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'This Documentary Actually Makes Welland Look Good': Exploring Posthumanism in a

High School Documentary Film Project

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Introduction

Our title derives from a line a young woman said as she watched the final documentary produced by media artist Vanessa Crosbie Ramsay about our research study and its central message. The study considered community engagement in Welland, Ontario, Canada and how promising futures in the city might be seen. In this chapter, we focus on a six-week documentary film unit completed at a high school in Welland as one of five projects within a larger government agency-funded research study entitled *Maker Literacies[1]*. Fifteen Grade 11 students (ten who identified as girls and five identifying as boys) worked on the six-week documentary film project. These young people were poignantly aware of their town's deficit image within the broader landscape of Ontario, and they were particularly protective about their community. Pleased, even delighted, by the rendering of Welland in Vanessa's documentary, Beyonce[2] (a young woman) called out: "This documentary makes Welland look good!", encapsulating the spirit of this chapter's focus

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[1] *Maker Literacies* is a government-funded research project on Maker Education led by Jennifer Rowsell. This research is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (grant number 435-2017-0097) and is associated with a European Grant led by Dr. Jackie Marsh entitled, *Maker Spaces in the Early Years: Enhancing Digital Literacy and Creativity (MakEY).*

[2] The real names of all students have been changed to preserve their anonymity, and they chose their own pseudonyms.

on how teenagers materialize their community through human and non-human engagements within documentary films. The posthuman and new materialist dimensions of the chapter reside both in teenagers' non-human modes of expression coupled with the ways they talked about their everyday lives in Welland as an entanglement of human and non-human forces (Pahl et al., in process).

We conceptualize these students' maker processes through a posthuman approach to data analyses (Kuby, 2017), and, in our engagements with posthumanist theory, we draw on work by Kuby and Gutshall Rucker (2016) and Deleuze and Guattari (1980) to understand how these students thought and experimented with moving-image techniques and technologies to create film narratives.

The chapter is divided into four sections in which we 1) consider how posthumanism framed our thinking about maker activities

and 2) think with

posthumanism to look at interview transcripts.

. Our project team included two researchers (Lemieux and Rowsell), a media artist (Vanessa Crosbie-Ramsay), and an English high school teacher. Our aim was to offer students a unit of study to express, through documentary/film-making, their responses to the novel *Shattered* that contained difficult themes of homelessness, anxiety, depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

During the first phase of the project students read *Shattered*, the story of a friendship between a war veteran, now homeless, and a teenager from an affluent background, who steadily learns about what it means to struggle with mental health, poverty, and a displaced existence. In Phase Two, the English teacher and Vanessa elicited with students themes of anxiety and PTSD, and asked them to produce a short documentary that explored these more deeply. We found that bringing posthuman concepts to this work offered an entangled and complex view of how people and affective forces of anxiety and trauma 'become-with' (Braidotti, 2018) the materiality of city streets, homes and class differences. Posthumanism also helped us to think through experimentation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994) and moments of becoming that unfolded as students played, improvised, and made with different modes (Rowsell & Mcqueen-Fuentes, 2017). This group of students had a particular dynamic, with females in the group having stronger voices and a greater presence, while the few males in the class tended to gather in the back and work individually. Yet, there was a cohesive feel to the group having been in school together for some time. What we observed as the film-making process unfolded was a greater intensity to their work together and longer periods of silence with, paradoxically, periods of debate and arguing about visual effects, sonic decisions, and spatial orientations.

Engaging with Shattered

Shattered depicts the story of Ian, a 15-year-old who befriends a Canadian war veteran (Sarge) while volunteering at a local soup kitchen for homeless people. Ian experiences conflicting emotions as he listens to his new friend's past. As Sarge tells him about his time serving with the

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Canadian-led United Nations mission in Rwanda during the genocide, he recalls painful memories that trigger PTSD episodes. Chosen by the teacher, *Shattered* served as a catalyst to the documentary-film process given its focus on topics close-to-home for students who had observed homelessness in their own town. Based on their readings, we asked students to: 1) familiarize themselves with the documentary genre (based on Vanessa's expertise in documentary film-making); and 2) produce a short documentary focusing on themes and with guidance from Vanessa, Amélie, and Jennifer. Students chose their topics of interest and concern–those that held personal and felt connections, and also that captured their imagination.

During class hours, students were placed into groups of three or four and they used iMovie on iPads to edit their documentaries. At the end of the project, we planned a final screening where students presented their documentary to an audience (their peers and us). Each film screening was followed by questions and answers moderated by the research team, and students were able to field questions, extend their ideas, and offer provocations.

Posthumanist contributions to our thinking about maker approaches

There has been a growing movement to adopt posthuman perspectives in literacy research (Kuby & Gutshall-Rucker, 2016; Kuby & Rowsell, 2017; Nichols & Campano, 2017; Toohey, 2018). We build on this energy by applying posthumanist theory to a group of teenagers' efforts to produce short films. Shifting the traditional focus from human-oriented theories of learning (such as behaviourism, positivism, social constructivism) to posthuman theories, we hope to inhabit a

"being/doing/knowing" approach (Kuby & Rowsell, 2017, p. 285) by excavating how humans become-with non-human subjects. In particular, we recognize thinking with materials as a form of making, where students think about their fleeting and affective relationships with "what might be" (Ringrose & Coleman, 2013, p. 125), that is in this case, digital products (documentaries) that are materially shaped in real-time spaces. We cannot claim to be experts in posthuman or new materialist theories, but we recognize the value in maker education to account for assemblages of human-and-non-human becoming and intra-actions (Braidotti, 2018).

There is a natural coupling between maker/craft-based work and posthuman approaches to literacy. As a grass-roots movement, maker approaches to literacy involve accessing technologies, resources, and materials to make texts and objects through experimentation and problem-solving. Maker approaches are considered grassroots explosions in Do-It-Yourself (DIY) and maker cultures (Peppler, Halverson & Kafai, 2016). The reported research adopts a maker approach, but rather than focusing on technologies and materials, we focus instead on concepts of craft knowledge and material engagements (Rowsell & Shillitoe, 2019), understood as the practices and processes of working with materials, as opposed to focusing exclusively on the forms of materials themselves (see also Ingold, 2013). Maker and multimodal approaches to literacy work are established ways of researching and analyzing the qualities of meaning-making (Rowsell et al., 2018). However, aspects of meaning-making can be fleeting and they get missed, or are at least eclipsed, when adopting an exclusively representational, production-oriented focus on the qualities of work across different modes. Posthumanism and the concept of agential realism (Barad, 2007) have considerably pushed our thinking about conducting multimodal fieldwork. Through posthumanism, we de-centre youth identities and view these identities as

entangled or assembled with matter and materials that emerge in making, designing and producing. Such an approach allows us to account for the ways that material humans work with other materials and foreground more embodied and affective engagements as well as ways that matter and materials animate agentive qualities. Different materials, such as the iMovie software on the iPad and the iPad hardware produce affective flows and human and material desirings that make some things possible and constrain others; in this, the iPads were consequential as we elaborate later in this chapter.

Karen Barad (2007) distinguishes interactions from *intra*-actions. Interactions references separate ontologies, such as individual elements, things-humans-subjects-objects. Intra-actions, in contrast, is Barad's concept and refers to entangled human and non-human where individual separations dissolve. An agential cut happens when differences are made by our research apparatuses, discourses, and educational practices. In this way, meanings and subjectivities are made rather than found as pre-existing entities. Drawing on this distinction, we believe, as Barad (2007) argues, that what we witnessed during the research was a "mutual constitution of entangled agencies" (p. 33), whereby intra-activity emphasized the assemblages between human and non-human agents (students↔camera↔editing work). These entanglements point to the indeterminacy of matter across time (Smythe et al., 2017). Ontologically speaking, taking this stance as we analyzed film and interview data, we argue that humans and non-humans involved in the research *became* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980) together in a dynamic process, where process and product took on an equally important and relational role. Those reciprocal relationships were observed in software↔matter↔editing tools↔humans (students, research team). Thinking with the concept of intra-action allowed us to foreground an emergent quality of the young people's

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film work. Hence, we draw on posthumanism theory to access and extenuate the dynamic and hybrid quality of each group's moving image compositional work.

We drew on such scholars as Doucet (2018), who used an affective, posthumanist typology to analyze a family photograph to delve into memory work and Indigenous storytelling. Doucet (2018) created an ontological narrative derived from a family picture of her aunt Hannah to consider: 1) the people present in the picture (with descriptions and positions of subjects); 2) the context and setting of the picture, i.e. by whom it was taken, when, where, and for what purposes; 3) the aesthetic choices and technologies that made this picture possible; and 4) how the photograph is received and perceived in real-time situations. Doucet (2018) defines ontological narratives as being two-fold, with a first emphasis on how they are agential, and a second focus on how they unfold "subjectivities and narrative identities" (p. 18). Our approach was also to "think with" (Doucet, 2018; Mazzei, 2016), by adopting a mindset of decentering ourselves as human-researchers and the young people who were involved in this documentary/film-making project, and focusing instead on intra-actions in space↔matter↔time↔affective flows.

Being relatively new to posthuman and new materialist theories, we had some hesitation in operationalizing such terms and concepts. Nonetheless, we found the collaborative thinking with and thinking through of posthuman theory generative and most certainly amplifying, animating and enlightening when conducting and analyzing maker and multimodal research. We attempted to decentre ourselves when we conducted research, especially as we analyzed data in co-writing

this chapter. To decentre the human, we question humanist assumptions by accounting for aspects of production and the ways that materials and modalities design and production (Rowsell et al., 2018) offer potentialities, possibilities and moments of becoming. To illustrate our method for analyzing humanist-decentred moments, we draw from a research moment with Liza. Liza, a student participant, wanted to try the green screen for her documentary on Romeo Dallaire[3]. After we set up the green screen in an empty classroom, Liza stood in front of it and experiemented with poses. When we projected these poses on the iPad, she transformed into a different person–Liza with a tropical backdrop; Liza with skulls from Rwanda in the background; and Liza close-up. Considering the capacity for the green screen to transform Liza into a more intimate, close-up and personal space with just her face, or, placing her in an exotic island setting entangled a human body↔natural worlds↔semiotic forces. The iPad took on a life of its own. It was a portal into different locales and spaces of becoming and with each one, we saw Liza in different lights. Each person in the room (Jennifer and Vanessa were a part of the process) took turns looking through the iPad at Liza in multiple ways until we all agreed on the shot that captured her biography on Dallaire. This human-decentring stance is not a direct application of posthumanist theory, but instead, a diffractive approach to data with bits of the more-than-humanness of the iPad and the green screen *becoming* with Liza. The green screen gave form to Liza as much as the iPad animated and materialized Liza.

Data collection and procedure for analysis

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[3] Romeo Dallaire is a Lieutenant-General and Canadian war veteran who served as Force Commander for the United Nations Peacekeeping force during the 1993-1994 Rwandan genocide.

Our research methods rest on ethnographic fieldnotes combined with multimodal analyses

(Heath & Street, 2008; Thompson, 2014). At the end of the research project, we conducted one-

on-one interviews with five students who were willing to speak with us. These conversations

were recorded with an audiorecorder, and the transcriptions were outsourced and transcribed

professionally. What emerged from those conversations were intensities (Massumi, 2007) and

moments when documentaries (as product and as a making process) clearly impacted students'

self-identification as makers and their engagements with materials. We detail these intensities

below.

To engage with our corpus of interview data, we draw on Kuby's (2017) posthumanist method

for presenting interview data in literacy research and we ponder the question she asks: "How do

we talk to students and (re)present entanglements with humans/non-humans?" (p. 167). That is,

we emphasize the "discursive relationships of becoming" (Kuby, 2017, p. 167) that take place

between interviewer↔interviewee↔topic↔themes↔situations, in no particular order even

though writing prescribes such structured procedures. Some participants narrated complete

monologues and so we included these verbatim and left the repetitions to show emphases on

topics and content. Like Ehret (2018) and Kuby (2017), we tried to find ways of illustrating

human and non-human interactions and throughout the research, we thought about non-

representational theories. We thus acknowledge, as a limitation, that our analysis entails coding-

oriented ways of looking at data. Like Kuby (2017), as well as Toohey and Dagenais (2015), we

mark intensities through different fonts and typeface styles, but they also indicate restrictions that

do not often resonate with posthumanism because it is difficult to escape the representational

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discourses embedded in language constructs (Barad, 2003; St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014). These restrictions, affective intensities, and the ways in which discourses of language are entangled in our research methods, highlight the differences and distinctions we make as we do our analytic work.

Adjusting font and layout is not intuitive, it is rather pushed by writing conventions (Genette, 1987). In other words, it is a structured way of representing data within the scientific genre that is in an academic register. Like Kuby (2017), we found issue in using traditional, human-centric ways of sharing transcriptions, and, in a similar fashion, we used different fonts to represent parts of the discourse: this rhetorical convention highlights a theme, **this one marks the interviewer/interviewee**, and this one illustrates emphases/intensities from the participants. These conventions focus on relational moments between materials↔humans, as well as entanglements between human and non-human actors, or what Kuby (2017) defines as the "processes and doings" (p. 170). For screen captures of documentary footage, we experimented with a method of looking at the intra-activity of modes in the moving-image work. We looked at how students included still images within their documentaries (a practice also identified in Toohey & Dagenais, 2015), how human representations (through images and sounds) found themselves as part of the documentaries, and how in some cases the documentaries did not incorporate and actually decentred students. In one case, which we will see later, sonic and visual representations of the actor Cory Monteith played an integral role in all stages of the film-making process. As he was a celebrity who struggled with anxiety and depression, a group of students wanted to make him (or representations and becomings of him)

central in their work from beginning to end, and he occupied those spaces in the student-made production.

Agential Cuts

In analyzing interview data from a posthuman lens, we identified moments within the multimodal work that young people completed. For example, Bella shared her concerns and the implications of her documentary for other teenage girls who struggle with eating disorders, anxiety, and depression:

Bella: A lot of girls eat junk food and then are self-conscious about their weight and think everybody hates them, and then certain people know other people and then a few years later they're acting completely different 'cause they have anxiety and depression. So we tried to make it like when the viewers watch it they can even be like I've been in that situation. Or I know somebody who's been in that situation. So you can relate to it on a personal level.

Amélie (Lemieux): Okay, so you guys were thinking about the audience when you were making?

Bella: Yeah, we were thinking about that. That was part of the planning process too.

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What emerged from the conversation between Bella and Amélie was an acute sense and emphasis on feelings of anxiety linked to fast food and considerations for the audience ("like when the viewers watch it…so you can relate to it on a personal level"). Amélie wanted to know if the latter sentence was coincidential and therefore probed about audience—the notion of making for people with these people in mind—and wanted to know if, at all, the group thought beyond "making in the moment," with considerations for viewers other than themselves. Film-making presupposes thinking about other than the self, therefore also including entanglements such as film-makers↔materialities↔audience. Recalling the girls' project and their wishes in making, including the entanglement Timbits[4]↔anxiety, was a priority to communicate to future viewers what it felt like to be anxious about eating disorders.

Drawing on Barad's new materialism (2003), we put to work the notion of *agential cuts* as defying Cartesian binaries of the mind/body, and therefore view the qualities of meaning-making as entanglements of human and non-human worlds. Barad's notion of agential cuts allows us to see the ways in which spaces, people and objects are entangled, making moments across time and space messy (Rowsell et al., 2018). In this way, and within this larger assemblage, anxiety↔Bella↔other participants↔depression↔junk food↔timbits↔interview is an agential cut. Through this agenial cut, anxiety and depression emerge as main concerns of the group's documentary. They all performed roles in the documentary as teachers (who offer help) and as students (who struggle with anxiety and depression), and the narrator provided statistics, symbols (Timbits, heavy women, body shaming), and figures/bodies that allude to body image.

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[4] Timbits are small balls of doughnuts commercialized and sold by the fast food restaurant chain Tim Hortons.

Incorporating Cory Monteith as a visual and conceptual anchor in the documentary, the group showed how people from all walks of life suffer from anxiety and depression, and the varied ways that it manifests itself. Rosie, one of the members of the group, insisted on including Monteith as a strong presence in the film and, given that he passed away due to addiction, she felt that he was a fitting icon. There were several smaller arguments between Bella and Rosie about including him, and after compromising, the entangled agencies of Monteith and a whole array of other elements could be felt in the music (his songs), and through a medium shot of his face.

When Bella talked through her process of narrowing down and negotiating a topic with her group, her decisions, choices, and beliefs during conversations connected strongly with embodied feelings. These embodied feelings relate to the ways that she experiences the world and her own materiality across time and space as well as how her modulations and intensities were experienced throughout the research process. We noticed Bella in particular because she is so open about her emotions, and we witnessed her ebbing and flowing during classroom conversations, group interactions, private conversations with us and her behaviour during the project. However, in addition to a focus on Bella, our posthuman analysis needed to pay attention to discourses about anxiety, depression, addiction, body image, appearances and gendered stereotypes that circulated in the press (and in youth's online discourses). As well, we needed to consider the affect, emotions and politics (whose voices were stronger, for example) in this intra-action, and how they were entangled with the students' reading and representation of *Shattered*.

For Bella's group, there were strong associations between eating Timbits and obesity, and between gyms and thinness that became desired foci for their film, matters that connect with Bella's own "weight issues" and anxiety. Bella's group collaboration was a particularly fraught one at times because Bella and Rosie clashed about how they conceived of the content. This recognition of entanglements between human (Bella, Rosie, Geri) and non-human (Timbits, gym equipment, drawing of a heavy woman, etc.) elicits what we regard as an agential cut, or as Barad (2003) describes, it enacts "a *local* resolution *within* the phenomenon of the inherent ontological indeterminancy" (emphasis in the original, p. 815). There was a screen capture in their documentary that showed a materialization of the emotions that Bella described she had experienced growing up with anxiety and depression. Written in black ink on a girl's body, words ("FAT", "disgusting", "gross", "pig", "ew", "thinner", "diet", "eat", "starve", etc.) spoke to inner human feelings that someone dealing with eating disorders may experience in addition to self-harm, visible in the form of cuts on one of the forearms. This picture echoed multiple material-discursive relationships: the girls' selection of this image and the impact of the image on the girls (and on us when we watched the short film); its design and the focus on material-discursive relationships; the physicality of the flesh, the cuts, the white bra the subject on the picture is wearing, two black lines on each side of the subject's waist where the flesh *should* have stopped if she was thinner. Literal cuts thus unfolded as follows: the group's decision to include the still image; the Google image search (we observed this and spoke with them about it), the process of embedding the picture in the documentary, the group (researchers and participants together) viewing of the documentary, and the process of reinterpretation that occurred in writing this chapter. The cuts do not end there—with chapter reviewers, chapter

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readers, and so on, participating in agential cuts themselves as they engage with this chapter in different spaces, at different times, involving other materialities.

A Refrain

There is another layer to Bella's documentary film-making story which concerns some of the tensions that she experienced with Rosie. Monteith's inclusion in the documentary film was central to the girls' discussions about how they would design and film their piece. Following the interview transcript, we included a still (Figure 1) showing the editing work and transition between images, from the girls' performance in a classroom setting to Monteith's profile—a picture taken from Google Images. In the following conversation, Bella expands on the struggles with her peers (interactions) and how the group trouble-shooted and tinkered with iMovie to make their project come to fruition:

Commented [MF3]: To be removed if we just include the picture of the student and the teacher talking to each other.

Commented [R14R3]: Yes, we can remove this. Thank you Magali!

Bella: Drug overdose, yeah. So she said oh, I want to put him in our project and I said okay but we've got to figure out how to relate him. We can't just throw him in there. She didn't listen to me, she threw a picture of him in there. Vanessa turned around and said you can't just throw a picture of him in there. And so we put a voiceover and then Rosie was completely not on board with the voiceover over his picture. She was like oh, there shouldn't be any sound behind him. Just him singing. The song we have is his song from *Glee* and it makes sense because it's called *Stand by You* I think. It's talking about I won't let anybody hurt you. I'll stand by you through the hard times, it doesn't matter. And

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that deals with anxiety and depression because you need someone to be there,

standing with you when you have anxiety and depression to help you.

Bella's group spent several days debating how Monteith would be represented in the

short film, and Vanessa, the media artist who worked with the students, felt that there

had to be a purpose for him in the film narrative, or else it would appear arbitrary to

include him. After several heated discussions, they kept a photo of him seen in the

screen capture below and one of his songs, *Stand By You*. The image below shows a

transition between two scenes: 1) an interaction between a student struggling with

anxiety and her teacher, and 2) Cory Monteith's picture with the song playing in the

background (not shown here due to copyright issues).

\<insert Figure 1 + caption\>

Caption: Intra-active becoming with Cory Monteith

There are flows of desiring in this description of multimodal production. On the one

hand, there is Bella's desire for an arc to the film's story, structure, and cohesion across

the three-minute film where Monteith was a choice without direct and substantive

connections with the film. On the other hand, there is Rosie's desiring to include him in

the film. What is happening during these relational moments involves largely human

material

Bella↔Rosie↔Cory Monteith↔Vanessa (media artist)↔Jennifer (researcher)—and non-human words↔images↔sounds↔colours↔iPad↔iMovie↔microphone, etc. The group's discussions relate to Guattari's (1995) description of *refrains* as patterns of expectations and behaviour. Rosie's devotion to Monteith and Bella's argument about lyrics and sounds merged, flowed, and became together as a *leitmotif* in the short film. There had to be a compromise, and Rosie and Bella needed to agree on the Monteith visual and substantive anchor. In other words, this refrain—Monteith, his voice, *Glee*— became a space that tied desire with matter and materialization.

Posthuman relationships and collaborative mindsets

We found that collaboration among students, researchers and professionals took place at all stages, and that working in groups was generative in finding solutions and coming up with a finished product that pleased everyone. Hackett, Pool, Rowsell and Aghajan (2015) had similar findings about incorporating cross-sector professionals into their multimodal fieldwork during the *Community Arts Zone* research project. They found that when young people collaborated with adults and professionals, generative learning happened, producing synergies in terms of perspectives and implications for multimodal meaning-making. In the excerpt below, Beyonce emphasizes how helpful it was to work with experts in the classroom in addition to her teacher, notably because she felt nervous about being included in a group as a newcomer to the school:

Jennifer (Rowsell): Can you just talk through how you felt about the project as a whole?

Beyonce: At the beginning I was pretty nervous about it because it's a [home] kind of experience for me especially me coming to a new school this year so I was really nervous because especially if we were going to make our own groups I felt like I was gonna be the lonely one but throughout you including Daniele, Amelie, and Vanessa were helping and at the end of it, it became really easy and I enjoyed it. So I'm really excited to present them now and watch everyone else's.

Jennifer: and what were the bits that you really liked? And then I'm gonna ask you about the bits that you didn't like and iffy about and all of that.

Beyonce: The parts that I really enjoyed was probably putting it together 'cause I've never done anything like that so it was a whole new experience for myself. So when we were putting it together and I finally saw it I was like I can't believe we actually did that. It was really shocking to me 'cause I didn't know I could do something like that. So I really enjoyed that part and I also enjoyed working with you yourself, Vanessa and Daniele.

In this conversation with Jennifer, Beyonce stresses how surprised she was at her own capacities as a maker and at the skills she did not anticipate having. Making affords reflections, temporal changes, and realisations (for example, Beyonce looking back and being happy and surprised about her accomplishments, discovering "a whole new experience"). Her comments answered the questions put to her, but her recognition of her growing expertise seemed to surprise her.

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That is, while the

Jennifer's questions tended to enact agential cuts – a process by which the conversations could

take certain discursive pathways – the paths these took were unpredictable, surprising, and

indeterminate.

Guiding students in their making and film-making, we see ourselves as "doing/being/thinking"

with teenagers: we were there with them, answering their questions and them answering ours,

being in their documentaries, assisting with editing, pushing their thoughts in either new

directions or ones they wanted to pursue. Throughout the interviews, we also found that students,

as makers, enjoyed helping each other along the way:

Bella: Geri, she's an exchange student, I think she came last year. She didn't know

how to use an iPad. She's never touched an iPad. And now she knows

because we sat there and we said okay, Geri, this is how you do it. We

taught her. And then me and Rosie learned to work together, and I feel it's

an educational purpose because you learn how to make documentaries.

You need to learn about the topic you're filming. You also learn I think

personal life skills like how to work with people, how to teach people, how

to listen to people because in a group you have to listen to each other

and help each other, and like I said cooperate with one another. So I think

it was a big learning process and I had tons of fun doing it. I'd do it again if I had

to.

Bella emphasized in her response how this experience was educational, collaborative, and generative. These three dimensions shaped how Bella viewed her experience of making as a transformative practice, where she felt a sense of responsibility that came with designing film, editing with iPads, and showing friends who struggle with technology how to play with commands in order to make, produce, design, and edit. Not only was this process educational and transformative, according to Bella, but it was also "fun" and instructive ("I feel it's an educational purpose because you learn how to make documentaries. You need to learn about the topic you're filming"). A humane, collaborative, and community-building dimension is embedded in making documentaries, as Bella expressed, because working in groups and with people who come from outside the school generates learning about "personal life skills" in Bella's words, like teaching, listening, helping, and cooperating.

Future research considerations

We acknowledge that recent early childhood literacy research based on posthuman thought has only recently been taken up in English Language Arts (Hackett & Somerville, 2017; Kuby, Gutshall Rucker, & Darolia, 2017). With this chapter we took up the challenge of thinking with posthumanism, which was a steep learning curve for us, but provided us with a more textured picture of the flows and intensities in the making of documentaries. That is, we appreciated the ways in which posthumanist theories add complexity, layers, and texture. We committed to understanding the topologies of "co-ing", "inter-ing" and "intra-ing" not only with our participants, but also in our research praxis, especially during research presentations where we

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made a commitment to focus more on the process than on the product. As such, in this chapter, we investigated the relationships between high school students' perspectives on their film-making practices, sensitive topics such as anxiety, eating disorders, homelessness and PTSD, and the affective dimensions embedded in maker education at the high school level.

Posthumanism paves the way for more complex understandings of the self in relation to others, evolving environments, and contextual circumstances that are situated in time, and that are, in other words, "entanglements with the world" (Hackett & Somerville, 2017, p. 388). Magnifying these entanglements in educational research through a posthumanist lens have the potential to bolster productive changes for literacy futures, in that they may:

1) Open possibilities for interpretive research on "e/affect" (Kuby, Gutshall Rucker & Darolia, 2017, p. 365) in maker education;

2) Situate learning within flexible networks including conversations with the self and with others; and,

3) Help teachers and researchers alike in situating students' learning processes in "being/doing/knowing" (Kuby & Rowsell, 2017, p. 285) as it responds to maker mindsets.

In conclusion, we probed the shift from exploring multimodal productions as we have in the past to experiment with a more non-representational account of what we witnessed over the six weeks of fieldwork. For instance, through a posthumanist approach to interview analyses (Kuby, 2017), we were able to locate discursive-material entanglements within interview data. Yet another

example of the contribution of posthumanist theories to our analyses is our effort to pin down and locate how cuts and edits to documentaries were affectively driven during the process and the intricacies of this process as a group chose modes and matter to illustrate their ideas, beliefs, and interests.

In our efforts to think about maker approaches in ways that de-center humans, we ventured into a maker project that gave teenagers the necessary space to design, plan, storyboard, and record their own direct views on human issues like depression, anxiety, PTSD, and homelessness. As we wrote and edited this chapter, we appreciated how central matter and materials were to these young people, and how modes and materials were the stuff that moved them. Being able to express how they feel about their community was so grounded in and imbricated with intra-actions between human and non-human forces that it was not a spoken or tangible element of the research, but instead something that we all felt and experienced, students, teachers, and researchers alike, as we sat at the final viewing to witness what the cuts made.

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