professional Identities with those working in the helping professions.

"A helping profession is defined as a professional interaction between a helping expert and a client, initiated to nurture the growth of, or address the problems of a person's physical, psychological, intellectual or emotional constitution, including medicine, nursing, psychotherapy, psychological counselling, social work, education

or coaching” (Graf, Sator, Spanz, 2014: 1). The term ‘helping profession’ is commonly used to define the exact professional sectors the researcher worked with including this recent study into compassion fatigue by Ondrejková and Halamová (2021).

This article re-reads the Video-Wonderings to think further into the method of using video to intra-act with theory, research activity and researcher self as a mode of ‘becoming with’ information. This piece falls within an Educational Research paradigm building on/with the work of Posthuman arts based feminist new materialists that have used ideas around embodiment as transdisciplinary, diffractive, pedagogic, social research methods (Burnard, 2022: Borovica, 2020: Fullagar, 2020: Fullagar, Hickey-Moody et al. 2021).

The researcher draws on/re-reads their background as a movement artist to think with performance as a situated pedagogic approach. Additionally this educational research is influenced by Elizabeth Mackinlay’s (2019, 2022) feminist critical auto-ethnographic approach to research, scholarship and theorising.

The voice over audio captures a researcher self that intra-acts with layered video, diffracted through concepts of ‘constantly becoming with’ drawn out of posthuman feminist new materialist theory, this is the basis of the structure of a video-wondering. Fragments of written Wonderings (drawn from doctoral thesis and invented) are also positioned over the video to re-see the visual material as speculative fabulation &/OR commodification of Post-qualitative Research. Onscreen text appears in a variety of rhythms, some requiring pausing to read, while others linger, aimed at interrupting the traditional rhythm of being with video-essay.

[0:38]

[Kieran Sheehan:]

My main research question was: ‘How can professional identity be co-constituted when I perform movement intuiting verbal accounts of workplaces?’

Within my doctoral fieldwork I engaged in one-to-one sessions where the participants told me about how they were experiencing their workplace relationships, both human and more than human, and I responded through intuitive movement, noticing the physical sensations, images, memories, ideas, and processes I experienced during the movement and reported this back to them. They then chose whether to respond further verbally and whether I moved again.

My participant sample all worked in caring professions at a senior level, which meant that they were used to reflecting on their workplace practises and

professional identities as part of their working life. They worked in the fields of psychiatry, police, social work, priesthood and academia. Therefore they were all required to engage in professional reflective management supervision. Part of my interest in selecting the sample was based on the hypothesis that due to the pastoral nature of their work, the use of intuitive movement as a mode of thinking about their workplaces would offer a stimulating prospect.

I was also interested in exploring how adults who are unfamiliar with using intuitive movement to interrogate ideas would respond to this experience of co-constituting ways of knowing.

All participants involved in the research signed consent forms which were approved at University level ethical clearance for my doctoral study. The field work took place in England between September 2019 and February 2020. 17 one-to-one sessions were conducted in total

[02:05]

[Image: flowchart]

The following figure represents the structure of my methodological approach using two parallel flow charts. To demonstrate the overlapping of theoretical and practical experiences of the inquiry. I refer to the researcher's body. This is not an attempt to make the process generalizable. It is instead, to support the readers comprehension of how the methodological approach integrates intuitive movement within every element of the inquiry. The circles aimed to outline the intra-action of my body with human and more than human actants when moving intuitively within fieldwork and researching phases.

Central to the video essay is the idea of unfolding the researcher's unique approach to diffraction, centred around their performance of intuitive movement as a converging force across the terrain of the video, with poetic analytical text, with posthuman theory and with spoken/written/voiced atmospheres.

The video article extends Sheehan's (2022) thesis in the way it plays with the dissonance between imagination, body, cognition and physical sensation becoming a kind of carnal empiricism (Braidotti, 2022:115) that tracks intra-action with the research activities which centred on the main question:

How can the enactment of intuitive movement co-construct professional identities with those working in the Helping Professions?

[03:03]

Content Warning:

News Report of LGBTQIA+ hate crime in Poland with sound of flare shots for next twenty seconds.

[Newscaster:]

Poland has been dubbed the worst place to live in the European Union, if you are LGBTQ+.

Kieran Sheehan, Constantly Becoming With.

(a video-wondering)

[Kieran Sheehan:]

The ethical engagement in the subject of where I know from is vital to the development of ethical practise, which concerns where I know I from. There is a care that I am attempting to take by repeatedly drawing the reader back to this consideration of how the knowing is being presented and what human and more than human matters intra-act with the process of knowing. The way in which I think about data in this care full way is relevant to my inquiry as it becomes much more relational, intra-active and entangled in itself and the apparatus that are being used.

I identify as a gay male, but I am not from Poland. I see these ideas of self-relating to methods of speculating, poeticising, creating, theorising, diffractively through one another to notice the moments that reveal often affective insights about our entangled selves. I push this definition further to consider that self is entanglement and therefore Intuitive Movement, in the context of my research, is a pedagogy for revealing the entanglement of professional identities.

Researcher Transcript:

The following word is spoken by the researcher after he has performed Intuitive Movement for the participant based on their workplace report... issue... narrative... reflection...

anything?

This selection of video shows
the researcher in the moments
in between his performances
for all of the participants.

The audio that is read could be a Speculative Fabulation (Haraway, 2013), could be Posthuman auto-ethnography, about the ethics of this research, about worlding in this way, in this way, now. We will re-turn to it.

[05:53]

[Kieran Sheehan:]

I'm staring at Final Cut Pro and trying to paste a hacked iPhone video of an octopus into the storyline. Laying over footage of me doing some fieldwork. I've clipped together all the beginnings and the endings and folded them over each other. I'm wondering about whether I need to explain the octopus? I think I do. I'm half reading an article on post human autoethnography by Warfield, 2019. I stare at the octopus and wonder if that's too tenuous a link to Haraway's reference to tentacular thinking. If I am in the water with an octopus, to be honest, I am scared. I don't know it and it isn't part of my way of being. But the octopus has found its way into this video. I seem to become the octopus. It's, it's not me, it's the movement.

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[07:24]

it is not the subject, not the pre-formed body doing the moving, but the relational field itself that moves. The movement moving is activating an environ-mentality that resonates with everything in its path.

Erin Manning, 2014: 172

the body reads information and in that process of reading sees how it is made by the phenomena it traces. This is vital to the way in which perception is built as it moves away from a humanist, binary subjectivity.

Kieran Sheehan, 2022: 29

[Kieran Sheehan:]

We would sit and they would share reports, recantations, memories, analyses of their working relationships, situations, experiences. I would then intuitively, speculatively move my body, shutting my eyes and being with the experiences of physical sensations, emotions, figurative images, and heard voices.

[08:15]

Inhale and so what? We hear Audio and see video now that is perhaps the end of the methodology chapter, the beginning of a conclusion, speculating about becoming with knowing.

Did you miss the theory or the movement or the bubbles of thought?

[Sheehan dances in a small frame with bubbles, surrounded by a larger black frame]

Blackman states the concept of hosting is derived from Derrida and Barad and refers to ethically motivated and entangled position of the researcher who is committed to following those traces. I get that. Deferrals. Yeah. Absences. Yeah. Gaps, I don't know. And their movements. Yes. Within a particular corpus of data. OK. And to remove and keep alive what becomes submerged or hidden by particular regimes of visibility and remembering in affective methodologies. Can I diffract my room? Can I diffract thinking about diffracting through my body?

I keep looking and looking and I read and I read. What is diffracting in my body? What if I just diffract this room? I look a gain a nd I r ead a nd I m ove a nd the differences of the materiality, resonate. Why is there an albatross hanging round here?

[Image: drawing of a bird]

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reflective practice...places the...researcher
as the entity that is reflecting, whereas
diffractive analysis sees the researcher
as part of the information being assembled.

Sheehan, 2022: 43

'diffraction' as an encouragement to write outside
of and beyond humanist constructions of the self,
the research is active in beginning to disrupt and
challenge the colonizing phenomenological
tendencies of reflective and reflexive practices
that have dominated academic and professional
writing practices for a considerable time.

Gale, 2016: 249

[10:10]

image

sensation

exterior movement

emotion

affective drive

memory

images of natural spaces

images of work places

of tables and chairs

of people's hair cuts

of people's glasses

imagination haunts the participant's site of work

diffracting new generative meanings

[Kieran Sheehan:]

I would then finish moving and report these experiences back to them without interpretation, listing the materiality of the imaginative landscape, my fleshy responses and my affective experience. They would then respond. Trying to find meaning and the correlation of this sensuous, imaginative, affective experience of my report. And their witnessing of the performed movement.

I move the participant's internal landscape

I speak the transcript with my memory of the participant's voice

I mediate the participant

I diffract the participant

We diffract the participant

We become

Constantly

[10:51]

Priest Transcript Session 5

Yes, yes. It's very beautiful. I got the sense of oppression and heaviness there. I think the fact that you were very low down was important. I don't know. Because I had been talking about a burial of ashes and you were kind of close to the ground

and that sort of resonated with me that you were kind of close to the ground and there was a bit where you kind of kicked your leg and that made me think about the whole focus on that bashing, kicking thing that happened. There was a sense of quite a sort of suppressed anger in it, almost for me.

Okay.

And I suppose a lot of sadness as well. A lot of sadness in there, sort of grief and um oh what can I say? Sort of um conflicting loyalties or something I don't know a sort of sense of... although the movements were graceful there was a tension in them, there was a sort of tension in them there that made me think a little bit about when I do ceremony like that, I do it as gracefully as I possibly can and there's, you know, there was a tension and I kind of picked up a sort of paradox there, that although the movements were graceful and there was a tension in them, and a heaviness to them as well.

Okay yeah, I've got to be honest. As soon as you start talking, I had a really strong sensation here.

[music starts to play]

Indicates his own left neck and side of face and jaw. And here. And it was really... so I don't know if that resonates?

Yes, I saw you doing that, but that to me, sort of, I don't know that seemed to me to be about this sort of downward... indicates with hand... That the body is going down?

Oh yeah, maybe.

Like going to the ground sort of thing.

[13:30]

I understand this process to be what Barad coined as an intra-action.

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the idea of being a 'researcher that moves' with the matters that I am becoming with: affect, image, memory, sensation, place, space, theory, policy etc. Rather than considering the data I analyse as a subject I see, it becomes something that is [itself] making knowledge through me.

Sheehan, 2022: 46

I understand this process to be what Barad coined as an intra-action.

intra-action.

intra-action.

filming through my iphone, wall, shadow, skin, touch, hands i/they have held, plant, sloping roof, touch

intra-action.

intra-action.

intra-action.

I understand this process to be what Barad coined as an intra-action.

I understand this process to be what Barad coined as an intra-action.

body shape, affective flow, situating intuition, in theme, in space, your breath, your sensation, with my voice, your image, our our our, straight line ness

I understand this process to be what Barad coined as an intra-action.

intra-action.

intra-action.

intra-action.

thinking from my room

rooming from my thinking

how am I in this machine

and not that machine?

Wondering into the centre of my research me-search we-search and I move in the space i've been stuck in. dwelling (Polanyi).

DOCTOR (?)

[bar chart with text:] Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are incarcerated at three times the rate of straight people

Curtains Closed

Zoom Camera Off

iPhone on tripod balanced on bed

iPhone seeing seeing iPhone

[16:11]

Wondering into the centre of my research me-search we-search and I move in the space i've been stuck in

[Kieran Sheehan]

Wondering into the centre of my research me-search we-search and I move in the space I've been stuck in.

The blood and shit (Mackinlay) of my Gay Body (world) intuiting this transgressive data (St. Pierre).

Speedy stares and shimmers. Gale swims and shimmers. They shimmer, haunting each other. Taking responsibility for the agentic assemblages they cut out of their me-search. Posthumanly.

And my throat becomes your throat.

My room is our room. That we think about texts to write move.

This is my job now.

this is my job now

My professional identity.

I should edit this.

I remember the time this body got beaten, got eaten, got one. A micro-fascist power of my affective cuts, like the agential cuts, human centering again, the machine again. We enter into it again.

sticky emotions, affect as a force, situated, intra-active, generative

We gayed. We broken doctors of new builds and mortgages, unfolding an ethico cut cut cut. Shout cut for the camera.

A rif of tech – print – academic algorithyms typed into summon – i eat the books to re-churn...to dance them into diffractive machines like the other people did, close, original, a contribution, but not outside of the rigour, click, breathe.

But of this worlding, I see the table Ahmed set out now, I didn't the first time I read it, I thought, I can sit at any fucking table I want.

Becoming. Thank you-we-us. It's getting hot outside. Who's – what – how's outside that door that window. Did they see? Doors and walls and folding, seeing,

and vibrating with the worried well, traumatised micro-aggressors, in my i-phone no Isis state- policy power – i Mac. My movement is made of that stuff.

Do something. Becoming.

DO SOMETHING

Doctor. Becoming all at once.

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[18:43]

[Kieran Sheehan:]

My participant has walked home but there is someone else who is curious, I haven't ever worked with them before.

Do you want me to speak first or do you want to?

They are a builder, they work on a construction site. They have heard about my tendrils and the power I have to pull up images and memories through the earth with my body.

could you think of anything?

I am so pleased to see them, but I'm also scared. Octopi Intuitive Movement artists don't often mix with construction workers, and I'm worried there won't be any academic studies to back up this field work method.

The construction worker felt so desperate he would try anything; it really was the end of the world for him to come and find an Intuitive Movement Octopus. He had come from Mexico to find me in the United Kingdom.

We didn't know how to begin. I couldn't get out of the water, and he couldn't breathe underneath. We could both speak Spanish, but he couldn't make out my bubbles from beneath the surface. The Mexican man was used to a dusty hot environment that was nothing like this man-made damp British landscaped garden. But he was able to think about the construction site and feel the exhausting heat and stone and noise so differently here through my movement. He leaned closer to dip his head into the pond to try and listen to the images and sensation, the feelings, the memories and see the shapes I was making with my fluctuating tentacles.

He saw a tentacle reach through to the government Office for National Statistics, and pull 86 death certificates from 2019, all construction workers. He peered into the water and although he couldn't breathe, he saw my tentacles squirting colours

and words, people and characters, imaginary figures, floating across the space. He pulled his head violently out of the water and gasped for air.

Another participant wanted to help Jesus to swim with me. And see the magical images and movements I could perform. They all put me into a glass box with wonderfully clear water so that everyone could see my movements and images. It looked like a computer screen, this computer screen. The people that knew how the glass box was made waited quietly, respectfully, staring hidden in the background

could you think of anything?

as the audience watched me perform. Amazed at the non-sensical spraying of colour, images, memories, and poetry that poured out of my entirely Octopus body now, they clapped. They had given me permission to reach out my tendrils and connect them to one, two, three different things at a time, wrapping them around each other. I had hung onto Jesus, holding him above the construction site in Mexico City, the company he worked for had been commissioned to build a university. Jesus wasn't heterosexual and struggled with the homophobia on his site, he wanted to get promoted to a linesman but felt like his lateness a few years ago was jeopardising this.

anything?

He lived in a small Christian compound in Mexico City and the feeling of isolation was increased by his desire to talk to someone about how he felt at work.

Jesus had heard of this Octopus but didn't know what to do, he liked the sound of it, but hadn't done the Octopus communication course that was held at the United Kingdom University.

It taught you polite standing and sitting, silent watching, acceptance, tolerance, equity for different categories of "people, places and things" (Macmillan, 2017), often people drank alcohol after attending.

I held Jesus high with my tentacle as he helped me to understand how the machinic assemblage that was making me Octopus was actually stopping me from being able to make sense, to just touch these people and be touched by them in order to understand more

would you like to talk first, or do you want me to talk?

and more and more. I left the tank and slowly crawled, or tried to, using my suckers to drag-squelch-drag myself toward the ocean where I could just get lost. The glass cage remained full of the ink and colour and my excrement. The audience saw

this as a diffraction of the research I had been engaged in and lauded it, clapping endlessly, taking photographs, and commissioning visual art exhibitions. The man from Google smiled, wickedly, thinking of an expensive new ‘thing’ to fuck, a crane, or a golden piece of scaffolding.

Jesus couldn’t breathe, he was being squeezed so tight by my tentacles now, I wanted to soften my grip on him, but I was also aware that I didn’t know why I was squeezing him. I didn’t want him to die but if I wasn’t with him, wouldn’t he die anyway? Why did I want him to live? So that he could perform better at the construction site and get his promotion?

I did not want that.

Jesus was making me, in the squeezing. Other limbs ripped off, one caught in the grey filing cabinet at the Office for National Statistics as the lady with bobbed hair slammed it shut. The other was cut free by the applauding crowd and placed in the glass box as a museum exhibit to be taken to the Burning Man Festival (academic section). Another was in the jaws of a goldfish, that just wanted to eat my tentacle. I began to ingest Jesus through my Phallic breathing apparatus as I rolled into the sea, armless. There was an anthropocentric intimacy in our intra-action, we had merged into participant as researcher, environment as cultural practice, rolling and rolling in Bright Red Mexican Gay Boy-Species Blood.

We sank slowly downward toward the floor of the sea.

[25:00]

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