# EXPANDING THE EMPIRICAL REPERTOIRE OF NON-REPRESENTATIONAL THEORY THROUGH A METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON CREATING A DOCUMENTARY FILM

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**Abstract.** Since the ‘crisis of representation’, social and cultural geographers have been trying to configure ways of uncovering the non-representational geographies that struggle to materialize within representational thinking. Following on from this contemporary body of work that utilises non-representational theory to explore the materiality of performative and affective encounters, this paper marks a turn to methodological considerations in order to think identity in a different way. By counterintuitively using the representational technology of the camera to do so, this paper not only pushes the empirical side of non-representational theory, but also questions the assumption that cameras are solely technologies of representation by exploring the affective resonances that films produce. In keeping with the emancipatory potential of non-representational methodologies, the practice of making a documentary film was imbued with a sense of the creative, allowing me to be swept through the encounter and taken down unpredictable lines of thought in response to different affective intensities. Emergent from the research event was the idea of hope as an ambivalent affect tied to fear and doubt that I then explored with the cinematic techniques that I had used to animate the film. What I found is that the generative potential for hopeful affects to imagine other ways of being with the world may be greatest when this inconstancy is cherished rather than blindly ignored.

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# Introduction

In the summer of 2017, whilst studying a short architecture course in Puebla, Mexico, our class were invited to design and paint a mural in a small nearby town called Chachapa. As we sat around a table to discuss design idea, it occurred to me that dangling around my neck was the opportunity to capture this unique moment, so I took hold of my Nikon D3300 and proceeded to film the process from start to finish. After editing the footage and uploading the video to YouTube, a local news outlet in Chachapa shared the film on its Facebook page reaching thousands of people, many of whom have left comments speculating about the possibility of other murals being painted across their town. This experience gave me an insight into the idea that technologies of representation do not just have to be technologies of capture; they can also be technologies of speculation, creation, anticipation and hope. As such, given my deep admiration for the art of drag, for my dissertation, I set out to combine these two interests by exploring the ways in which film and drag disrupt the "categorical politics of identity and textual meaning" (Lorimer 2005: 83).

In an alternative reading through film and non-representational theory, I want to turn to methodological considerations in order to think about identity in a different way. This is in part following on from the contemporary body of work in cultural geography that utilises non-representational theory, but also to explore how visual culture is growing in a vibrant body of contemporary scholarship. The approach to the film is therefore not on pre-defined codes of meaning, but an exploration of how affect and sensation emerge throughout the filmmaking process, and how this can conger immanent realisations of a possible aesthetic category of existence that rethinks the relationship between difference and identity beyond representational categories (Deleuze 2004[1968]).

The film, titled *Hope is a Journey* (2019), explores the life of Ty Jeffries, a classically composed singer-songwriter who describes himself as an "introverted extrovert" (Jeffries 2019, interview). Ty first took to the stage in 2010 as 'Miss Hope Springs' who has played the dual role of being a mask that Ty can hide behind, whilst also being a beacon of hope; a springboard from which he has gradually gained the confidence to come out on stage as himself. The film captures this profoundly climactic moment in Ty's life that is understandably accompanied by emotive accounts of his hopes and fears, dreams and doubts, and recollections of his darkest moments. The film asks us to question the notion of hope and the blind optimism that usually underpins it; that makes it easier to respond to everyday struggles by "eliminat[ing] chance and contingency", thereby tending to see things "work out well … for no good reason

whatsoever" (Eagleton 2015: 12). Rather, by viewing hope as an "unsteady joy" that is born out of tragedy and fear, the film begins to uncover the relations between hope, fear, joy, sadness and doubt, that together put a critical interjection into the ways in which this dissertation interrogates notions of difference and identity (Spinoza 2001[1677]: 113). In this way, this dissertation is both a methodological reflection and a conceptual one that begins to disrupt the representational identity politics that I set out to transcend.

The literature review begins with a critique of representation as to justify a turn to non-representational theory. After delving into the intricacies of non-representational theory, the review leads into an account of geography's disciplinary history with filmmaking, before tying these ideas together by outlining the non-representational approaches to filmmaking that have been employed in this dissertation. The methodology marks a turn to more experimental research practices that enabled me to be more attentive to the non-representational aspects of the research event. Furthermore, to hold on to the intensity of the event, rather than simply re-tell the story portrayed in the film, the discussion retains an air of experimentation by riffing on the idea of hope that comes not only from Ty's drag persona, but also from the intermingling of hopefulness and despair that pervades the film.

To clarify, the main aim of this dissertation is to develop how non-representational theory can work in geography, albeit in a rather unconventional way through the representational technology of the camera, as to extend and expand the theory's empirical repertoire.

# Literature Review

## The Crisis of Representation

> "Understanding, as distinguished from having correct information and scientific knowledge … is an unending activity by which, in constant change and variation, we come to terms with and reconcile ourselves to reality, that is, try to be at home in the world."
>
> Hannah Arendt (2005: 307-308)

As philosophers, as filmmakers and as social scientists, we are trying to generate something that is shared. For Arendt (2005), the home, and as I will argue, the ethnographic documentary film, are things to be shared, to be populated and to be lived *in*, as opposed to things that can be represented unequivocally and lived *out*. Arguably, Arendt's view of modernity anticipated the "crisis of representation" that would rattle not just her field of political anthropology, but

all of the social sciences, inciting social theorists to question the arbitrary relationship between knowledge and understanding and embolden their attempts at trying to 'be at home in the world' (Marcus and Fischer 1999: 15).

From the 1970s, in an attempt to restructure the epistemological concern with representation within geography, two distinct moments manifested: the first critiquing representation, and the second conjuring the existence of what Nigel Thrift (2007) would come to term 'non-representational geographies' (Söderström 2005). Inspired by Judith Butler's (2007[1990]; 1993) theories on gender performativity, the first moment sought to explore the "imaginative and material geographies of cultural performativity and embodiment" (Nash 2000: 654). Butler's interpretation of performativity as a discourse-based act whereby the subject subverts the signifiers imposed onto them by a pre-existing power through the performance of alternative identities, reconceptualised understandings of the origins and structures of meaning taken as scientific fact, positioning them instead as a "representational effect (not cause) of repetitive acts" (Rose 2002: 392). Resultantly, cultural geographers such as Bell et al. (1994) began to trouble gender and reimagine sexualised spaces, such as those of the 'gay skinhead' and 'lipstick lesbian', as performative constructions where embodiment becomes a way of resisting the policing of bodies. However, Thrift and Dewsbury (2000) argue that Butler's account limits the scope of geographical inquiry into the performative aspects of space by neglecting the non-representational excesses of bodily practices; by failing to acknowledge that the 'event' of performativity is "*excessive*, … affective rather than purely effective" (Dewsbury 2000: 474-475).

The second moment thus marks an attempt to revivify the 'dead geographies' of representation by problematizing methodological conceptualisations of the subject as the object of geographical research (Massumi 2002). Taking the event of the football match as a useful example, when transposed onto the television screen, Massumi (2002) explains how the screen starts to exist as a catalytic 'part-subject' by potentialising the domestic event-space of the household, arraying various bodies and objects around itself. In this instance, "media transmission is the becoming *of the event*", in that the ability of audiovisual technologies to actualise the virtual excesses of the event is itself constitutive of the event's materializations (Massumi 2002: 81). To understand how this "expressive 'virtual' dimension" operates, Thrift (2007: 115) proposes a new approach for studying the everyday, that is, 'non-representational theory'.

## Non-Representational Theory

Non-representational theory draws on a range of intellectual currents including the immanent philosophies of Deleuze and Guattari (2003[1987]), the affective tonality of Massumi's (2002) work and Connolly's (2002a) attunement to the politics of the visceral register to name just a few. Moving beyond the narrow confines of the phenomenological subject that limits perception to the realm of conscious sense-making, non-representational theory stands to challenge the ontological and epistemological prioritisation of cognition by thinking representation in a different register (Thrift 2007). Compared to more traditional social scientific research practices that seek exhaustive description through representation, non-representational theory advocates a more contemplative approach that attends to the different ways in which affective life is mediated (Anderson and Harrison 2010). Such an ethos works to generate new techniques that respond to ethical and political questions about who we are as subjects, in terms of how we identify, by outlining a pure difference that is immanent to the becoming of the present (Deleuze 2004[1968]).

However, certain geographers such as Thien (2005: 452) are firmly oriented against non-representational theory on the grounds that it is "masculinist, technocratic and distancing", in the sense that a focus on the affectual devalues and feminizes emotion by opposing it to an impersonal, masculinist conceptualisation of reason. Furthermore, Toila-Kelly (2006) argues that Thrift's approach to affect is facialising in the sense that it ignores sociological difference by assuming a universal potential for identity formation that occludes the inequalities that arise from uneven power relations. The fieldwork undertaken in this dissertation marks a response to such critiques by showing that non-representational theory is indebted to questions of singularity and difference that are immanent, making it arguably more about difference than those analyses that claim to represent difference unequivocally (Anderson and Harrison 2010).

### *Affect*

Central to the style of engagement that non-representational theory advocates for is an understanding of affects as 'becomings' that operate independently from feeling and emotion (Deleuze and Guattari 1994). Before feeling and emotion, there exists sensations as blocs of 'affects' and 'percepts', inducing imperceptible feelings that impact on how you are feeling in a particular moment. For Thrift (2007), conceiving of affect in this way does not aim to denigrate feeling and emotion, but rather stands to foreground the ways in which our pre-cognitive, instinctive motivations are vulnerable to manipulation by political formations that create and mobilise affect. Thus, Thrift (2007: 192) contends that a "microbiopolitics which

understands the kind of biological-cum-cultural gymnastics" that operates largely in the unconscious half-second delay between reception and conscious thinking is required if we are to grasp how power operates within such infrasensible registers.

Here, Thrift is drawing on the work of Connolly (2002a: 67), who outlines how the interrelations between visual media, philosophy and neuroscience in everyday culture are enabling people "to explore the realm between thinking and affect". To adopt a Spinozist tonality, film, documentary and other forms of visual media have the potential to increase the 'affective capacities' of everyday life by outlining the existence of a 'neuropolitics' that can be harnessed to work with such affects (Connolly 2002a). Furthermore, whilst not disregarding the profound influence that the content of filmic material produced by visual technologies has had on social and cultural life, a non-representational approach critically turns attention towards the materiality of the visual and the ways in which the cinematic image is embedded with ethical and political regimes that operate on a pre-conscious level (Connolly 2002a).

### *How do Non-Representational Affects Operate?*

Thrift employs Massumi's (2002: 24) likening of affects to 'intensities' that entangle "semantic wires", thereby infinitising the virtual possibilities that could be actualised in the becoming of an event-space. For Massumi, (2002) intensities are akin to feelings, emotions and other personalisations of affect, but are in *excess*, and so operate above or below semiotic and semantic systems. These intensities represent a difference in the manner of what is felt, meaning that the multiple identities existent in such virtual transformations, whether activated or not, cause the potential for something else to happen, making each event a singularity (Massumi 2002). It is through this understanding that we can begin to understand what Deleuze and Guattari mean by affects and percepts as the force relations that, with regards to the practice of making a documentary film, lie in between what is transforming the filmmaker and the event-space in which they are situated.

Importantly, this stands to offer geography a different set of methodological practices for considering matters of ethical responsibility by conceiving the world "less as a series of sites from which to extract representational meaning" and more as an arrangement of events that have the potential to call "new spaces of thinking and moving into being" (McCormack 2003: 489;502). Notably, McCormack (2003) explored how Dance Movement Therapy allows its participants to experiment with different ways of moving that attend to the possibility of other, possibly more therapeutic emotions and feelings being taken up and brought into being. This foregrounding of affective and embodied knowledges for the purpose of cultivating non-

representational styles of fieldwork has also been explored through the use of filmic images as a way of interrogating the politics of the imagined spaces that cameras open up (Latham and McCormack 2009). This leads into the next part of the literature review that outlines a brief history of geography's engagement with film.

## Geography and Filmmaking

The film camera was first invented by the Lumière brothers in 1895 and just three years later taken on the Torres Straits exhibition by anthropologist Alfred C. Haddon, marking the start of a shared trajectory between anthropology and film (MacFarlane 2010). Similarly, geography has always had an intimate relationship with visual culture, marked by practices of mapping, spatial modelling and other visualisation aids that demonstrate the inherently visual nature through which geographical knowledge is produced (Driver 2003). It is therefore surprising that geography does not have a sub-discipline comparable to that of anthropological filmmaking that engages visual methods in such a practical way. Jacobs (2013: 718) explains that this is likely due to the manner with which "geography approaches the 'visual' as constitutive of the discipline as a whole". As such, seminal texts in visual literacy such as John Berger's (2008[1972]) *Ways of Seeing* have been hugely influential in critiquing the geographical perspective in terms of how it has worked to impose a subjectifying relationship of power onto landscapes that is often oppressive and reductive (Rose 1993).

Through critiques that position landscapes as social constructions that rely on particular ways of seeing, geographers have become critically aware of the role that vision and perception plays in the construction of geographical knowledge (Lukinbeal 2005). However, as a consequence, geography's engagement with film has traditionally been limited to conceiving moving-images as 'cinematic landscapes' that merely stand to encode a particular representation, without much concern for the practices of filming that create these representations, or for the non-representational aspects of film (Lukinbeal 2005; Crang 2010). Crang's (2010) overview of human geography's engagement with visual methods and methodologies propounds this latter idea, seemingly revealing a glaring omission of an account of affective analysis in human geographical inquiries into the visual.

However, this is not to say that an affective analysis is markedly distinct from a semiotic analysis. On the contrary, Lorimer (2010: 245) makes it clear that to understand how particular affects are actualised, one must engage with "existing approaches that explore images as representations", such as Rose's (2001) critical methodological toolkit that sets out three 'sites' at which a semiotic analysis can be applied: namely, the external narrative behind the image's

production, the image's formal composition and lastly, the processes of audiencing (Rose 2001). Whilst not attempting to present social scientists with an exhaustive set of tools for analysing visual materials, it is evident that what existing semiotic and linguistic structures can be related to the researcher's response takes clear precedence over a more embodied engagement that attends to the non-representational aspects of the source (Carter and McCormack 2006). Though it is necessary to engage with a semiotic analysis, it is for this reason that Lorimer (2010: 245) urges the researcher to resist the "academic's instinct to detach, and [be] swept through the emotional landscape on offer". By imploring the researcher to think *with* the moving image, Latham and McCormack (2009: 260) contend that a non-representational approach encourages the researcher to engage the aesthetic not as "some representational veneer" but rather as part of the generative becoming of that which has been filmed.

### *The Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm as an Object of Experimentation*

Importantly, Latham and McCormack (2009) make reference to Guattari's (1995: 91) ecosophical project which is an embodiment of non-representational thinking, stimulating the "development of unprecedented formations of subjectivity" within the 'ethico-aesthetic' paradigm. As a category of experience that separates itself from the dualistic subject-object relation of the scientific paradigm that ties subjectivity and knowledge to the realm of representation, Guattari's (1995) ethico-aesthetic response provokes immanent deterritorializations away from the enslaving semiotic productions of existing social systems. It does so by diagramming a responsive relationship between 'Existential Territories' and 'Incorporeal Universes' or aesthetic frames of reference, such as those relative to film, that represent a "pre-personal part of subjectivity" (Guattari 1995: 9). For Guattari (1995), Existential Territories represent the creation of virtual realities by an affective experience that have yet to be territorialized into the 'real', thereby resisting objectification and harbouring the potential for immanent subjective revolutions.

Gerlach and Jellis (2015) suggest that this pairing can be used to consider how human geographical research has begun to renew itself through a turn to experimentation. Reviewing geography's engagement with video methods, Garrett (2010: 1) explains how more experimental practices of filmmaking are allowing the discipline to "realize the full potential of video as a research methodology". Accordingly, the practices of filming outlined in the methodology embody this turn to experimentation. However, before moving onto the methodology, the last section of the literature review acts to synthesise what has been discussed

so far by outlining a set of non-representational approaches to filmmaking that will be applied in this dissertation.

## Non-Representational Approaches to the Moving-Image

For Marks (2000), the assumption that the documentary image can produce objective representations is underlain by the logic of what Deleuze (2005[1986]) calls the 'movement-image' that maintains a distinction between an actual present and a virtual past. Deleuze (2005[1986]) explains that in pre-war cinema, the movement-image can be seen to image perception, affection and action along a repetitive chain of cause and effect relations that move 'rationally' and 'logically' through space and time, thereby reducing the real to a set of clichéd narratives. By reducing the cinematic image to cliché, Deleuze (2005[1989]: 18) argues that the movement-image indirectly gives representation to time by imaging already established "sensory-motor situations" that force the audience to accede to a banal series of actions and reactions.

### *From the Movement-Image to the Time-Image*

Following Nietzsche's disavowal of the binary logic of truth and falsity, Deleuze (2005[1989]) advocates fiction as a more efficacious mode for fostering subjective becomings than through trying to represent reality objectively. Deleuze (2005[1989]) grounds this claim through identifying that the early 'cinema of reality' unwittingly retained an ideal of truth that flowed from 'cinematographic fiction', that is the myth of objectivity. For Deleuze (2005[1989]), it wasn't until the 'cinéma vérité' of Jean Rouch that documentary filmmakers would begin to acknowledge and respond to the idea that narration no longer has to be truthful, nor does it need to link up with the sensory-motor schema that adheres to the rigid structures of representation. Cinéma vérité is a style of 'direct cinema' that uses prolonged exposure to perform the truth of cinema, rather than unearth a cinema of truth, by showing 'real' characters through their telling or performing of anecdotal fictions (Deleuze 2005[1989]). In this sense, narration becomes "temporal *and* falsifying at exactly the same time", connecting with virtual elements such as dreams and fantasies that present the spectator with immediate 'lines of flight' away from the expected narrative (Deleuze 2005[1989]: 128).

In contrast to the movement-image that makes us aware of the passing of time by imaging three distinct moments (perception, affection and action) that obey the sensory-motor schema, the direct time-image uses the 'powers of the false', which this paper interprets as the power of fiction to confuse and question things taken as scientific fact, such as linear time and binary gender, to admit new narratives of difference and identity into the world (Deleuze 2005[1989]).

Deleuze's understanding of how memory and time operate, not just in cinema, but also in the cinematic unconscious of the human brain, draws heavily on Bergson's (2013[1889]) concept of real time or 'durée reélle'. Durée reélle is distinct from scientific time in the sense that there are no measurable sequential units that pass from one to the next. Rather, time endures, increasing the virtual memory store of the past as each actual present moment flows into the future (Bergson 2013[1889]).

### *Techniques of Falsification*

Rodowick (1997: 15) explains how the 'crystalline regime' of the time-image has made the spectator more sensitive to time, meaning that the 'cut' in modern cinema now works to suspend spectators "in a state of uncertainty". Whereas before intervals were used 'rationally' to present a logical progression of images, the 'irrational cut' of post-war cinema is used as a technique of false continuity, reconciling the idea of continuity with an irrational, non-chronological conception of time (Deleuze 2005[1989]). Connolly (2002b: I) contends that by presenting us with the 'unrepresentability' of what is happening at the virtual level between two incommensurable scenes, the irrational cut works to affect the "visceral register of human sensibility". By inviting retrospection, the repeated use of irrational cuts forces the spectator to become aware "that below the threshold of attention (the virtual level) intensities flow" that are inducing a direct experience of time (Connolly 2002b: III).

Furthermore, taking inspiration from Rouch, Jean-Luc Godard used the edit to present story-tellings as "constantly reaching a before or an after in the characters which constitute the real, at the very point where story-telling is set in motion" (Deleuze 2005[1989]: 149). This worked to constitute a new, direct time-image by bringing the before and the after together and refusing to arouse a sense of being in the present by animating a moment that endures (Rodowick 1997). "Aberrant movement", induced by irrational intervals, the false continuity of visual or sonic images and other falsifying techniques, thus works to give expression to the virtual potentialities that are contained within the present through the powers of the false (Deleuze 2005[1989]: 35). In this way, the time-image surpasses any alternative between the fictional and the real and charts the potential emergence of a new mode for becoming another by innovating the characters' story-tellings from a non-representational vantage (Deleuze 2005[1989]).

### *The Crystal-Image*

Deleuze (2005[1989]) gives various indications as to what can constitute a time-image. The first are purely optical or sonic images (opsigns and sonsigns) that invite the audience to

become listeners and seers with the characters. Recollection-images and dream-images are used to show the relations between otherwise disconnected opsigns and sonsigns (Bogue 2003). However, it is only when opsigns or sonsigns are pictured directly with their own virtual images of the past that a crystal-image is formed, momentarily stopping time from being portrayed in a scientific, factual way (Deleuze 2005[1989]). In this sense, crystal-images, along with their corresponding 'hyalosigns', work to make virtual images indiscernible from actual ones (Deleuze 2005[1989]). For Deleuze (2005[1989]), hyalosigns, which in their most literal sense can take the form of reflective surfaces that image a virtual space existent within the present, disrupt time by breaking down the idea that the past, the present and the future are separate entities. Instead, hyalosigns point towards the existence of a pure difference that is immanent to the crystal-image; to "a bit of time in the pure state" that has the potential to radically transform thought (Deleuze 2005[1989]: 79).

### Some Clarifying Remarks

The research embarked upon for this dissertation set out not only to attend to the non-representational as to perform an affective film analysis, but also as a way of "generating materials" in the research event that could later be manipulated by the approaches outlined in this chapter as to animate a film that holds on to the non-representational excesses of the event (Whatmore 2003: 90). Given the complexity of such an endeavour, the methodology begins by outlining how the filmmaking process was imbued with a sense of the creative, before sketching out a rough template for the discussion that is also experimental in tenor.

## Methodology

The impetus of this section is to argue for and justify the need to turn to more experimental ways of 'doing' video ethnographies. After all, this is a dissertation where two people are putting things at risk: I'm putting at risk conceptual and methodological commitments to thinking about how I can engineer affect in an ethnographic context and through the micropolitics of film, whilst Ty is taking a risk by going on stage for the first time without the mask of Miss Hope Springs in a show titled 'Ty Jeffries Sings Ty Jeffries'. Due to the intensity of the encounter, I was therefore faced with a range of logistical and ethical constraints and considerations that needed to be addressed.

### Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Following a more conventional documentary rubric, I chose to arrange one shoot where I would interview Ty and another where I would see him perform as Miss Hope Springs. As will be

made clear in the third chapter, the second shoot ended up being a performance of Ty as himself and not Miss Hope Springs. To address any ethical concerns, I provided Ty with a consent form that offered him the right of reply to the footage and that set out a clear understanding that he could withdraw his consent at any time. Given that the second shoot took place in a private venue, it was necessary to provide a location release form as well as 'filming in progress' posters so that the audience were made aware that the performance was being filmed. Due to the sensitivity of the film's content, we decided to upload the video as an 'unlisted' YouTube link that can only be accessed by those that read this dissertation. It is at this point in the paper where I would advise the reader to watch the film *Hope is a Journey* (2019).

## Doing a Video Ethnography

In *Doing Visual Ethnography*, Pink (2007: 22) defines ethnography "as an approach to experiencing, interpreting and representing culture and society". With regards to the use of video in ethnographic practice, Vannini (2015a: 232) contends that most ethnographies that choose to incorporate video still retain an underlying scepticism rooted in the idea that the camera is first and foremost a technology of representation that hides and deceives and so should "be treated gingerly". In order to transcend this scepticism by avoiding the 'deadening effect' of representing that which the naked eye can already see, and rather, utilise filmmaking as a way of holding on to those ephemeral moments during an event where "researchers find themselves lost for words in the face of some unexpected possibility" (Whatmore 2003: 98), it was necessary to question how I could imbue the practice of doing video ethnography "with a sense of the creative, the practical, and being with practice-ness that Thrift is seeking" (Latham 2003: 2000).

For Whatmore (2006), going beyond the limits of representation occasions a turn to experimentation that opens methodological practices up to investigations of potentiality and immanent becoming. Non-representational research methodologies have been particularly resolute in embracing experimentation, in relishing the failures of knowledge and embodying the idea that experience doesn't have to be coded in order for it to be appreciated (Vannini 2015b; Dewsbury 2010). Rather, affect-based ethnographies insist on thinking through the bodily affect, on taking the body more seriously "as the locus of sensory appreciation" that comes prior to interpretation (Dewsbury 2010: 327). Imbuing more traditional qualitative methods, such as interviews and ethnographies, with a concern for how affects work *on* and *between* bodies, incites a turn to more creative practices and asks why it is that scholars tend to stick to doing research in specific ways (DeLyser and Rogers 2010).

More specifically in regard to 'videographic' geographies, only recently have geographers begun to valorise the creativity of the editing process in terms of what it stands to offer to non-representational modes of inquiry (Garrett and Hawkins 2015). In particular, Garrett and Hawkins (2015: 156) argue that the highly technical process of sorting through and editing footage arouses a sense of "becoming intimate" with the visual material, encouraging the researcher to be more attentive to the affective potential of what is being produced by embodying its emotive force. However, it is not enough to imbue the audience with an embodied idea of something, which is why the discussion necessarily begins by analysing the ways in which the film is generative of affects.

## The Making of *Hope is a Journey* (2019)

Vannini (2015a: 234) contends that whilst relatively easy-to-use handheld cameras used in conjunction with similarly uncomplicated editing programs such as Adobe Premiere Pro stand to encourage experimentation, there still exists the danger that "clueless optimism and excessive self-confidence" may lead to sloppy productions if not used skilfully. As such, in the summer of 2018, I took part in the 'Filmmaking for Fieldwork Summer School' at Futureworks School of Media in Manchester. On this course, I learnt the fundamentals of ethnographic documentary filmmaking: the grammars of different shot types, how to structure an engaging narrative, how to conduct a 'master interview' that gives the audience a deeper insight into the characters, the practicalities of filming an 'event' and a brief introduction to Adobe Premiere Pro. It is for this reason that the two shoots I had planned for this film mimic a reliance on participant observation and interview that can be seen in most anthropological films.

However, in order to attend to the eventfulness of things and retain an ethics of responsibility for the events that I wanted to film, it was necessary to let go of certain directorial practices so that pre-conceived theories were not being imposed but were rather being put at 'risk' (Thrift 2007; Whatmore 2003). Thus, rather than trying to direct the encounters so that they could be interpreted in terms of how they map *onto* existing understandings of gender and sexuality, Whatmore (2003: 97) urges us to be mindful of Stengers' proposal of a "litmus test for distinguishing between well and badly constructed propositions", where pre-conceived understandings risk being redefined through the materials generated in the encounter being mapped *into* knowledge. Most poignantly, this occurred where the process of filming the interview began to disrupt the representational identity politics that I had set out to abandon.

In the interview, I asked Ty about his connection to Hope as both a drag persona, and as an emotional intensity, and whether his idea of hope is tied to an optimism, an anticipation to

finally get the 'break' that he has been waiting for. Echoing the Spinozist iteration that hope is tied to doubt and fear (Spinoza 2001[1677]), Ty began to reveal a more vulnerable side where he spoke about his lack of self-confidence and the fears that he has for an upcoming show where he would be performing for the first time as himself without the mask of Miss Hope Springs. For Spinoza (2011[1677]: 113), "hope is nothing but unsteady joy, arising from the image of a future or past thing about whose issue we are in doubt". After hope comes fear, which "is an unsteady sorrow, arising from the image of a doubtful thing" (Spinoza 2001[1677]: 113). Here, Spinoza begins to map the relation between affects and how they influence our subjectivities. It follows that both hope and fear are held in common by the question of doubt, that fear is unproductive whilst hope is productive, that the idea of hope imbued in Miss Hope Springs constitutes a hopeful form of subjectivity; a 'becoming hopeful' that whilst traversing performative constructions of gender and sexuality, also "generates differences and divergences in what becomes actual" that exist in *excess* of his performances as a gay man or straight woman (Anderson 2006a: 738). Following the intensity of this first encounter with Ty, it became imperative to film the crescendo where Ty Jeffries would finally sing Ty Jeffries.

## Staging a Discussion

Rather than simply re-tell the story in *Hope is a Journey*, the discussion adopts a more unorthodox approach to the chronology of events as to hold on to this intensity and to persevere with the idea of affective experimentation. Accordingly, the discussion takes a risk with the idea of hope as an 'inconstant joy' and explores this idea with others, namely: filmic techniques of falsification, Deleuze's (2005[1989]) concept of the crystal-image and how hope is figured as an affect in contemporary geographical thought. The first two chapters outline how I went about engineering the film to produce certain affects. However, since affect is a matter of process that does not lend itself to discursive engineering, and rather "arises in the midst of *inbetween-ness*: in the capacities to act and be acted upon" (Seigworth and Gregg 2010: 1), the discussion takes a more meditative approach inspired by *Bento's Sketchbook* (Berger 2011) that dares to roam where inspiration leads.

> "When we are impressed and moved by a story, it engenders something that becomes, or may become, an essential part of us, and this part, whether it be small or extensive, is, as it were, the story's descendant or offspring."
>
> Berger (2011: 84)

In a similar style to the draftsman and social theorist John Berger who folds between meditation, sketch and quote, the discussion begins to write by taking inspiration from journal entries, stills from the film and from the filming process, and quotes relevant to this dissertation, in order to piece together seemingly disparate ideas that tell a different story of hope.

# Discussion

The following chapters mark an attempt to critique and interrogate the notion of hope in a way that resists lapsing into a classic representational story-telling of joy and wonder. Instead, hope is depicted as something that is born in tragedy, that is in Spinoza's term 'an inconstant'. Thus, starting with the film, the title 'Hope is a Journey' does not mean to entail a steady, linear journey to the 'sunlit uplands', a hollow cliché used by Brexiteers such as Andrea Leadsom who were certain that they could "seize the great opportunities for the UK in leaving the EU" (as cited in The Spectator 2016). Rather, hope is an inconstant journeying that maps out an inconstant geography of subjectivity through time. The first two chapters necessarily begin by outlining the ways in which I have tried to animate this inconstancy through the film and through my personal interactions with Ty.

## The Powers of the False: Fostering an Ambivalent Hope

> "How, though, can we engage with … the ground that haunts an imperative to hope, without reproducing the lifeless rhetoric of doom that marks too much critical engagement with the world? One response is to learn from the affective fluctuations of everyday life and foster certain types of hope and hopefulness because of, rather than despite, the tragedy and injustice of suffering each emerges from."
>
> Anderson (2006a: 749)

Beginning with Anderson's (2006a) Spinozist inflection that there is always tragedy surrounding hope that is linked to a rhetoric of fear or doom, this first chapter explores how the film animates this ambivalence through the powers of the false. On the surface, the film seems to be produced at the level of representation, allowing for a clear cognitive engagement with narration-led sequences that introduce the relationship between Ty and his drag persona, Miss Hope Springs, who, in his words, exists as a "suit of armour", enabling him to "feel fearless" when performing as her on stage (Jeffries 2019, interview). This 'truth' is verified by recollection-images of him performing as Miss Hope Springs, allowing the past to become

knowable in the present. However, Deleuze (2005[1989]) contends that by presenting the past as an optical, representational effect of the recollection-image, a false relationship is established between the virtual past and the actual present that guts the memory-image of its eventfulness and its potential to engender a becoming in the present. Furthermore, by presenting the spectator with a series of images whose significations unfurl in direct relation to Ty's narrative, the documentary fails to attend to the ambivalence of hope as an affect, that, whether facilitating a sense of fearlessness, or unwittingly inducing fear by anxiously looking into the future, nevertheless "need[s] always to be tethered to fear" (Gerlach 2017: 338). Since this affective dubiousness was struggling to materialise through truthful narration and logical time, I necessarily turned to the 'powers of the false' as to interject a crisis into the way in which time was being represented linearly.

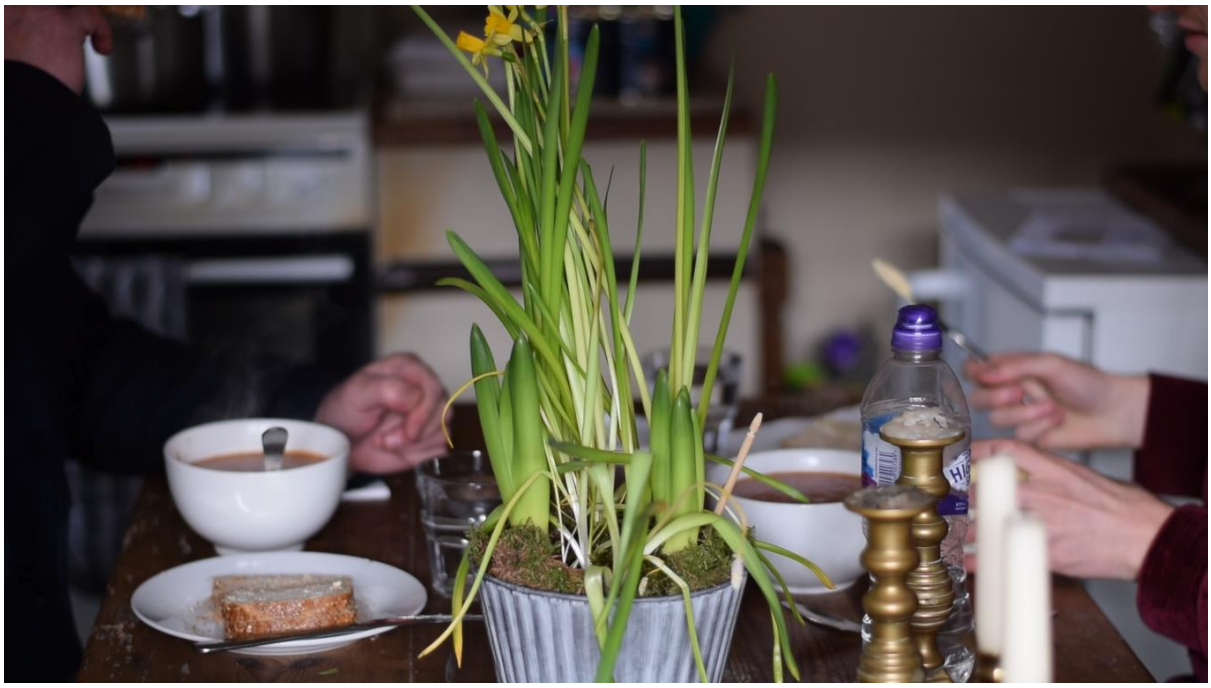

Figure 1: Lunch with Ty. Still from interview footage, 23.01.2019

> "*After an hour of interviewing, I suggested that we take a break from the interview, to which Ty then kindly offered to make us both lunch, or at least warm up a carton of soup as admittedly, he was not much of a cook. As he dipped his bread into the soup, Ty paused to ask how I was finding the process of filming as he was aware that this was the first time that I had tried to make a documentary on my own. We connected over a shared lack of self-confidence for our craft to which he was keen to offer some words of wisdom, reminding me that any doubts I may have about myself were being refuted by my very presence at that moment. However, from the conversations we were having*

*in the interview, whether he had taken these words of advice on board himself was another story…*"

(Author, extract from diary entry, 23.01.2019).

For Ty, becoming Miss Hope Springs involves temporarily inhabiting the identity of a fictitious female icon from the Golden Age of Hollywood. In the interview, Ty spoke of his late father Lionel Jeffries who starred in the movies of the 1960s/70s and of what it was like to grow up in Hollywood. He noted how various stars such as Fred Astaire, Shelly Winters, and Katherine Hepburn would regularly frequent his family home, creating a strange situation where his obsession with Hollywood, his dream world, was also very much a reality that he could reach out and touch. As he grew older, this dream world became less tangible, making the desire to get his songs performed by artists such as Peggy Lee less attainable. As he states in the film, what he shares with Hope is the "struggle that nearly everybody in show-business has" (*Hope is a Journey* 2019). Hope, in this respect, "dwells in the region of the not-yet" (Bloch: 1998: 341), which Anderson (2006a) argues is a dangerous space that fosters the same conditions for a becoming hopeful, as for a becoming despondent.

A positive, representational story of hope would aptly depict a realisation of Ty's hopes and dreams, retaining the idea that hope arises from a desire for an 'absent reality', within which lies the possibility that this reality may never be actualised (Hroch 2011). Rather, for hope to 'spring eternal', to borrow terminology from Alexander Pope (1950), and to have a more powerful, affective impact on the spectator, it was necessary to embrace an ethic of falsification in the editing process that would work not to represent or realise, but rather to evoke a sense of hopefulness *from* the tragic excesses of Ty's story: a hope that he "may not have even recognized or acknowledged existed" (Hroch 2011: 261).

Figure 2: Falsifying narration. Still taken from *Hope is a Journey* (2019)

Three minutes and twenty-eight seconds into the film, Ty begins to open up about his lack of confidence and internal conflict regarding his gender identity. For Deleuze (2004[1968]), what distinguishes an individual is not that which is determined on the basis of opposable differences, but rather that which happens *to* the individual. Thus, when speaking about his identity, rather than reaching any conclusion, Ty experiences a becoming that "begins as a desire to escape bodily limitation" (Massumi 1992: 94). Whilst this narrative is occurring, the film shows Hope performing a song titled 'Pigalle', which continues to play as we switch back to the interview where Ty refers to Hope as the channel through which he is able to be empowered by 'female energy'.

> "… the straight line as force of time, as a labyrinth of time, is also the line which forks and keeps on forking, passing through *incompossible presents*, returning to *not-necessarily true pasts*."
>
> Deleuze (2005[1989]: 127)

At the moment depicted in Figure 2, the false continuity of the audio, achieved by the merging together of audio tracks from two separate performances, works to destabilise the truthful, rational time of the movement-image by having Ty continue to sing the same song during the performance of his own life story, with the same confidence and tenor as if he was sat there as Hope. In this instant, 'Ty Jeffires Sings Ty Jeffries' "has the reality of an acted event, a performance: short of actual" (Massumi 2002: 57). In becoming 'short of actual', Ty's life

becomes intertwined with that of Hope's without there necessarily being any awareness of this himself. The powers of the false replace and supersede the 'truthful narration' by imaging Ty as a fantasy, as a becoming hopeful that he never thought existed. Furthermore, the irrational-cut that fades into a fantastical image, rather than into a recollection-image, could be said to suspend the sensory-motor extension, generating hopeful affects that work on the visceral register of judgment rather than the level of conscious sense-making (Connolly 2002b). Such affects work to rapidly generate sub-symbolic intensities in the pre-conscious part of the brain known as the amygdala, shaping an instinctive emotional response to the image before the spectator is aware of what is affecting them (Connolly 2002a). In Figure 2, these affective intensities crystallise and move the spectator along a line of becoming hopeful with Ty.

> "For this reason, hope—while actually in a state of suspension—is committed to change rather than repetition, and what is more, incorporates the element of chance, without which there can be nothing new."
>
> Bloch (1998: 341)

Since any truth in cinema necessarily flows from cinematographic fiction, when trying to document something whose truth is inscrutable, Deleuze (2005[1989]) advocates an ethic of falsification in the editing process. In *Hope is a Journey* (2019), this is achieved by building from tragic excesses of Ty's narrative to evoke a sense of hopefulness through the powers of the false. Figure 2 images a moment that is suspended in time, that endures, that thinks through the bodily affect, through the intensity of my encounters with Ty and that retains an ethic of responsibility for these events by maintaining a sense of becoming hopeful that arose in the encounter. In doing so, the film works to create a space in which a certain style of hoping begins to imagine how the everyday could be different; "in which becoming hopeful momentarily folds into a better way of being" (Anderson 2006a: 743). Where this chapter has tried to foster hope from moments of doubt that tie it to fear by making a play on fictional narratives, the following chapter asks why such moments of dispirited or melancholic intensity may have arisen, and how the crystal-image may be more generative of hopeful affects.

## Crystals, *or Seeds*, of Hope

Anderson and Holden's (2008) article that looks at how hope 'takes place' in urban areas of regeneration, referring to how hope as an affect animates the latent potential of everyday urban spaces, is instructive in thinking about how my film creates a shared experience of "becoming and being hopeful" (Anderson 2006a: 746). In 2003, Liverpool was designated the 'EU Capital

of Culture', a title likely to draw investment into the city, inciting processes of regeneration and economic growth (Anderson and Holden 2008). Whilst the title seemed to be inspiring an "affective epidemic" of hope in which residents were becoming hopeful about the potential for incoming capital to be redistributed amongst smaller projects that would work to regenerate less public areas of the city, focus-groups highlighted how hope tends to disappear when the idea of trust, based in this example on the past actions of local councils, is brought into question (Anderson and Holden 2008: 153). This pertains to Anderson's (2006b: 704) insistence that the act of hoping requires one "to enter into a relation with something outside oneself that is defined by a relation of trust".

> "How, then, can we be a little more *melancholy* about the movements and countermovements of affect?"
>
> Anderson (2006a: 748, emphasis in the original)

From the start of the research process, Ty and I were both very open about our apprehensions towards the film. Consequently, there existed this timorous intermingling of Ty putting his very self, his subject and his vocation at risk, and on the other hand, my own need as a researcher to remain reflexive and responsive to our encounters as to constantly question how I was attending to the non-representational. Seemingly, this commingling of vulnerability worked to cultivate a level of trust and care between myself and Ty that allowed for moments of immense intensity to arise. Facilitated by this level of trust, becoming hopeful began to take place as a shared affective experience, evoking an excessive sense of the tragic and the feared that would act as a virtual guide for much of the conversation (Anderson 2006a). Furthermore, Anderson suggests that becoming hopeful "holds the condition of defeat precariously within itself" (2006a, quoting Bloch 1998: 341), which invites speculation as to whether this explains why Ty's most earnest moments of confession came about when *being* hopeful was needed the most. This was particularly pertinent in the two scenes that show Ty in his dressing-room just moments before going on stage for the first time as himself.

Figure 3: A crystal of hope? Still taken from *Hope is a Journey* (2019)

After Ty opens up about the "dark place" that he would often find himself in when first performing as Miss Hope Springs, the film then leads into the dressing room where we are presented with a hyalosign (Figure 3), a mirror-image that reduces Ty to the realm of virtuality by pushing his 'actual' self out of the frame. For Deleuze (2005[1989]), crystal-images are those that are able to capture the moment when time appears to split perpetually into an actual present that is fleeting and a virtual past that is in the process of being preserved. This occurs in Figure 3 where the mirror depicts a virtual image of Ty that contracts with the present moment, causing his virtual self to emerge and become valid in and of itself by actualising in the present. Figure 3 depicts where the film has tried to engineer a moment that begins to show the relation between affects, fostering a specific type of hope that emerges from feelings of intense melancholia. However, this becoming-hopeful does not actualise through an appeal to conscious thought, but rather, through a crystal-image that evokes a conception of time that transcends conscious thinking (Deleuze 2005[1989]). In other words, inside the crystal-image, the melancholic past and hopeful present become indiscernible from one another, breaking down the idea that hope is an optimistic abstraction, by animating the ambiguity that ties it to a fear of suffering (Eagleton 2015).

Figure 4: Limp(id) hands. Still taken from *Hope is a Journey* (2019)

On top of making indiscernible the actual and the virtual, Deleuze (2005[1989]) explains how the crystal-image extends this coupling into the 'opaque-limpid' dimension that relates to the aesthetics of the time-image determined by the camera's focus. In the shot depicted in Figure 4, the aperture of the camera was widened as to create a shallow depth of field that focused on the reflection of Ty's hands in the piano. By focusing on the reflection, the virtual image of his hands not only becomes actual but "visible and limpid", making the actual image of his hands more blurred and 'opaque' in comparison, as if this image now represents a virtual past (Deleuze 2005[1989]: 68). In this moment, a crystal that arises in the present begins to change how we perceive the past, showing that an enduring conception of time can radically alter how we understand our subjectivities in relation to a past that can be reconstituted. However, Deleuze (2005[1989]) makes clear that the crystal is only an expression. It is when this "expression moves from the mirror to the seed" that the crystal-image then enters into our unconscious (Deleuze 2005[1989]: 72). This brings the discussion to the final figure of the crystal-image that imagines a virtual seed of the past being crystallised in the present environment (Deleuze 2005[1989]).

The use of the term 'crystal' seems to envision such images as having their own internal reflective surfaces that refract off one another in repetition, causing a continual exchange between the actual and the virtual within the crystalline structure that makes the images indiscernible from one another. In this sense, when Deleuze (2005[1989]: 69) imagines crystal-

images as reducible to the "internal disposition of a seed in relation to the environment", one can infer that when this seed enters into our unconscious mind, the indiscernibility between the actual and the virtual, between what is real and what is fiction, may begin to influence the way in which we interpret other images that we encounter beyond the cinema screen. This begins to make sense of Deleuze's (2004[1968]: 70) statement in *Difference and Repetition*, that "*repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it*".

In *Hope is a Journey* (2019), the seed stands for a different way of thinking through binary oppositions, such as male and female, actual and virtual, fiction and reality, by evoking a sense of becoming hopeful that traverses and confuses these distinctions due to the ambivalence of hope as an affect. Thus, it is through such a style of engagement with the various ways in which hopeful affects organise themselves, that the documentary implores the spectator to think difference beyond categories of representation (Deleuze 2004[1968]). This brings the discussion to the final chapter that intends to plant this seed of hope amongst the environment that is the Anthropocene debate. This is with the hope that the seed can germinate a type of "hopefulness because of, rather than despite, the tragedy and injustice of" drastic climate change (Anderson 2006a: 749).

## Hope in the Anthropocene

Having explored the idea of hope as an 'inconstant joy' with ideas of the powers of the false as well as with Deleuze's conception of hyalosigns, this last chapter seeks to distribute this idea amongst contemporary discussions of how hope is being enrolled in the social sciences to provide relief to the Anthropocene. This begins to map out an ecology of hope by briefly illustrating just one example of how hope gets involved in different debates.

The question of hope has become a bit of a quandary in geography, in particular regarding the ambivalence of the current planetary epoch known as the Anthropocene (Head 2016). Discussing the different ways in which ideas of hopefulness and despair operate within debates concerning the Anthropocene, Head (2016) calls attention to the role that hope's more unpredictable and experimental tendencies play in causing disruptions to existing social, economic and political orderings. To exemplify, Head (2016) envisions moments of emotional rupture, such as when a policy advisor breaks into tears at an international environmental summit, as having the potential to cultivate different ways of living through this moment of epochal change due to the friction between hopeful and forlorn affects.

> "I've just got off the phone with Ty who messaged me earlier on today asking if I could give him a call as he needed to speak to me about something quite urgent. Unfortunately, he let me know that he's had to cancel the show where I was going to film him perform as Miss Hope Springs. I think he felt quite bad as he was very apologetic, but I told him not to worry and let him know that I was far more interested in filming the show that's happening two days after that one was supposed to, where he'd be performing as himself. He still sounded quite flustered and asked if I could maybe record the parts where he's on stage just as an audio track. I told him that the last thing I'd want to do is make him feel uncomfortable as what he's done for me thus far has been amazing, but that I'd also really appreciate if it could be filmed, even if that meant that the footage stayed within the confines of my dissertation. Where at first he seemed to be quite upset, he then quickly changed his tune and let me know that I could film whatever I wanted. We then proceeded to chat about other things that we could film together in the future…"
>
> Author (extract from diary entry, 21.02.2019)

As Head (2016) insists, these impromptu moments of emotional rupture need not be happy. On the contrary, Head (2016: 167) explains that their generative "potential is driven by painful emotions" that refuse to deny a sense of grief or struggle, harbouring the possibility for forms of hopeful action that work *with* this inconstancy. In this sense, hope does not take the form of a shallow, self-indulgent optimism, a state of profound emotional enlightenment underpinned by a pure and unrelenting happiness (Eagleton 2015). Rather, if debates regarding the Anthropocene are to appropriate a form of hope, this type of hope should be derived from moments of grief and struggle as to counter the excesses of capital and neoliberal 'common sense', that are arguably to blame for this moment of potentially catastrophic and irreversible climate change (Head 2016).

> "the world itself, just as it is in a mess, is also in a state of unfinishedness and in experimental process out of that mess"
>
> Bloch (1986: 221)

Thinking back to the idea of experimentation, this counterwork could involve enacting experimental spaces of hope, within the bounds of capitalism and neoliberalism, that hold the possibilities for imagining a politics that exists beyond these confines (Anderson 2006a; Silver 2015). Notably, the 'Mamre Ceiling Retrofit' project in Cape Town, a climate change

experiment that set out to provide affordable housing installed with energy-efficient ceilings, has worked to respond to national and international climate change agendas, whilst also attending to neoliberal concerns regarding the desire for a competitive housing market and greater financial savings for the state (Silver 2015). Whereas before the aspirations of the state to provide affordable housing had been built on empty "post-apartheid promises" for a better future, by engaging with the ambivalence of what it means to hope in the Anthropocene that requires a sense of grieving for the planet, the Mamre Ceiling Project appears to have been more successful (Silver 2015: 121). Furthermore, whilst enabling poorer communities to become hopeful about the potential social benefits of the project, the project also begins to imagine a politics that potentially makes space for progressive urban environmental change (Silver 2015). If this is the impact that a certain style of hoping, cultivated from the suffering of the past, could potentially have in causing environmental change, although seemingly unrelated, we can begin to imagine the potential work that the film could do in mobilising hopeful affects beyond directorial control.

### Some Concluding Remarks

Overall, by taking a risk with the idea of hope as an 'inconstant joy' and exploring this with others, the logic perpetuated in the discussion has been a more experimental one that builds its own logic, rather than trying to appeal to a logic that already exists. As such, I would argue that this approach has allowed the research event to retain its ephemerality and transitory nature, preventing the non-representational from being subjugated by the written word.

## Conclusion

In presenting a methodological reflection on the process of creating a documentary film, the dissertation works to push the empirical side of non-representational theory and contribute to a growing field of 'non-representational methodologies' (Vannini 2015b). After all, non-representational theory is not known for its empiricism, certainly not with techniques of representation like film.

Whilst I am pleased with my attempts at embarking upon a more experimental research method, besides obvious technical constraints, there is still space to take the creative process of filmmaking even further; specifically, to a space that distributes the creative process amongst the film's intended audience (Garrett and Hawkins 2015). Similar studies seeking to utilise filmmaking as a way of thinking beyond representational identity politics, might try to ensure that their audiences are informed on the project's motivations and also "remain aware of [the]

contagious quality of composing associative sensation and mobilising affect", in terms of what work the filmic productions may do beyond the author's control (Garrett and Hawkins 2015: 159). Nevertheless, I am still satisfied with my attempts at not only trying to animate certain affects in the film, but also striving to hold on to the intensity of the research event in the discussion.

Inspired by Deleuze's (2005[1989]) cinematic philosophy and Connolly's (2002b) micropolitics of film, the documentary has tried to engineer certain moments that mark a break with the sensory-motor schema. In doing so, a new relationship is formed between time and unconscious thought where the non-representational can come to the fore. In the first chapter, this involved using filmic techniques of falsification, such as the irrational cut and the false continuity of sound, to accentuate the irreducibility of the actual-virtual relation. By beginning to falsify parts of Ty's testimony, and in doing so, producing de-chronologised moments that make visible the falsifying nature of truthful narration as a rational narrative structure in cinematographic fiction, this fiction ceases to become true or false and instead engages a becoming. Since the discussion set out to stage a story using the impersonal refrain of hope, this moment is interpreted as a becoming-hopeful that refuses to lapse into optimistic cliché by instead fostering a sense of hopefulness *because* of doubt and fear.

The second chapter explores the ambivalence of hope more directly through the use of hyalosigns. In *Hope is a Journey* (2019), mirror-images are used to picture virtual images of Ty that are similar to the actual image, but are in some respect incompossible with the present moment, asking the spectator to question the cinematic reality presented to them. These 'incompossible presents' purposefully intend to cultivate new modes of thinking: the dressing room scene depicting a melancholic past that endures into the becoming hopeful present; and the piano scene attempting to sculpt a virtual image that is so forceful in coming into its own, that it begins to blur and leave the actual present behind. However, given the difficulty of trying to represent the non-representational, there is a limit to which my attempts at trying to discursively animate these moments through film and through a written analysis of the film will inevitably reach. It is for this reason that the final chapter entered a new terrain, imagining how a seed of becoming hopeful may sit at the back of someone's mind, say a housing policy maker who within the Anthropocene has to be mindful of the future of humanity in the face of uncertain climate change. We can imagine how this seed that holds within it an indiscernible crystalline structure may begin to refract with these uncertain images, conjuring new ways of

becoming hopeful that build from the destruction of the current epochal moment rather than irresponsibly feign optimism.

By foregrounding the potential intersections between cinematic philosophies, contemporary literatures on hope as an affect, and non-representational theory, the dissertation has allowed me to identify moments of tension and spaces for collaboration that can work to think the new. Thus, whilst not necessarily coming to any conclusion on how to restructure contemporary identity politics, by beginning in the middle of things, by being just one modest intervention into thinking about the notion of hope and by holding onto the eventfulness of my encounters with Ty, the dissertation tries to engage a becoming that creates new possibilities for thought (Thrift 2007).

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