Negotiating Fragments: History, Archive, Fiction(ing)

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Candidate Declaration

I hereby declare that:

1. I have not been enrolled for another award of the university, or other academic or professional organisation, while undertaking my research degree.

2. None of the material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

3. I am aware of and understand the university's policy on plagiarism and certify that this thesis is my own work. The use of all published or other sources of material consulted have been properly and fully acknowledged.

4. The work undertaken towards the thesis has been conducted in accordance with the SHU Principles of Integrity in Research and the SHU Research Ethics Policy.

5. The Word Count of this thesis is: 43,962

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Abstract

Negotiating Fragments: History, Archive, Fiction(ing)

This project is about the past. Not a specific era or event of the past, but the way it is communicated, focussing on archives and museums as structures in which the past is retold. More broadly it is about time. Through practice-led research I address topics of archive, memory, storytelling, and heritage, and explore the use of diagram as a non-linear, non-hierarchical structure onto which a multi-temporal and polyphonic experience of past, present, and possible futures may be mapped.

I have investigated my topic through the production of artists books, site specific installations, collaborative work, creative writing, and undergone voluntary archive and museum based work. The processes that inform this project are hybrid and multiple: autoethnography, site writing, fiction, theory, historical source material, and philosophy sit together to create an account of what it is to look to the past from the present. This multiplicity is carried over into the thesis itself a creative work exemplifying how research and practice are inseparable.

The work is underpinned by an ongoing consideration of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of the 'minor', as expanded upon by Simon O'Sullivan and Erin Manning. Readings from Keith Jenkins's postmodern history theory and Francois Hartog's concept of 'presentism' are used to both inform and support the claims of this research. Literary genres such as historiographic metafiction and autotheory are considered alongside museum-based art interventions and parafictional works, producing a method that takes the tropes of literature out of the linear book format to create contemporary art, via the diagram.

The main body of text in the thesis is split into three key chapters 'History', 'Archive', and 'Fiction(ing)'. These three areas are thought of as rings in a Borromean Knot; a mathematical structure in which three rings are linked together in such a way that if any one were removed the other two would also become unlinked. It is in this linking this consideration of these three areas simultaneously, via art practice that a contribution to knowledge is proposed.

At a time when questions of post-colonialism, class, education, gender, and representation surround museological practices, it is timely to consider how a multiple and anti-didactic approach is beneficial when negotiating fragments of the past.

Contents

Acknowledgements

My first acknowledgement goes to my parents, Lynn and Paul, for teaching me to be both inquisitive and practical, and supporting me, unwaveringly, in every life path I have chosen to take. They have never – not even for a second, in my entire life – not believed in me, and for that I am sincerely grateful. Secondly, I thank my grandmothers, Maureen and Elsie, who instilled in me the importance of storytelling, taught me the value of conversation, and always kept me grounded and humble.

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Finally, I thank Luke, who's encouragement helped me believe that I might be capable of completing a Ph.D. in the first place, and who, if he were here, would be very, very proud.

How to Read

This thesis is a creative work.

Unable to separate my roles as artist, writer, researcher, and doctoral candidate, I have produced a body of text that exemplifies both practice and research. Both rely on one another, in method as in product.

The imposition of structural changes, such as a margin for both myself and my reader to make notes, allows the thesis to mirror the generative, tangential, and associative nature of other works. The use of diagrams, charts, conversation transcripts, and dialogic tone, again, echo my methods as an artist. In many ways this body of writing acts as a reflective journal, and as such mimics the journey of the work and research held within.

The accompanying volume, *Constellations*, acts as an inverse to this thesis. It contains solely images, all of which are important to the words found here. The act of cross-referencing between volumes is not intended to inconvenience my reader — though of course it may do that — but to provide an embodied experience of the kinds of archiving processes considered across each tome.

Recognising this thesis as a piece of work in its own right, I have requested it be read in hard copy. In asking for the thesis be handled as a physical entity, it may be considered not only a book, but a book-shaped-object — an artefact.

A man sets out to draw the world.
As the years go by, he peoples a space with images of provinces,
kingdoms, mountains, bays, ships, islands, fishes, rooms,
instruments, stars, horses, and individuals.
A short time before he dies, he discovers that the patient labyrinth of lines
traces the lineaments of his own face.

Jorge Luis Borges

I discovered what writers have always known (and have
told us again and again): books always speak of
other books, and every story tells a story
that has already been told.

Umberto Eco

Chapter One

Mapping Out

1.1. Working towards the Centre

> The facts are not all like fish on a fishmonger's slab. They are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend, partly, on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use – these two factors being determined of course by what kind of fish he wants to catch.[1]

This project is about the past, not a specific area of the past, nor a particular period of time, but the way the past is communicated. It is a project not about history, but about historiography, with focus on archives and museums as sites of historiography; structures in which the past is retold. More broadly – it is about time. I argue that art practice, with its capacity for creativity, spatiality, and multiple narrative viewpoints is a valid way to communicate the past, and necessarily ties what has gone with what is happening now, and perhaps what is to come. No moment in time stands alone, and no study of what is past is unencumbered by the present, and the past and present of that person studying it. This is the 'negotiation' referred to in my title – no look to the past or the archive is a one way exchange; as in a negotiation it is 'in action', a dialogue which has not concluded, it is perpetually in progress. The art practice that forms a crucial part of this research uses the diagram as a form through which multiple timeframes and narratives may come together, exemplifying this toing-and-froing of negotiation, and an experiential account of working with historical materials and sites.

Like the study of history, this text has been engaged with, planned, and written from many various points. The part that is to be read first has, of course, been written last. It has developed from the centre outwards, expanding to the edges of its prescribed form; a form that typically feigns a move from start to

[1] E. H. Carr, *What is History?*, London: Pelican Books, 1973, p. 23.

finish coherently, linearly.[2] For this reason I end at the 'centre', denying a smooth glide from introduction to conclusion.[3] It is important to acknowledge openly that a straightforward trajectory has not been my writing process because this work calls for a non-linear, multitemporal representation of the past and any encounter with it. I favour a more honest account of backpedalling, re-treading, erasure, remembering, and rewriting, arguing that this is the most accurate way that the past can be portrayed, and should therefore be made apparent in any retelling.

This thesis has three main sections, originally imagined as a three-way Venn diagram, which I came to think of as three rings in a Borromean knot.[4] Each ring overlaps the other two; they are linked in such a way that its form cannot survive were any one of the three main components removed. The text is concluded by a final section that imagines the central point of these overlaps, and I argue that this central point is where this research is situated, and a contribution to knowledge is found. I explain in more detail how this structure functions later in this chapter, but now I will briefly write about the three core sections of this diagram and the accompanying theories in each to form an overview, followed by a summary of the final chapter. Each of the following chapters considers a different work made in relation to the topics discussed.

Henceforth the word 'minor' is solely used in this sense, so I will drop the inverted commas

Ongoing throughout is a consideration of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of the 'minor', as defined in their text *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*. A summary of the three conditions for a minor literature are as follows:

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[2] As Stéphane Mallarmé writes: 'A book neither begins or ends: at most, it pretends to'. Mallarmé quoted by Roland Barthes 'Session of January 5, 1980, *The Preparation of the Novel: Lecture Courses and Seminars at the Collège de France (1978—1979 and 1979—1980)*, ed. by Nathalie Leger, trans. by Kate Briggs, New York: Columbia University Press, 2011 [Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2003], pp. 174–188, p. 183.

[3] The final chapter, 'Centre/s', conjures the idea of a labyrinth, suggesting that the linear structure of the usual thesis what did I intend to find? how did I go about it? what did I find? is unrepresentative of its actual navigation.

[4] It is important to state that I am thinking of the Borromean rings, or 'knot', here in mathematical terms, and not Lacanian ones, though a short consideration of this is presented in the final chapter.

- A minor literature should deterritorialise the major language.
- In a minor literature everything is political.
- A minor literature is always collective.[5]

'Thinking through' > formed opinion

Simon O'Sullivan[6] and Erin Manning[7] expand on Deleuze and Guattari's concept, applying their theories to art practice. Manning describes a minor practice as pragmatic, speculative, ephemeral, and precarious; terms which are all pertinent to this work. She writes that minor artful practices make it 'apparent, in the way they come to problem, that knowledge at its core is collective'.[8]

1.2. Chapter Summary

1.2.1. History

A site of 'major' discourse

The first area is History, and more broadly, historiography. The museum is considered a site of historical encounter and study, as well as a home for historiographical artworks, and I evaluate if such works may still hold contemporary relevance. Though now of core significance, this project did not start with an interest in historiography; instead it began with an earnest interest in the past; the artefacts, and documents that are preserved in archives. An immersion in archival practices and a long period volunteering in a museum store turned my attention to the process of dealing with remnants of the past, rather than the small, individual histories held and communicated by the artefacts themselves. This shift in focus marks an enormous change in

[5] Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, trans. by Dana Polan, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1986 [*Kafka: Pour une littérature mineure*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1975].
[6] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice', in *Drain: Journal of Contemporary Art and Culture*, 2 (2) Issue on Syncretism, 2005. https://www.simonosullivan.net/articles/minor-literature.pdf [last accessed 10 December 2020]
[7] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.
[8] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 13.

the direction of this project.[9] A book work, *Read History*, explores the contradictory and complex nature of dealing with archival or historical material alongside reading from history studies.

A brief overview of history studies and the claims to historical truth since the 1960s is given, going on to focus on Keith Jenkins's postmodernist text *Refiguring History*. Jenkins suggests that the past should be referred to as the 'before-now', acknowledging the necessary link between the past and the present. He proposes that a spatial consideration of the 'before-now' and the way it is encountered presents a more accurate portrayal of the study of history. Jenkins uses the example of Jacques Derrida's *différence* to explain the relation between moments of time, arguing that if no word can exist solely in meaning, without any preceding or succeeding word changing the nuance of its message, then the same can be said for the past.[10]

History is reliant on language

For this reason, plurality and hybridity are key features of my practice. I am not concerned with denying what might be 'true', nor am I stating that there is no such thing as 'fact' when looking at the past; however, multiple truths; historical, personal, social, temporal, political, and more, coexist. The diagram is used as a foundation onto which this plurality can be mapped, following Jenkins's assertion that a more spatial way of communicating the past is called for. History studies reading provides both a language with which to talk about my work,[11] and becomes a part of the work itself. Theory is translated into practice. This is the section of the thesis I think of as the 'what'.

The minor must work from within the major

What am I studying? What is my focus?

[9] Though with hindsight I see that an underlying narrative about the process of exploring the past was, in fact, ever present.

[10] 'When you arrive at the same words in a new context after you have met them in a previous one, the meaning will not be exactly the same.'
Keith Jenkins, *Refiguring History*, London: Routledge, 2003, p. 21.

[11] Following Deleuze and Guattari's assertion that the minor voice must always be in conversation with the 'major' voice. This ensures the 'political' necessity, outlined in the second condition.

1.2.2. Archive

Archive = site of encounter

The second area that is considered is Archive.[12] If history studies and the way it is communicated is the 'what', then this section is the 'where'. Reflecting on my time working in museum stores, this chapter contains a little of my experience negotiating fragmentary archival material and the subsequent reading that followed. A book work *Conversation Pieces* focusses on the catalogue card as a narrative device, pre-empting the diagrammatic works that follow, and testing how a seemingly objective structure can be used to convey the subjectivity ever present in any consideration of the past.

Non-linear form, spatial presentation of text

The essay collection *Archive Stories; Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History* describes a turn from the institutional archive as 'archive proper' and considers personal archives, grass-roots archives, and online archives, all of which indicate the archive not as a site for preserving the past *as it was*, but perhaps *as one would like it to be*, a site of activity and of the now. This shift in purpose of the archive echoes the entering of the 'post-truth' era,[13] in which a glut of often contradictory information and opinion is available at the touch of a button, undermining any notion of 'fact'. This future-focussed way of approaching the archive also addresses issues of post-colonialism, minority representation, and class, as well as the question of whose history is being told, and by whom — an increasingly prevalent contemporary concern.

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[12] I have intentionally avoided using the phrase '*the* archive' here as it conjures an idea of the institutional archive — 'archive-proper' — and in this project the word archive is considered not solely as a noun, but as a verb — a site of movement, of doing, capable of change and multiple, simultaneous interpretations.

[13] Post truth is frequently considered to be linked to 'lying'. Donald Trump is often considered to be one of the biggest purveyors of post-truth lies — tell the people what they want to hear, not what is true. The phrase post-truth is also considered to denote a narcissistic viewpoint in which an individual's personal and often emotional beliefs mean more than the facts presented to them, but here the phrase is used from a philosophical rather than political basis (though the two are often bound together). The secondary effect of 'post-truth' as defined above is that those without agenda or narcissistic tendencies, those simply in search of knowledge or understanding, are bombarded with infinitely contradictory articles, theories, standpoints, and 'facts' — in short, information overload. In an age when virtually any viewpoint can be seemingly backed up by 'fact', it seems impossible to suggest that there is any one narrative that successfully and truthfully outlines an incident.

Considering the archive a repository of 'time', the book *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time* by François Hartog is explored. Hartog argues for 'presentism' the inability to examine the past outside a contemporary understanding. He claims that presentism is most prevalent in a 'crisis of time'; a time in which 'events outstrip their modes of understanding'.[14] For Hartog this is the 2008 financial crash, but it is easy to see that we have passed through a more recent 'crisis of time' with the Coronavirus pandemic. Though I argue that a crisis of time is not crucial for presentism to be a consistent factor in the way the past is viewed, it is clear that the lockdown situation through which we recently lived made it harder to look to even our own past without nostalgia and slight bewilderment,[15] and almost impossible to look to any future that was recognisable. In an interview about the pandemic Hartog states; 'With lockdown, people suddenly find themselves locked in a suspended time, a time that is always the same […] But because of computers, a person can be present everywhere in a click. Therefore, the digital world, I think, is fundamentally presentist'.[16] Further considerations of archival time are explored through concepts such as heritage, memory, nostalgia, and hauntology.

The recent 'crisis of time' and its lasting effect is one of the things that makes this research both timely and pertinent. The complex temporalities involved in navigating archival fragments create an experience of time that is not simply linear. As Hartog states, time flits between the long days of lived experience and the instantaneous accessing of everything, everywhere. A practice that explores these fluctuations in time and the experience of it is both relevant and necessary.

Time of writing:
January 2021

[14] Peter Seixas, "Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time', in *International Network of Theory for History*, https://www.inth.ugent.be/content/regimes-historicity-presentism-and-experiences-time [last accessed 12 May 2020]

[15] I find myself often now watching films or reading books in which people are gathered, laughing, talking, touching, hugging and thinking how alien it seems. Yet in real time it has been less than a year since that life was a reality such is the effect of a crisis of time.

[16] https://fortune.com/2020/07/12/work-from-home-coronavirus-time-distortion/ [last accessed 16 November 2020]

Fiction(ing) ≠ **O'Sullivan and Burrows's** *Fictioning*

1.2.3. Fiction(ing)

The third chapter is 'Fiction(ing)', a term which encompasses both research process and practice method. Initially, and for a long time, this chapter was entitled 'Literature', as the reading of literature, creative writing, and literary theory has played a significant role in the shaping of this research; however, the connotation of a more traditional 'literature review' and the sense of dormancy – of lack of active practice – in the word forced a reconsideration. Continuing from the 'what' and the 'where' of the previous chapters, this section is considered the 'how'. Reading is a constant stimulus, and W. G. Sebald's use of images that at once reinforce and undermine his narrative is discussed. This device is considered alongside the physical museum that accompanies Orhan Pamuk's novel, *The Museum of Innocence*,[17] and Leanne Shapton's auction catalogue inspired work *Important Artefacts and Personal Property of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris* […].[18]

D. H. Lawrence, Tristan Tzara. Writing *about* writers

I go on to explore the term 'historiographic metafiction'; a genre outlined by literary theorist Linda Hutcheon as a body of text that 'works to situate itself within historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction'.[19] Humour is considered in texts such as *Out of Sheer Rage* by Geoff Dyer[20] and the play *Travesties* by Tom Stoppard,[21] and the use of humour as a deliberately destabilising yet relatable device is also explored in this chapter. Autotheory and hybrid forms of writing – which advocate for an experiential, embodied encounter with theoretical pursuits – are considered to be akin to my methods of making work.

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[17] Orhan Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence*, trans. by Maureen Freely, New York: Knopf, 2009 [*Masumiyet Müzesi*, Istanbul, Turkey: *İletişi, 2008*].
[18] Leanne Shapton, *Important Artefacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris, including Books, Street Fashion and Jewelry* [sic], London: Bloomsbury, 2009.
[19] Linda Hutcheon, *Historiographic Metafiction: Parody and the Intertextuality of History*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1989, p. 4.
[20] Geoff Dyer, *Out of Sheer Rage: In the Shadow of D. H. Lawrence*, Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 1997.
[21] Tom Stoppard, *Travesties*, London: Faber and Faber, 1975.

Such literary theories are used to explore my work *Encounters*, shown in Bishops' House Museum, Sheffield, which replaced all of the original museum signage boards with ones I had written as part-prose, part-playscript, conveying a personal encounter with the fifteenth century house-museum. I then explore the commonalities between this work, historiographic metafiction, and autotheory, according to the three conditions of a minor literature, asserting that works such as *Encounters* may be considered 'minor' in the Deleuzoguattarian sense.

Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature

In *Fictioning*, David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan write that the intention for their text 'has been to produce a diagram syncretic in character of an expanded field of fictioning practices that embraces both the rhapsodic and the scientifically inflected'.[22] My hope for this text is similar, and through a fluctuation of style and syncretism, diagramming is considered a fictioning practice in its own right, creating another type of language that is viewed alongside the written word. In considering writing and diagramming to be fiction(ing) processes, the act of reading is bound to the act of making, both becoming methods of art practice, of making work.

Syncretism = the combining of varying schools of thought

Diagram = visual language of objectivity, order, logic

1.2.4. Centre/s

The final chapter of this thesis; 'Centre/s' asserts that we conclude at the centre, as in a maze, and that there may be more than one centre, more than one ending to this work. I discuss a final piece of work made for Kelham Island Museum entitled *Along These Lines*. The work mimics technical diagrams found in the museum's archive, around which fragments of text are plotted, combining site writing, autobiography, historical, and contemporary research

[22] David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan, *Fictioning: The Myth-Functions of Contemporary Art and Philosophy*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019, p. 8.

into the area, and questions the site as 'post-traumatic landscape'.[23] This installation is employed, parallel to the work *Encounters*, to examine how thoroughly the works and research explored in the following chapters meet the aims of my project, followed by a consideration of how this Ph.D. may be seen as pertinent in contemporary culture, its contributions to knowledge, and where the work might go from here. A consideration of how this research is relevant to contemporary historiographical and museological discourses including notions of inclusivity, classism, and decolonising the museum is made in this final chapter, following Deleuze and Guattari's assertion that the minor is always political.

The Brutish Museum
Dan Hicks

1.3. Structure

It has been an ongoing concern that explaining the tropes used in the structuring and writing of this thesis would occupy too dominant a role in this introduction and detract from any candid outlining of the project. Writing about autotheory and hybridity, Arianne Zwartjes states, 'There is also the question of what it means to be "successful" as a hybrid work, rather than to be simply clever or gimmicky, or simply thrown together without a sense of necessity or resonance'.[24] Though this has caused apprehension for me, each device used herein has been chosen for a reason that is specific to the aims and claims of the research. By addressing each of these devices in turn, a different aim for this research will also be addressed.

Style-over-substance?

[23] The site as post traumatic landscape was the overall theme of the exhibition in which I was I was invited to take part. The intention of the theme, I think, was to consider the remnants of Kelham Island's lost industrial heritage, however my work considers the fact that the ongoing gentrification of the area may also be considered traumatic, as life-long residents of the suburb are priced out of their homes by increasing property prices and renovations of the area.

[24] Arianne Zwartjes, 'Autotheory and Hybridity', see: https://www.ariannezwartjes.com/autotheory-hybridity/ [last accessed 16 Nov 2020]

1.3.1. Diagram as Narrative Device

> Aim 1. To test how the diagram – a form that sits between image and language – can be used to convey the fragmentary experience of the archive.

The use of diagram is carried over from practice to thesis. Though no images of my installed works feature in this text, mind maps and diagrams are shown, illustrating a 'thinking through': an idea integral to my practice. These diagrams feature in both the thesis and *Constellations*: the book of images that accompanies this text. I follow Jakub Zdebik's assertion that the diagram sits *between* image and language,[25] an experimental space of possibility that is simultaneously both, and neither – not a solely visual work nor sufficient to stand in for a text alone. This diagrammatic space is further expanded into the thesis by the application of a margin, in which the reference numbers for the images in *Constellations* may feature more prominently and immediately than in a footnote. It also provides a space in which associative, fragmented notes may be made, linking ideas that may have no place in the main body of the thesis, denying a solely linear reading of the text, and exemplifying the need for a spatiality when relaying a research process. The empty space left in the margins provides room for further (often recurring) ideas and associations to develop over time, and creates a space for the reader to note their own associations, adding to the generative nature of this work.[26]

Deleuze and Guattari → Rhizome

ie. p. 1., fig. 7. = page one, figure seven

Bender and Marrinan → The white space of the diagram is as important as that which is filled **→ Diderot**

Featured in the three main chapters

My appropriation of a library accession register to illustrate the reading that accompanies certain sections of the text reinforces a line of enquiry in which systems of categorisation may be questioned. Often books and essays fit into more than one categories, and the registers contain readings that have not made the 'final-cut'. Creating such a taxonomy highlights its instabilities and

[25] Jakub Zdebik, *Delezue and the Diagram: Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organisation*, NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012, p. 1.
[26] This idea is taken from Kate Briggs's translation of Roland Barthes's *The Preparation of the Novel*, in which the margin functions in a similar way, allowing associations to be made without the body of the text being broken.

variables, and conveys some of the issues of trying to force multifarious and interconnected research into a rigid structure. I am conscious, also, that this project must culminate in making sense of things, an accurate presentation of what has been achieved and how, and so a diagrammatic form has been employed as words alone will not suffice.

I argue that personal experience shapes the way any kind of research is encountered, and it is thus important to note that my father is a mechanical engineer. It would be remiss to discount a childhood surrounded by technical drawings, exploded view diagrams, and Haynes Manuals as inconsequential when considering my use of diagram. Throughout my adolescence the diagram became the thing referred to when things did not make sense. When *a* and *b* didn't equal *c*, my father would put on his glasses and pore over the intricate lines and markings until things became clear. This led to the diagram a visual representation of a thing that needed understanding being regarded with an unquestioning reverence.

Nostalgia → **Svetlana Boym**

Simon O'Sullivan writes that 'the diagram is rhythm emerging from chaos, the manipulation of chance to suggest the "emergence of another world"'.[27] In my practice particularly the work *Along These Lines*[28] the objective, quasi-scientific structure of the diagram has been used as a ground on which to map the written word, producing if not 'another world', as suggested by O'Sullivan, then an alternate one where layers of truths, temporalities, and experiences coexist. My work juxtaposes the unreliability of narrative with the accuracy of the diagram, each undermining the other, asking questions rather than answering them.[29] Artist Amy Silman writes that in the diagram 'everything is relational. In this sense a diagram is utopic, showing how things *should* or *might* go, re-envisioning things expansively, not merely describing them

Exhibited in Kelham Island Museum, 2019

[27] Simon O'Sullivan, 'From Stuttering and Stammering to the Diagram: Deleuze, Bacon and Contemporary Art Practice', in *Deleuze Studies*, vol. 3., issue 2., pp. 247 259, p. 255.
[28] Discussed in detail in the final chapter, 'Centre/s'.
[29] Much as the images function within W. G. Sebald novels such as *The Emigrants* and *Austerlitz*, at once the text is reinforced by the use of image, but we must also question whether the image has diverted the text from its more 'truthful' course.

categorically'.[30]

p. 27., fig. 86.

While a diagram of a piece of machinery may be accurately made and presented, the components are finite. My diagrams present a more abstract space, without end, defined edges, or a predetermined number of pieces. Jakub Zdebik, in *Deleuze and the Diagram*, writes:

> The diagram thus does not represent, but rather maps out possibilities prior to their appearance, their representation. This new dimension lies between the visible and the articulable, and therefore traits are not exactly pictures or written language.[31]

1.3.2 *Constellations*: Appropriating Aby Warburg

An archival experience?

> Aim 2. To present a spatial account of an investigation that denies a linear or chronological reading.

Here I address the deliberate decision not to use any images of works in this text, despite my interest in the combination of text and image. The images that accompany this text are to be found in the book *Constellations* and cross referenced between that volume and this. The need to cross reference intentionally breaks the reading of this thesis as a flowing narrative, and the images are arranged in such a way that associative relations are forced. I follow Walter Benjamin's concept that 'ideas are to objects as constellations are to stars'.[32] Like constellations of stars, lines may be drawn between points of clarity to produce a wider image, but these can only be picked out in relation also to what they are not, the other stars in the sky define the constellations as

[30] Amy Silman, 'Notes on the Diagram', in *The Paris Review*, November 12 2020 https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2020/11/12/notes-on-the-diagram/ [last accessed 15 Nov 2020]
[31] Jakub Zdebik, *Delezue and the Diagram: Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organisation*, p. 1.
[32] Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. by John Osborne, London: Verso Books, 1998 [*Ursprung des deutschen Trauespiels*, Berlin: Surhkamp Verlag, 1963], p. 34.

much as those that form the final arrangement. Named constellations are a product of storytelling – mythologies of the past carried over to the present – subjectivity and objectivity combined. Stars do not move, regardless of how they are grouped, yet in the grouping a subjective narrative is created, a mythic tale decides what *is* and what *is not*.[33] Benjamin writes, 'Ideas are timeless constellations, and by virtue of the elements being seen as points in constellations, phenomena are subdivided and at the same time redeemed'.[34]

Adorno → Ideas have autonomy, but do not exist in isolation **→ Rhizome**

My book *Constellations* comprises solely of images.[35] Not all of the images in the book are referenced directly in this text; however, all are relevant to the project as a whole, recognising not only the research and references that have made the 'final cut', but also those that have played a part in this complicated journey. The inspiration for this body of images, imitated in its appearance, is Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*.[36] Warburg's project spanned five years and was incomplete at the time of his death in 1929. Christopher D. Johnson describes this project as Warburg's attempt to 'map the afterlife of antiquity'.[37] The work takes the form of large black panels, each with black and white images in varying formations often exploring an artefact and its reiterations and replications through time. Though never finished, it is estimated that Warburg planned at least seventy-nine panels, and perhaps as many as two hundred to form the final 'atlas'.

Mnemosyne = Greek Goddess of Memory

p. 8., fig. 5.

The use of the word 'atlas' resonates with this project as it suggests a there is a spatial, or topographical element to the work, rather than the informative

[33] And this grouping will differ country to country, culture to culture. A smaller section (asterism) of constellation Ursa Major, known historically as 'The Great Bear' (after the Greek myth of Callisto), is known as the 'Big Dipper' in the US, and the 'Plough' in the UK. Elsewhere, in Alaska, for example, it is a small part of the whole-sky constellation, 'Yahdii', a figure that walks from east to west overnight, while in Arabian history the stars represent a coffin with three mourners surrounding it.
[34] Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 34.
[35] With an Index, at the end of the book.
[36] Aby Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, 1924 – 1929 (unfinished).
[37] In the same way a museum might also be considered a map of the afterlife of an object.
Christopher D. Johnson, *About the Mnemosyne Atlas*
https://warburg.library.cornell.edu/about [last accessed 14 November 2020]

function of the 'encyclopaedia' the work is not simply to be 'learned', but travelled, experienced. I have wondered if Warburg's work might also be a dictionary providing a vocabulary with which to think about images, though some panels speak more as a thesaurus, providing different iterations of the same image; and as in a thesaurus, each signifier is not an exact replacement, or true synonym, for another, each containing slightly alternative nuances to the original image/word sought.

Diderot

'In an age where books were the primary medium for scholarship, Warburg's approach was audacious'
Othman Hakimi

The images in *Constellations* accompany this text as a visual map (or atlas, to use Warburgian terms) of the journey. Maps often differ according to the foibles of the cartographer, for political motives, or vary in accuracy or omission depending on their prospective uses and users.[38] Likewise, the book of images here is designed according to my version of events. Some images may seem unimportant to the thesis, but they have been a part of it, tangentially, perhaps, yet it seems significant to recognise the threads that this research has led me to pull upon, noting not only those which have assembled to form this thesis, but those that went nowhere, or did not fit into the finished thing. The black background of the page not only mimics Warburg's aesthetic, but also represents the darkness from which these reference points emerged, a darkness in which there is still much to be discovered. *Constellations* is made to deliberately contrast the text of the thesis, the images acting as a negative or inverse version of the script. This project has, in part, been one of text and image, how those two components in history telling can be brought together or juxtaposed to elucidate a different perspective.

Although Warburg's collation of images may be seen as a stand-alone work, it is noted by Johnson that two full panels of text were planned, though never

[38] One map of the Rocky Mountains shows a peak named 'Mount Richard', which two years later was found not to exist a fictional addition by map maker Richard Ciacci, who sought to immortalise himself through his cartography. Other map alterations or additions have been the product of propaganda, particularly prevalent in times of war when an incorrect map was penned and leaked to the 'enemy' meaning they did not possess a true version of the terrain they planned to traverse. In less political situations 'trap streets' occur, where a fictional street will be added to a map in order to watch for plagiarism among cartographers. If the same street appears on a competitor's map, then it is to be sure that they have plagiarised someone else's work.

completed. Johnson writes that Warburg 'increasingly deployed such panels in his lectures and presentations',[39] suggesting that this collection of images was not intended to exist solely in visual form, but alongside the written or spoken work, as is the case here. Georges Didi-Huberman in *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms* writes that *Mnemosyne* is predated and foreshadowed as a concept by Warburg's construction of his library, built between 1900 and 1906. He writes:

p. 9., fig. 10.

Benjamin
Unpacking My Library
Borges
The Library of Babel

> In this rhizome-like space, which by 1929 contained sixty-five thousand volumes, art history as an academic discipline underwent an ordeal of regulated disorientation: everywhere that there existed *frontiers* between disciplines, the library sought to establish *links.* But this space was still the *working library* of a 'science without a name': a library, thus, *for work*, but a library that was also a *work* in progress.[40]

Physical mimicking digital the internet is also a non-static space for documents

The creation of a non-static space for documents, books and artefacts to be housed is one close to a fundamental idea on which this project has been built. It has been most useful to this pursuit to think of the word 'archive' as a verb rather than a noun if the term archive comes to mean something active, rather than static, it allows space for movement in the remnants of the past, rendering them full of life and possibility rather that 'dead' inactive spaces in which history, and time, stands still. As in Warburg's library, links are to be found between the inhabitants if only they are allowed to roam; if their taxonomies remain unfixed and fluid.[41] Throughout the course of this research I have often referred to the archive as a 'theatre', both creating a space for the inhabitants of archival material to come alive, and also a place in which an individual must 'act out a role'. One does not act as themselves in an archive;

Arche
Greek→
'Source of action'

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[39] Christopher D. Johnson, *About the Mnemosyne Atlas* https://warburg.library.cornell.edu/about [last accessed 14 November 2020]

[40] Georges Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image: Phantoms of Time and Time of Phantoms, Aby Warburg's History of Art,* trans. by Harvey L. Mendelsohn, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvanian State University Press, 2002, [*Devant l'image: Questions posées aux fins d'une histoire de l'art*, Paris: Èditions de Minuit, 1990] p. 21.

[41] The necessity for this is shown in my inability to clearly delineate my readings into set categories in the accession registers that interrupt the main body of this thesis.

the movements made, time taken, and consideration given to the objects housed there are prescribed by the conditions of the space itself.

1.3.3. Borromean Rings

Later, 'model' will become 'metamodel', but chronologically I do not know this term yet
Manning
Metamodel = research-creation

> Aim 3. To read from and link together three areas of study, and consider this linking a model for a historiographical art practice.

The rhizomatic, spidery diagrams that accompany this thesis have allowed connections to be formed in a way that seems most natural. The use of Borromean Rings is another of my attempts to simultaneously illuminate and obfuscate this project as a whole. Borromean Rings, in mathematics, are three rings that link together in such a way that if any one ring is removed, the other two will fall away from each other. Here, these three rings are the three main chapters; History, Archive, and Fiction(ing). Each is a separate, autonomous area of study, encompassing its own reading and thinking, while relying on the others to form the whole. If any section were to be removed, then the project would collapse.

p. 7., fig. 3.

p. 6., fig. 2.

In Mathematics:
a∩b∩c
Thus:
History∩Archive∩
Fiction(ing)

These circles may also be thought of and mapped as a three-way Venn diagram. The point, or intersection, of the diagram where all three sections meet and overlap is where this research concludes. The three separate rings, or circles, meet to elucidate something, and in the union of these three areas something new is achieved and a contribution to knowledge is found. Reaching the centre of this diagram clarifies how each individual section depends on the other two. Only in considering all three areas simultaneously may what has been accomplished be perceived. Like a labyrinth, this reaching of the centre marks a completion — the arrival at the place I have been seeking.

And, as in a labyrinth, much getting lost, re-treading, and recovering ground is enacted before arrival at this point.[42]

The accompanying diagrams may act as an elevated view of the labyrinth, yet they have only been possible to draft upon its completion. During the process of the research I have, at times, felt helplessly lost in the maze.

> The encyclopaedic order consists in gathering together our knowledge in the smallest place possible, and, to place, so to speak, the Philosopher above this vast labyrinth at a greatly elevated point of view from where he may be able to perceive the principal arts and sciences at the same time; to see with the glance of an eye the objects of his speculations, and the operations he can perform on those objects; distinguish the general branches of human knowledge, the points that separate them and the points that unite them; and even sometimes catch a glimpse of the secret paths that unite them. It is a kind of map of the world.[43]

1.3.4. Writing Style

> Aim 4. To test literary techniques such as site writing, autotheory, and anecdote as essential methods in examining historiography and the archive.

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[42] The blog post 'Thesis Knowhow, 'the contribution' can create coherence', explains the Nordic writing device of the 'red thread'. The red thread in a thesis is the line of enquiry that runs throughout the text, the thing that keeps the writer (and reader) on track. It is the answer to question 'what is this research really about?'. Here, the red thread is the bringing together of history, fictioning, and archive via art practice to create a viable and representative way of looking at the 'before-now', challenging any linear and 'factual' retelling of the past. Hopefully this particular 'red thread' will act as Ariadne's string, guiding both myself and the reader through the labyrinth that follows.
Pat Thompson, *Thesis Knowhow, 'the contribution' can create coherence*, April 2nd 2018, https://patthomson.net/2018/04/02/thesis-knowhow-how-the-contribution-can-create-coherence/ [last accessed 08 November 2020]

[43] Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, New York: Columbia UP, 1994, [*Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1991] p. 187.

Roland Barthes, in *The Preparation of the Novel*,[44] expresses his sadness that his work is often 'reproached for intellectualism'. He claims that he wants to 'reduce that discrepancy, to be rid of it by at last producing a new, *accurate* writing, one that really expresses the *whole* of me'.[45] The most-read sections of my copy of Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things* are the foreword and the preface. In the foreword Foucault writes:

> This foreword should perhaps be headed "Directions for Use". Not that I feel the reader cannot be trusted he is, of course, free to make what he will of the book he has been kind enough to read.[46]

For some time, I planned to appropriate Foucault's foreword to explain how this thesis has been written, and thus may be read, but like many other plans, this eventually fell by the wayside.[47] In the 'Preface' Foucault begins; 'This book first arose out of a passage in Borges, out of the laughter that shattered,

The 'how to read' section of this thesis was reintroduced one month before submission, but is less reliant on Foucault by this stage…

[44] That Barthes should express a wish to write in a more self-expressive way just one year prior to the release of his final book *Camera Lucida* seems hardly coincidental. Throughout the course of this Ph.D. I have been a member of The Roland Barthes Reading Group, convened by Dr. Sharon Kivland. For five years we read through Kate Briggs's transcription and translation of Barthes's series of lectures *The Preparation of the Novel*. Though Barthes does not play an overt role in this thesis, this reading group means that his lectures have given rise to many considerations and conversations regarding the act of writing, rather than what is being written. His honest account of the *desire* to write, and the challenges in doing so have strongly formed the way this thesis has come together.

[45] Roland Barthes, 'Session of December 15, 1979', in *The Preparation of the Novel*, p. 164.

[46] Michel Foucault, 'Foreword to the English Edition', in *The Order of Things*, New York: Routledge, 1989, p. ix.

Foucault, like Borges, skates the peripheries of this thesis, and indeed it could have been written with his philosophies and ideas at the fore, but that is not the version of this text that has made it to fruition. Suffice it so say, I, too, am interested in 'the order of things'.

[47] I also fear there is a tone of condescension in Foucault's words that perhaps should not be parodied if you are not actually Michel Foucault.

Borges →
Animals are divided into:
1. Those that belong to the emperor
2. Embalmed ones
3. Those that are trained
4. Suckling pigs
5. Mermaids
6. Fabulous ones
7. Stray dogs
8. Those included in the present classification
9. Those that tremble as if they were mad
10. Innumerable ones
11. Those drawn with a very fine camel hair brush
12. Others
13. Those that have just broken the flower vase
14. Those that from a long way off look like flies

as I read the passage […]'.[48] In these sections of text there is a sense of the person writing them, I image Foucault sitting in a luxurious leather armchair – wingback, with brass stud detail – laughing aloud at a Borges text, and I am reminded that what I am about to commence reading is the research and philosophy of a *person*, not to be taken as given, as academically irrefutable, but the product of a singular human mind with all of its idiosyncrasies and individual experiences. That is how I would like this thesis to be read – not because I do not think it academically rigorous or without claim to knowledge – but precisely because part of that claim to knowledge is in recognising the subjectivity of the writer as present in any form of writing. To not make this explicit in the thesis itself would undermine what this research explores; the inherent viewer bias when looking to the past. To ignore my own past and experiences when explaining how this project has taken shape would be dishonest, for myself and my reader.

This concept may seem fundamentally postmodernist, and though it is often considered unfashionable or redundant to be considering postmodernism in this contemporary age, postmodern values are still much contested in historiographic discourse. Jenkins, in *Refiguring History*, writes:

Postmodernism's successor, Metamodernism, will be briefly considered later.

> Most professionals still hold that the *aim* of history is, to recall, to understand the past "on its own terms" and "for its own sake" uninfluenced as much as humanly possible by their own "historical context" for fear of committing the deadly sins of anachronism and distorting hindsight.[49]

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[48] Michel Foucault, 'Preface', in *The Order of Things*, p. xvi
I have a particular affinity to the Borges passage to which Foucault refers – an account of the categories that animals are divided into – according to a certain Chinese encyclopaedia. I referenced this Borges passage in the application I made to study this Ph. D., writing about Borges's trickery in attributing the taxonomy to a genuine translator of Chinese fiction, Franz Khun, yet the encyclopaedia seems to be fictional. I wrote; 'This weaving of the real and the imagined is pertinent to the way one must negotiate the archive, but something which often remains unrecognised.'

[49] Keith Jenkins, *Refiguring* History, p. 39.
It is acknowledged here that Jenkins' texts are twenty years old, yet I contend that the search for objective historical truth is still strived for by the discipline of history, and more current examples of the attitude that Jenkins describes are given in Chapter Two: History.

The writing style used both in the work made for this project and the thesis itself destabilises the search for objectivity, highlighting the associative and complex way the past is navigated. The use of multiple and plural narratives in works made with and from archival material is key to this pursuit. Historical fiction is often considered a fictionalisation of 'real historical events', based in its particular time period, as though the one in which it is being written does not exist. This work seeks to bridge the gap between the past and present, noting thoughts that are conjured *via* this journey, not to undermine the historian's claims to knowledge, but to add to them, following Jenkins's assertion that 'the past can be read at will and is so very obviously undetermining in relation to its endless appropriations (one past many histories) is to be both celebrated and put into practice'.[50]

'both/and' over 'either/or'

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Hutcheon distinguishes between postmodernism in literature and Historiographic Metafiction in her text of the same name. She writes: 'Historiographic metafiction manages to satisfy [...] a desire for "worldly" grounding while at the same time querying the very basis of the authority of that grounding'.[51] This dual aim is present in my work, which never fully undermines or reinforces existing narrative. My creative intervention is recognised, and often the methods of making work are alluded to in the work itself, producing a metanarrative about the process of studying archival artefacts and the past. Hutcheon suggests that this literary device crosses into other art forms: 'As in historiographic metafiction, these other art forms parodically cite the intertexts of both the "world" and art and, in so doing, contest the boundaries that many would unquestioningly use to separate the two'.[52]

Term thought to be coined by autotheoretical writer Maggie Nelson

I consider both this project and this text itself to be akin to literary genre Autotheory. Arianne Zwartjes writes:

[50] Keith Jenkins, *Refiguring History*, p. 10.
[51] Linda Hutcheon, *Historiographic* Metafiction, p. 5.
[52] Ibid. p. 7.

> Autotheory is the chimera of research and imagination. It brings together autobiography with theory and a focus on situating oneself inside a larger world, and it melds these different ways of thinking in creative, unexpected ways.[53]

Zwartjes explains that autotheory is a particularly pertinent form of writing in contemporary society; positing it as a relevant response to the digital age with its multitude of realities and disinformation: 'the quickly changing world, constantly confronting us with things that are outside pre-existing boxes, and pushing us to adapt.[54]

Autotheory makes a claim for a work that sits outside the fact and fiction dichotomy for writing that acknowledges the lived and embodied experience of the writer, yet is not simply condemned to the genre of 'memoir'.[55] It claims, further, that this type of writing should still be considered 'research' in the traditional sense. It is perhaps another name for what Jen Soriano terms the 'intersectional form'. In *Multiplicity from the Margins*, Soriano writes:

> Authoritative truth is not challenged by replacing one dominant truth with another, nor by diving into postmodern enquiry about the nature of truth, but by expanding our notion of authority from a single truth to multiple collective truths.[56]

Though I consider postmodern enquiry in historiography, it is as a springboard to consider the theories that have followed it, those allowing for

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[53] Arianne Zwartjes, 'Autotheory as Rebellion: On Research, Embodiment, and Imagination in Creative Nonfiction', in *Michigan Quarterly*, 23 July 2019.
[54] Arianne Zwartjes, 'Under the Skin: An Exploration of Autotheory', in *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies,* no. 6.1, Fall 2019.
[55] This is partly why autotheory is commonly considered a feminist form of writing. As Sarah Menkedick writes; 'There has long been an assumed dichotomy between research-driven and personal writing, with the former understood to be rigorous and intellectual and male, and the latter frivolous and easy and female'.
Sarah Menkedick, 'Behind the Writing: On Research', in *Longreads*, February 2019. https://longreads.com/2019/02/07/behind-the-writing-on-research/ [last accessed 11 November 2020]
[56] Jen Soriano, 'Multiplicity from the Margins: The Expansive Truth of Intersectional Form', in *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies,* no. 5.1, Fall 2018.

a consideration of multiplicity and plurality crucial in understanding the 'post-truth', digital, information-overload era in which we live.

By using the diagram as a foundation on which multiple narrative layers can sit, theory and experience coexist. Different iterations of voice are crucial, not only temporally, but as fragmentary, polyphonic voices that generate discussion around the fictionality of the archive, and, more elusively, what it means to its viewer. The question of whether the reader of this thesis is expected to believe the autobiographical fragments in this text to be true has been raised on several occasions, but the more important question is whether that matters. If the reading of this text prompts a consideration of the varying, personal, hybrid, and multifaceted ways the 'before-now' is accessed then the 'truth'[57] of the anecdotes employed here is irrelevant readers will bring their own experiences to the text, adding to the generative nature of the research/practice itself.

Phillip Guedalla
'Autobiography is an unrivalled vehicle for telling the truth about other people'

1.3.5. An Email Exchange

> Aim 5. To use a combination of authoritative and non-authoritative voice and language to destabilise hierarchical presentations of information, and create a 'minor' work.

First condition → To deterritorialise major language

Following Deleuze and Guattari's first condition of a minor work I advocate for a combination of voice, both authoritative and non-authoritative, institutional and local. Throughout this research discussion with individuals as a route to understanding source material has been crucial. When making work for Bishops House Museum, the archaeologist and chief volunteer at the

Julian Barnes
History acts as a 'greased pig', an attempt to capture it will result in the individual being made to look a fool.

[57] And of course the truths conveyed in the autobiographical information here are only my truths. My parents, grandparents, siblings, teachers, virtual strangers, will have a different memory of events of my past, and such is the nature of what is being uncovered here. Memory is a slippery thing to hold on to, and the gaps in information are often fictionally filled using the most likely scenarios and explanations the individual has to hand, and this is so akin to exploring the fragmentary nature of the archive and the vast lacunae that surround the fixed points of source material.

house, Ken Dash, was invaluable, and his words and insights formed a part of the work. Likewise, Chris Keady, curator of Kelham Island Museum, whose stories about the way the museum functioned in the local community helped to shape the way I thought about the site. And, of course, my Ph.D. supervisors Penny McCarthy, Sharon Kivland, and Peter Jones, have initiated many conversations about this practice that have immeasurably shaped the way it has been thought about and formed.

Holly Pester, in the text *Archive Fan Fiction* writes:

> I would like to add another set of material condition that shapes a research project [...] the significant relationship that the researcher builds with the archive custodian [...] the developed intimacy or lack thereof with the archivist, influences the relationship the researcher has with the material.[58]

This acknowledgement of external sources outside of the reading of theory is seldom acknowledged. I have written, and quite comfortably write, that 'Jenkins's postmodern history theory has informed my thinking about the use of diagram in relation to historiography', but it is more difficult in this specific academic environment to say that 'there is a man who drinks in the bar I manage and he told me that he thinks of archaeology as magpie, taking parts of historiography, anthropology, social science, geology, and more to form a new, hybrid subject that is constantly questioning itself because it is not rooted firmly in any established discipline'. Yet, these words have been important to me when thinking about archaeology as a subject that consciously considers the implications of excavating the past as much as what is to be found there.

Freud
Civilization and its Discontents

The final trope used here is one that champions these grass-roots conversations that come not from reading philosophy and theory, but from

[58] Holly Pester, 'Archive Fan Fiction: experimental archive research methodologies and feminist epistemological tactics', in *Feminist Review*, 115, 2017, pp. 114 129. p. 118.

'Narratives and storytelling are important to working class lives. It is how we explain ourselves, how we understand the world around us, and how we situate ourselves in a wider context'
Lisa McKenzie

talking to people I have met along the way. I will use conversations with the same person throughout, as a recurring reminder that views and concepts are not solely shaped by what has been read, or may be considered 'academic'.

In 2014 I bought a collection of World War One letters on eBay, and like the diligent collector I had been trained to be at the museum I emailed the seller asking if he knew of their provenance. What followed is an ongoing email conversation about the nature of archival material, and the ethical implications of using such material, amidst general 'getting to know each other'. The eBay seller's name is Barry, and the conversations we have had throughout the course of this research have shaped and directly informed work that has been made. Because of this, small sections of email exchange between us interrupt this text, acting as archival material themselves allowing the reader to directly experience the fragmented nature of exploring remnants of the past, while elucidating the thinking behind the practice.

16th May, 2015

Hi Barry,

I have had a rare 'week off' this week which I have spent painting and rearranging my study so I have a nice place to work when I have to knuckle down again.

The conference did go well, thanks for asking. I was part of a panel so the Q&A at the end and people asked me quite a few questions so I think I (with the help of Mr and Mrs Jackson, and your good self of course) managed to spark some interest from the crowd. I want to write it up into a slightly more academic paper I'll send you a copy of course if I ever get round to it.

Do send me the letter if you don't mind, yes! I like the sound of it being 'a bit different'. When I sent you those books did I get your address wrong? Is that why they didn't arrive through the usual channels? I've been wanting to send you the book collating people's stories about their attachment to mundane, domestic things I made a few years ago, but am worried it will not get to you.

I LOVE the photos they seem to carry something of the atmosphere of the time. But Barry you do not tell me which one is you! I thought I had guessed but now I think it is Eric that I thought was you. Don't worry these photos will NOT be part of my research. I think you know that I am using some of our exchanges as a narrative that runs alongside more 'academic' writing. I have been asked about the 'ethics' of this what are

you to this research, a collaborator, participant, subject even? It seems strange to me to have to justify the use of conversations that everyone must have with people along the course of any extended research, perhaps it is because I have openly 'named and shamed' you! What is funny is that some people think I may have made you up to give a 'backbone' to my research, and that essentially I am having this conversation with myself. It made me chuckle to be asked if you were 'real'. I thought you would also find this amusing.

In regards to materials, I am happy to keep building on the things you send me (I will pay you accordingly, of course) if you come across anything that you think I will find of interest. I have been thinking recently about the way the objects in a collection are viewed as much by their relation to the other objects, as well as their own individual merits. Freud was an avid collector of historical artefacts and claimed that once the collection stopped growing and changing it was 'dead'. He would constantly swap old objects on his collections for new ones, following the idea that changing one item could breathe new life into the whole collection as it provided fresh contrast to the way each object could be seen.

Best wishes,
Louise

27th June 2015

Hello Louise,

How good it is to hear from you. I think I warned you at the start of out exchanges that I can be very slow with messages, especially when I think that I have nothing to report of any interest. So I suppose I have proven it now. Sorry.

I was really amused by those who seemed to doubt that I am real. (Tip). NEVER involve a phil grad in conversations on if or not he, you, or anything is real. It can get quite complex, not to say odd. So if you are questioned on the subject of my reality again, better reply 'probably'.

The council? Since my departure there have been two new attacks on our village life. There are plans afoot to build a tidal barrier to generate electricity across the river Wyre. 'Our' river, between us and Fleetwood. Also the Natwest are closing the last bank in the village. So life is not much more 'restful' for this little old geezer.

You did not get my address wrong when you sent the book. It was totally the PO's fault. So if you would like to send me more of your work, I would be more than pleased to see it. Any that you need to have returned, I will look after the item, and return it quickly.

The UFO letter came in an almost full old writing pad. The woman who sent the letter wanted to be so sure of getting the details correct that she rewrote the letter many times. The one I sent to you was the only one that went right to the end and signed off. So I was really fed up that the final page was not with it? I get the feeling it was actually to her son, but could be wrong.

I'm really interested in alien abduction, but where would I keep it? Sorry, another of my jokes.

I promise I will try to be less slow with future replies.

Keep cool,

Barry

2nd July 2015

Hi Barry,

Don't worry at all I was feeling like I had let our conversation down after you sent me such a fascinating letter. I intend to use it in the next book I make (of which I shall have an extra copy made for yourself). Slightly more academic this time as the theme of the series of book is 'The Good Reader' This is the blurb from the back:

Blurb written by **Sharon Kivland**

'In the text *Good Readers and Good Writers*, Vladimir Nabokov writes that 'everything that is worthwhile is to some extent subjective'. This subjectivity often makes the pursuit of being a 'good reader' difficult. *Reading Archives* explores a selection of writings concerning the ways to read history, often differing in opinion. These are shown with images of textual archival documentation, which themselves require close and thoughtful reading. Directly exploring a conflict in her own practice, the author questions which is more important: reading the archival document itself, or reading the ways we can or should read it.'

Your workspace sounds like a little museum in its own right! I love a room with lots of interesting things to look at, which is exactly why I need a calming space at home or I would never get any work done.

p. 59. Fig. 260.

How is Brenda now? Fully recovered, I hope.

The UFO letter is one of my favourite items already it is clear that much time has been taken over the wording and narration. I initially got the feeling it was to a friend, but on second reading it could also easily be to a son. I did a quick bit of googling to see if I could anyone reporting the same thing from the same date and there seems to be quite a lot of reports in Lancashire around that time, but mainly in July and September. I think the letter states it is at the end of August. One account from July cites the same thing, 'star brighter than all the rest'… etc. I think looking into this could take up way too much of my time haha!

It is very nice to hear from you,
Have you had the heatwave up your way? Yesterday was the hottest I have known it I think.

Speak soon,
Louise

9th July

Hello Louise,

One of the things I like about our exchanges, is that you never fail to give me food for thought. Last time it was the theme of reality. Now it's what value has art in itself, apart from what mankind places on it? The problem is that I can go-on for

ages about either subject.

I didn't know Nabokov had done any lit crit. I wish that I had. I was prompted to read the full article, especially as I had read at least two of the novels he covered. As you can probably guess my favorite is Kafka. I'm not saying that I agree totally with all Nabokov states though. (Got a nerve ain't I). As I understand what he writes, our subjectivity makes 'art' worthwhile. While that is in part true, as any work of fiction can only be read by the reader with subjectivity, if it were not so, we would all like/dislike the same works. Our subjective reading (even if we misread or misunderstand) of what is read, is what make the work 'ours', within our own frame of reference. Subjective reading, also has its dangers. Would Nabokov's Lolita *have been allowed to be published in today's climate?*

If a writer lives a simple life in the country with her sisters/brother, it doesn't mean that she knows little about her 'time' and 'place' within her society, and about that society in a wider sense. Are we not to expect imagination, wit and flair? If I am wrong and we are not to expect these things and more, then (I think), we are just left mediocrity and journalism.

Suppose Kafka had written The Trial, and locked it away in a cupboard, never to be seen again. Would that have diminished its worth as art? If so, then it means that art has no intrinsic value, just the value seen in it by a 'subjective' reading/viewing of it. I guess my argument is that the world was a beautiful place prior to the birth of mankind and any judgments then made.

I'm really happy at your reaction to the UFO letter. I had hoped that you would find some interest in it, but not the amount of interest that you express. I am posting another item of 'not our usual stuff' tomorrow. I hope that you see something in it that 'speaks' to you. You may think 'What has he sent me this for. It's not even our history?' I think it's very much all of our histories. In our (Britain's), case not a particular proud chapter. I eagerly await your view.

Speak soon,

Drink lots of 'fluids' in this heat. (Hic).

Barry

1.4. Surveying the Territory

All the devices used throughout my thesis exemplify my practice. This is, of course, a practice-based Ph.D. and I am often reminded that part of my task

is to demonstrate the necessity of the practice to the research.[59] In fact, I have been unable to write this text without using elements of the practice in it; the two are so bound together I can no longer separate them from each other research *is* practice and practice *is* research. As R. Lyle Skains writes, regarding a successful model for practice-based research:

> The resulting creative work and critical exegesis are thus bound inextricably together, informing one another in their communication of knowledge just as the research and creative practice informed one another. The resulting text can and should consist of both elements, the creative and the critical.[60]

This practice/research is generative.[61] Literary tropes are employed to emphasise the need for creativity and fiction when navigating the fragmented nature of the before-now. The diagram, existing between image and language, is a tool for demonstrating the spatiality needed to present this fragmented account of working with archival material. Autobiography, site writing, fiction, theory, sources, and research come together to form an account of what it is to look to the past from the present, and explore the problems, memories, observations, and imaginings from doing so. The three rings of History, Archive, and Fiction(ing) are brought together, linked in such a way that if any one were removed, this project would not exist. In this linking this consideration of these three areas simultaneously, *via* art practice my contribution to knowledge is formed.

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[59] I am intentionally using the phrase 'practice-based' rather than 'practice-led' here, following Linda Candy's definitions of the terms. For Candy, practice-led research 'is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice', whereas practice-based research 'is an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice', and must include 'analysis and mastery of existing contextual knowledge, in a form that is accessible to and auditable by knowledgeable peers'. Linda Candy, *Practice Based Research: A Guide*, Sydney: Creative and Cognition Studios, 2006, p. 3.

[60] R. Lyle Skains, 'Creative Practice as Research: Discourse on Methodology', in *Media Practice and Education*, 19:1, pp. 82–97, p. 96.

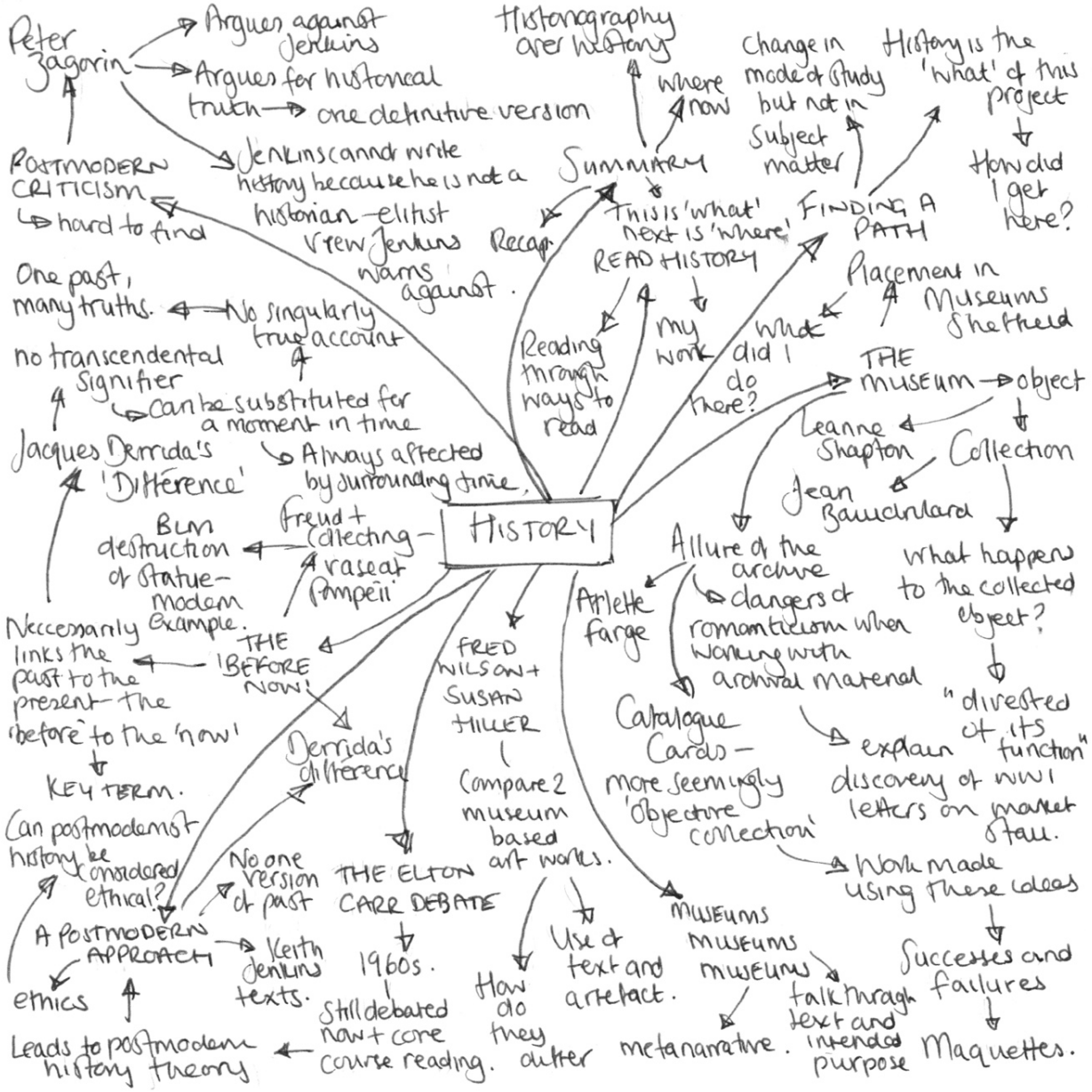
[61] 'The generative process is a brainstorm of ideas pulling from existing examples, recombination of elements from those exemplars, and novel approaches to the rhetorical problem.'
R. Lyle Skains, 'Creative Practice as Research: Discourse on Methodology', p. 90.

The truth can't easily be pinned to a page.
In the bathtub of history the truth is harder
to hold on to than the soap, and
much more difficult to find.

Terry Pratchett

Chapter Two

History




Museum
Archive
Memory
Time
Archaeology.
Historiography.
DDC
901 – 907.2
HISTORIOGRAPHY, PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY
See also museums, memory, time, archaeology, archive
Cabinet of Curiosity
Agamben
Collection
Jean Baudrillard
Archive Fever
Susan Hiller
Fred Wilson
Sonia Boyce
Mark Dion
Andrea Fraser
Claire Robins
Museum based interventions.
Critique
Freud museum
Nothing is lost
Frances Yates
'The Art of Memory'
Pierre Nora
'Between Memory and History'
Nostalgia
Svetlana Boym
Mark Fisher
Derrida
Hauntology.
Pitt Rivers
Dan Hicks
"The British Museum"
Benin Bronzes – call for decolonisation
2021 V+A Museum announce plans to restructure museum in chronological order
- individual memory
- collective memory (heritage?)
- cultural memory.
JME McTaggart 'The Unreality of Time' 1908
Michel Foucault The Archaeology of Knowledge.
Sigmund Freud Civilisation and its discontents.
Archaeological way of looking.
Georges Didi-Huberman 'Bark'
Auschwitz.
Christina Farraday "favouring chronology over design would be catastrophic"
non-linear
multi-temporality
Nostalgia Ghosts Memory Heritage Hauntology.
Diagram
Deleuze + Guattari
François Hartog "Presentism"
Jeremy Deller 'folk archive'
"Folk Memory"
Richard Evans.
Walter Benjamin 'On the Concept of History'
Paul Klee 'Angelus Nova'
Susan Buck Morss – 'The Gift of the past"
Elton/Carr Debate.
Elton (1969) The Practice of History
Carr – What is History? (1960)
BA core reading
Simon Schama 'Landscapes and Memory'
Derrida
Situated process of interpretation
MINOR.
Jennifer Wallace 'Digging the Dirt: The Archaeological Imagination'
'In Defense of objects' Bjørnar Olsen
John Tosh 'The Pursuit of History' (1984)
Pompeii
Temporal anomaly.
Gertrude Himmelfarb 'Telling it as you like it'
How is the past written/retold?
narrative
Ann Curthoys 'Is History Fiction?'
"Metahistory"
Hayden White (1973) 'The Historical Imagination'
moral implications?
moral problems of
"isms"
- Modernism
- Postmodernism
- Metamodernism
Voltaire
Hume
Gibbon
Lyotard
Jameson
Vermeulen + van der Akker
defined by oscillation between modern and postmodern
'End of History'
Linda Hutcheon 'End of postmodernism'
Post-modern Historiography.
Keith Jenkins.
Refiguring History (2004)
'The Before-Now' & 'The past is a medium of different density'
No Transcendental Signifier
marx
Spectres of Marx
Derrida 'Difference'
Eric Hobsbawm

2.1. Finding a Path

p. 7., fig. 3.

History = What

As explained, the structure of this thesis follows a Borromean Ring diagram: each main chapter is one ring in the structure. History is the first of the three rings to address as it is the focus of the work, and my reading into historiography underpins much of what is to come. As with the Borromean ring, some of the content here overlaps with the other two rings, 'Archive' and 'Fiction(ing)', as the three are intrinsically linked to one another. To fully separate them — or to even be able to separate them — would undermine the claim that it is the connection of these three areas that provides a model for art practice and a contribution to knowledge.

p. 68., figs. 297, 298.

Having spent much of my youth in the company of my two grandmothers — both formidable story-tellers — I have been interested in the way that stories relay the past since I was a child, and my desire to study history predates my decision to study art.[62] In 2006 I moved to Scotland to attend the University of Glasgow and study English Literature and History. Within a year I decided to leave this course and return to England to study art, eventually developing a practice that relied on both literature and history to inform its content.

This information is helpful in understanding this journey: it is no coincidence that the two subjects I had intended to study from the age of eighteen became the focus of the subject that allowed me to question and connect disciplines more associatively. This change in 'mode' of study, though not in subject matter, forms the crux of this project. The use of creative practice as a method for examining history underpins this pursuit, informing how it has shaped over time. I realised that it was not necessarily the events of the past in which I was interested (History), but the way these events are communicated (Historiography), and how this communication might be approached from the

[62] My decision to include email segments from Barry in this thesis is in some ways a nod to that way of life my grandmothers taught me. As the first of my family to go to University, never mind undertake a Ph.D., there is a link to my working class background in this research tactic, and the 'grass-roots' methods of information acquisition that I was exposed to as a child still inform any work I make or pursuit I undertake.

discipline of art, often considered more creative than academic.[63]

2.2. The Museum

Not *what*, but *how*?

Thinking about history as a communicative endeavour led me to museums as sites to be considered and examined. After visits to numerous institutional and museum archives I enrolled for a placement position working in the Social History stores of Sheffield Museums, dealing with items that were not on display in their museum sites. The placement ran for three months, and I chose to volunteer for a further three years. Though I have said that the events of history are not of as much concern to me as the way they are communicated, I am still inescapably drawn to certain artefacts or documents from which to work. I found that my focus fell almost exclusively on histories to which I felt a connection grass roots, female, Northern, working class histories and these themes continue to run through my work. As Antoinette Burton writes in *Archive Stories*, 'archival work is an embodied experience, one shaped as much by national identity, race, gender, and class as by professional training or credentials'.[64]

p. 83. fig. 359 361.

This experience evolved this project immeasurably. I began with a steadfast interest in objects, exploring how much of a story could be told from an object's appearance. I was focussing particularly on domestic objects, using creative writing to explore the life of an item as convincingly as possible without openly acknowledging any fictionalisation.[65] Books such as *The Hare*

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[63] Of course, I do not consider history to be more of an 'academic' subject than art, but I suspect it may be generally supposed. In 2019 I was asked to run a small workshop that considered how 'artists' might work better with 'academics'. My first suggestion was to consider the fact that artists might also be academics and not to separate the two from the outset.

[64] Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction; archive fever, archive stories', in *Archive Stories; Facts, Fictions, and the writing of History,* ed. by Antoinette Burton, Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2005, p. 9.

[65] This fictionalisation is linked to a brief exploration of 'Parafiction', as outlined by Caroline Lambert Beatty, in the chapter 'Fiction(ing), however complete fictionalisation is not a method that has been continued in this research.

with the Amber Eyes by Edmund de Waal,[66] *Utz* by Bruce Chatwin,[67] and *The Comfort of Things* by Daniel Miller[68] were all influential, but it was Leanne Shapton's *Important Artefacts and Personal Property of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris* […][69] that resonated most with the museum objects I was working with. Shapton's book is set out as an auction catalogue, detailing the personal property of two people we assume to be fictional, though the reader cannot be sure. Through the matter-of-fact object descriptions, the protagonists' lives together unfold revealing a poignant story between the covers of a seemingly commonplace, objective auction catalogue. I began to explore not just *object*, but *collection*: how an object or artefact is affected by the act of being 'collected'.

p. 20. fig. 54.
p. 42., fig. 162.

And what is a museum if not a collection?

A primary concern about the collection was the loss of the individual within it. In accumulating *en masse*, attention may be drawn to an object or artefact that would have been otherwise unnoticed; however, by placing an object in a group of 'like' objects, the individuality of one piece is lost. Quantity supersedes quality, and each object is viewed by its relation to the collection, rather than for its own merit. As Susan Stewart notes; 'While we can 'see' the entire collection, we cannot possibly 'see' each of its elements'.[70]

Jean Baudrillard writes that the fanaticism of the collector is what is to be studied, rather than the type of object that is collected: 'This fanaticism is identical whether it characterizes a rich connoisseur of Persian miniatures or a collector of matchboxes'[71] but in focussing on the collector, the object is

[66] Edmund de Waal, *The Hare with Amber Eyes*, London: Vintage, 2011.
[67] Bruce Chatwin, *Utz*, London: Vintage, 1998.
[68] Daniel Miller, *The Comfort of Things*, Massachusetts: Polity Press, 2008.
[69] Leanne Shapton, *Important Artefacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris,* 2009.
[70] Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection,* Durham, NC, Duke Diversity Press, 1993, p. 155.
[71] Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects*, trans. by James Benedict, London: Verso Books, 2005, [*Les Système des Objets*, France: Editions Gallimard, 1968], p. 94.

yet again lost.[72] He writes that an object must lose its utility to be collected: '[the object] devoid of any function or completely abstracted from its use, takes on a strictly subjective status: it becomes part of a collection'.[73] This prompted concerns about the objects collected by museums. If an object is divested of function and has taken on 'strictly subjective' status, can it be indicative of any period of time before the current moment, or does it exist solely in the 'now' to serve whatever purpose its viewer asks of it? The unstable position of the collected object undermines the museum's search for accurate representation, reinforcing the idea that there can be no examination of the past without full acknowledgement of the role of the present. The need for the subjective creation of an object's epistemological value, due to its loss of function through the act of being collected, opens a space where a creative practice can, and must, enter.

Heidegger
Thing Theory

Accurate = Authentic?

[72] Susan Hiller, on her work *From the Freud Museum,* considers the position of the collector: 'If you take a real collector what I call a real collector like Freud, who annotated very carefully the date, the providence, the price of each object that he acquired in a very orderly and precise way you can see that there is a tremendous pleasure there, an intelligent pleasure in this kind of acquisitive activity.' This suggests that Hiller's work mimicked Freud's position as collector, rather than considering herself as a collector, a 'real' collector. This raises the question of whether the artist that uses collection as their practice can truly be seen as 'collector'; their work is intended for a different purpose, for an audience, and often conceptual aim, rather than the simple pleasure of collecting.
Susan Hiller, 'Thinking Through Objects', in *Documents of Contemporary Art: Archive*, ed. by Charles Merewether, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006, pp. 41 48, p. 44.
[73] Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects*, p. 92.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 628.142 Collection — Theory, Personal, Museum.

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Jean Bauldrillard	The System of Objects	1968	Paris, France	Editions Gallimard		
John Forrester	Freud and Collecting	1994	London, UK	Reaktion Books	709.	In 'Cultures of Collecting'
Edmund du Waal	The Hare With Amber Eyes	2010	London, UK	Vintage (2011)		
Bruce Chatwin	Ut3	1988	London, UK	Vintage (1998)		
Leanne Shapton	Important Artefacts...	2009	London, UK	Bloomsbury Publishing	702.81	See 'Archive' 'Artists' Books'
Susan Hiller	Thinking Through Objects	1994	Massachusetts US	The MIT Press	155.9	In Docs of Contemp. Art : Archive
Sherry Turkle	Evocative Objects, Things we think with	2007	"	"	155.9	See: 'Archive'
John (ed) Elsner	Cultures of Collecting	1994	London, UK	Reaktion Books	709	See 'Museums'
Ellen Land-Weber	The Passionate Collector	1980	New York, US	Simon and Schuster	790.132	
Walter Benjamin	Unpacking my Library	1931	London, UK	Pimlico (1999)	628	In 'Illuminations'
John Fowles	The Collector	1963	London, UK	Jonathan Cape (1998)		See 'Fiction'
Phillipp Blom	To have and to hold	2003	New York, US	Overlook Press		
John Elsner	A Collector's Model of Desire	1994	London, UK	Reaktion Books	709	About John Soane Collection
Giorgio Agamben	Cabinets of Wonder	1970	Stanford, CA, US	Stanford Uni. Press	701.17	In 'The Man Without Content'
Dan Hicks	The British Museum	2020	London, UK	Pluto Press	06909	See 'Museums' 'History'
Susan M Pearce	On Collecting	1999	London UK	Routledge	709	
Orhan Pamuk	The Innocence of Objects	2012	New York, US	Abrams	06909	See 'The Museum of Innocence'
Mieke Bal	Telling Objects	2004	London, UK	Routledge		In 'Grasping The World'
Werner Muesterberger	Collecting: An Unruly Passion	1995	Boston, MA, US	Mariner Books	628	
Sandra H Dudley	Narrating Objects, Collecting Stories	2013	Maryland, US	Scarecrow Press		
Kevin M. Moist	Contemporary Collecting	2017	London, UK	Routledge	709	
Anthony Alan Shelton	Cabinets of Transgression	1994	"	Reaktion	709	In 'Cultures of Collecting'
Susan Stewart	On Longing	1992	Baltimore, MA, USA	John Hopkins Uni. Press	401.41	See 'archive' 'nostalgia'
Lydia Yee	Magnificent Obsessions	2015	London, UK	Prestel		Catalogue for Barbican Exhibit
Megan Bertagnolli	The Artist as Collector	2010	Manitoba, Canada	Mosaic (43) Journal		Re. Blair Brennan
A.S. Byatt	Possession	1990	London, UK	Vintage		
Viv Golding	Museums and Communities: Curators, Collections and Collaboration	2013	London, UK	Bloomsbury	709.	See 'Heritage' 'Community'
Phillip Hoare	Albert and the Whale	2021	London, UK	Fourth Estate		See 'Art History' 'Dürer'

2.3 From Collection to Archive

Given the process of cataloguing and organisation constantly underway in museum stores I have come to think of the artefacts there not as a collection, but as an archive. While 'Archive' as a theme in this project is explored in more detail in the following chapter, it is important to say now that I consider the objects in the museum stores both collection *and* archive. What makes a collection of interest is the *process* of archivisation, the cataloguing and considered intent to preserve and communicate for the future; rather than an affiliation with an institution.[74] Sigmund Freud's belief that 'a collection to which there are no new additions really is dead',[75] led me to think of 'archive' as something active, rather than static; a verb rather than a noun.

Archive = Space of Possibility

Derrida
Archive is a 'spectral' place

This language of 'death' frequently punctuates museum and archive studies. Writing about the John Soane Museum, John Elsner refers to the museum as a 'mausoleum':

> While the museum is a kind of entombment, a display of once lived activity (the activity whereby real people collected real objects associated with other real people or human beings), collecting is the process of the museum's creation, the living act the museum embalms.[76]

p. 22., fig. 60

Similarly, discussing his exhibition *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman*— shown in the British Museum Grayson Perry notes the exhibition title could

[74] Following Paul Ricoeur's suggestion that 'Archives are a set, an organised body of documents. Next comes the relationship to an institution'. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, [*Temps et Récit*, Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1983] p. 116.

[75] John Forrester, 'Freud and Collecting', in *Cultures of Collecting,* ed. by Roger Cardinal and John Elsner, Cambridge, MA: Reaktion Books, 1994, pp. 224 251, p. 227.

[76] This language of 'mausoleum', 'entombment', and 'embalming' enforces Baudrillard's idea that an object, once collected and displayed, no longer has a function it is a corpse and the museum its tomb.
John Elsner, 'A Collector's Model of Desire: The House and Museum of Sir John Soane', in *Cultures of Collecting,* pp. 155 176, p. 155.

also be an alternative name for the British Museum itself.[77] To turn away from viewing the archive or museum as a tomb or mausoleum and think of it instead as a site of activity revitalises the items contained there, rendering them full of possibility and potential. By considering the archive as a home for things that are in flux and still have a function, the site is transformed into one that houses activity and opportunity – opportunity that will rely on the intentions of the individual that chooses which artefacts to resuscitate and why.[78]

Chapter 3
Archive
Atmosphere of the archive, role of the researcher, role of the archivist

In *The Allure of the Archive*, Arlette Farge writes about the physical space in which she is working, recognising the effect of the quiet, calm-yet-tense atmosphere on the writing she does there. She notes the desire to become personally attached or inhabit the source material: 'You must always guard yourself against the persistent temptation to identify with the character, the situation, and the way of thinking and being in the document'.[79] Burton explains that the practice of reading history is 'a set of complex processes set in motion by one's personal encounter with the archive, the history of the archive itself, and the pressure of one's contemporary moment of what is to be found',[80] and refers to the 'romance of toiling in the "real thing" as opposed to surfing the net'.[81]

I got caught up in this romance instantly. On the run-up to the centenary of the outbreak of World War One, I was put in charge of all ephemera relating

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[77] Grayson Perry, *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman*, [exhibition], London: The British Museum, 27 August 2020 – 10 January 2021. https://www.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions/grayson-perry-tomb-unknown-craftsman [last accessed 2 April 2021]

[78] To continue the metaphor of death – perhaps too far – this process of researching in the archive may be considered a kind of necromancy, in which artefacts are risen from the grave and encouraged to do the bidding of their new master. They have not risen on their own and do not follow their own impulses, though perhaps, as in a séance, they might talk back.

[79] Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, London: Yale University Press, 2013, [*Le Goût de l'archive*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1989] p. 71.

[80] Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction; archive fever, archive stories', in *Archive* Stories, pp. 7 – 8.

[81] Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction; archive fever, archive stories', p. 13.

to that period, as others preferred to study three-dimensional artefacts.[82] This ephemeral, fragmented, and everyday examination of the past has continued to occupy my practice narratives of domestic, personal, and local histories echo through my work.

Deleuze and Guattari
What is Minor Literature?

Lost in a world of postcards from soldiers, letters home, ration books, and diary entries, I handled each object with a level of care and delicacy that, to me, mirrored the artefacts' importance. Wanting to make work from these documents but bound by the museum's privacy regulations, I sourced my own material. I bought, on eBay, a set of letters sent between four people during the first world war, which I dissected in the same way I had been taught in the museum stores. Yet it was not the same, something was missing. A few weeks later while walking through my local flea market, I saw a bundle of letters and postcards that I recognised to be from around 1917. The rain was dripping steadily onto the postcards from the tarpaulin above, marring the fragile pencil in which they were written. I moved them to safety, asking the stall holder about them, if he knew their provenance. For a moment, he looked as though he may have something interesting to tell me, and replied, 'Not a clue, they're ten a penny, duck. They're yours for a quid'.

p. 59., fig. 259.

Maybe I was doing it wrong?

I became suddenly aware of the way the archival environment had shaped my interactions with its artefacts, and slowly my attention turned to something I thought to be more objective the catalogue cards used to keep record of the collections. This seemingly mundane structure that strives for objective description exists in the physical world no less than the object it details. I considered the plethora of catalogue cards that were accumulated in the stores as another archive, yet not acknowledged as such. Occasionally

System over subject

[82] The word ephemera directly indicates the proposed lifespan of such artefacts they are intended only to be enjoyed or experienced for a short period of time. That they have now become permanent in a museum collection means that their status has changed, they are something other than what was intended for them. I found in the museum that most other volunteers were drawn to guns, helmets, uniforms, and medals, rather than the paper documents often detailing the more domestic effects of the war. These volunteers, perhaps coincidentally, were all students of History, rather than the Arts.

Was it ever an object in its own right?

when searching the stores for something that could not be found, the catalogue card stood in place of the physical object in its absence and its information had to be trusted.[83] This non-representational, two-dimensional structure became the object in *lieu*. What, then, happens to the existence of the catalogue card as an object in its own right? Questions about the fate of an object when its physicality is exchanged for its referent device, such as a catalogue card, began to occupy my work, reflecting in part a concern about the digitisation of archival material in exchange for the physical thing.[84] In the work I ask how successfully these communicative, taxonomic devices that are so commonly used in tracing objects of the past can stand in for the object itself.[85]

2.4. Catalogue Cards

Catalogue cards are usually found filed away by number in the type of small archival drawers that one imagines when thinking of small archival drawers. In the stores, each card, once completed, was initialled by the employee or volunteer who compiled it, and some initials were deemed more trustworthy than others. When I was eventually trusted to write my own cards for newly accessioned objects I was instructed to use language that was not colloquial,

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[83] This happens more than one might think. All museum stores are arranged slightly differently, but my experience was in a social history store, which was arranged by 'theme', and the collection was vast. I remember spending weeks looking for a tortoise shell shoe-horn, checking household items, footwear items, cobblers items, to no avail. Eventually it turned up in the 'walking/rambling' section. Such are the issues with taxonomies.

[84] I remember an archivist telling me that the Munich agreement had been digitised to the highest level of detail possible so it no longer had to be looked at physically, and that this digital alternative would mean the real thing could be preserved for much longer. I see this as some sort of paradoxical cycle the document can be seen in a digital form so that it stays in better condition in a physical form, which we don't need to look at because of its digital form. The actual document, then, exists as Schrödinger's cat, exposed to a small amount of radiation via its digitisation, and placed in a box that nobody wishes to open, its condition unknown.

[85] I recall Jorge Luis Borges's short essay 'On Exactitude in Science' in which he imagines a map that is made on a one to one scale, meaning the map eventually *becomes* the territory that is inhabited, rather than the geography it denotes.
Jorge Luis Borges, 'On Exactitude in Science', in *Collected Fictions*, trans. by Andrew Hurley, London: Penguin Books, 1998 [*Ficciones*, Buenes Aires: Emecé Editores, 1944], p. 325.

verbose, or unclear. This produced an urge to deliberately to fill out the cards playfully. I wanted to add my personality to the cards, as others had unknowingly done before me, describing embroidery as 'beautiful' or a particular fabric pattern as 'garish'. I wished for a role in the theatre of cataloguing, not by donating items to the museum, but by planting my personality firmly on a small wheel or cog in the grand machine of the system used to navigate it.[86]

During this time, I made a series of books addressing my experiences. The work was entitled *No. 25 (Vols I–V)*,[87] and consisted of four books in a handmade slip-case. The slip-case was made to fit five books, though only four were present (or made). Each of these volumes followed the same set of forty-five different objects, and could be cross referenced across each other. Volume One contained a catalogue card for each of the items hand written detailing its dimensions, condition, provenance, and appearance, Volume Three; an exploded view diagram or technical drawing of each item, Volume Four a short text, written as a monologue often colloquially explaining the history of the object, and its importance to its owner. And Volume Five showed black and white photographs of empty domestic spaces where the item may once have lived. Volume Two was intentionally missing, and was (I hoped it would be assumed) the book that contained an image of the object itself.[88]

p. 23., fig. 70.

Alan Bennet
Talking Heads

pp. 24 25., figs. 72 73.

[86] The donations museums receive, and the people that choose to donate is a whole different problematic area, and one I don't have space to discuss here. But my observation is that donations from minority communities and lower-income households are much less prevalent than those from middle class, white families, and so issues of accurate representation (especially in a social history context) are inherently embedded in museum collections.

[87] I chose this title because of its non-descript nature; it could be a catalogue number, index number, accession number, or house number (in fact it is the house number of my parents' house).

[88] The work was shown on a wooden writing desk, with a banker's lamp, and white archiving gloves, inviting the viewer to take part in the theatre of archiving while exploring the work and mirroring the archival conditions that impose an importance on the item one is interacting with.

p. 23., fig. 71.

Introduction of idea of diagrammatic form as a type of language

The catalogue card motif continued into further works, standing in place of the object itself, and alongside it in other iterations, exploring a subjective narrative in the rigid structure. These works addressed the destabilising effect of the combination of creatively written texts, or purposefully unreliable text, in the unyielding structure of the catalogue card, and more broadly the diagram, or taxonomic device.[89]

I consider these works to have both successful and problematic elements. Where they perhaps failed is that I exhausted the format. I reused the catalogue card motif repeatedly, pushing it to its limit, but I had to do so to understand exactly that: the limits of such a structure. The works, though well printed and attractive, were not attention-grabbing enough to encourage access to the underlying metanarrative about the language used to communicate the past, and the destabilising of any objectivity inherent in this. That the work could be easily overlooked reflects something of the concept itself: catalogue cards like most taxonomic structures serve an acute purpose in the communication of the past, but the physical artefact is most often the thing that catches the eye of the observer.

With hindsight, I can see that my preoccupation with the catalogue card format is, in fact, part of an enduring interest in the 'fragment'. The fragmentary nature of archival material is often acknowledged, but my concern with the fragment not only relates to the artefact, but a way of thinking about it. Working in the museum, ephemeral artefacts created fleeting impressions of moments in time, but also the dislocation of that moment in present time. My hesitation to read words that were illegible, my own memories, the reading I had been doing that informed my thinking, and

A move forwards to look backwards

[89] The most prominent of these works, *Conversation Pieces*, will be explored in the next chapter as it relies on a communication that has not yet been explained in enough depth.

the way the artefacts related to others I was examining created a fragmentary experience.[90]

A temporal fragmentation

This fits with ideas of the minor expanded upon by Manning, who describes the minor gesture as a 'force that make the lines tremble that compose the everyday, the lines, both structural and fragmentary, that articulate how else experience can come to expression'.[91] This is the point at which my work moves from a linear, narrative examination of the past to a spatial one, starting with the catalogue card and moving to the diagram. These works are representative of the fragmented way of thinking and understanding in the archive, showing a process of 'thinking-through', rather than presenting a formed opinion or conclusion.

[90] I think of Vladimir Nabokov's writing process the act of scribing upon numerous index card with sections of text that can be moved around until the story flows in the way he would like. Though my use of catalogue cards is no longer actively part of work shown, I use them in a similar manner, moving fragments around a page to create a diagrammatic layout, considering connections that are not immediately apparent.

p. 19., fig. 50.
p. 32., fig. 12.

[91] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 7.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 707.5–709 MUSEUMS, MUSEUM INTERVENTIONS, MUSEUM COLLECTIONS.

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
John Elsner	Cultures of Collecting	1994	London, UK	Reaktion Books	709	See 'Collection'
Claire Robins	Curious Lessons in the Museum	2013	Surrey, UK	Ashgate Publishing	707.5	See 'Artist Interventions'
Timothy Ambrose	Museum Basics	1993	London, UK	Routledge	708	
Giorgio Agamben	Cabinet of Wonder	1970	Stanford, CA, USA	Stanford (1999) University Press	701.17	From 'The man without content'
Dan Hicks	The British Museum	2020	London, UK	Pluto Press	069.09	See 'collection' 'History'
Clementine Deliss	The Metabolic Museum	2020	Berlin, Germany	Hatje Cantz Verlag	"	
Orhan Pamuk	The Museum of Innocence	2012	New York, USA	Abrams Books	069 09	See 'collection' 'fiction'
John Elsner	A collector's Model of Desire	1994	London, UK	Reaktion Books	709	In 'Cultures of Collecting'
Joanne Morra	Inside the Freud Museum	2017	London, UK	I.B. Tauris	708.1	See 'artist interventions'
James Putnam	Art and Artefact: The	2009	London, UK	Thames and Hudson	707.5	"
	Museum as Medium					
Susan Hiller	Working Through Objects	1994	Massachusetts, USA	The MIT Press	027 DC22	In docs. of contemp. art – 'Archive'
Martijn Sterens	Notes on the meta-modern museum	2011	online	Notes on Metamodernism		see 'metamodern'
Michel Foucault	The Archaeology of Knowledge	1969	Paris, France	Editions Gallimard	121.68	
Kevin Hetherington	Foucault, the Museum and	2011	online	The Sociological Review	"	See 'Diagram'
	the diagram					
Suzanne McLeod	Museum Making	2012	New York, USA	Routledge	727.6	
Brian Durrans	Museum, Representation	1992	London, UK	Anthropology Today (8)	"	See 'post-colonialism'
	and cultural Property					
Fred Wilson (interview)	Museums and Collections	n.d.	online	Art. 21	708	See 'artist interventions'
Fred Wilson	Mining the Museum	1994	New York, USA	The New Press	"	"
Griselda Pollock	Museums after Modernism	2007	Massachusets, USA	Wiley Blackwell	7276	
David Lodge	The British museum is falling down	1965	London, UK	MacGibbon and Kee	823	See 'Creative Writing'
G. Black + C. Reynolds	Engaging Audiences with	2020	online	Curator – The museum		
	Difficult Pasts			Journal Vol. 63		
Laura Peers	Strands which Refuse to be	2003	online	Journal of Material		See 'artist intervention'
	Braided			Culture Vol. 8		'Pitt Rivers Museum'
John Forrester	Freud and Collecting	1994	London, UK	Reaktion Books	709	In 'Cultures and collecting'
Elizabeth Buchan	The Museum of Broken Promises	2019	London, UK	Corvus		

2.5. *Museums, Museums, Museums*

In 2020 I wrote a short essay entitled 'Museum, Museums, Museums' exploring the museum in three parts, published online by *Litro Magazine.*[92] The piece takes its title from, and begins with, a rather lovely quotation from D. H. Lawrence:

Geoff Dyer
Out of Sheer Rage

> Museums, museums, museums, object lessons rigged to illustrate the theories of archaeologists, crazy attempts to co-ordinate and get into a fixed order that which has no fixed order and will not be co-ordinated.[93]

This quotation frames the three sections of text that follow it. The first, written in third person, explores my relationship to the museum as a precocious child, on the lookout for facts and figures with which to impress grown-ups. The second, written as a news report, recounts the story of John Nevin, an employee of the Victoria and Albert Museum in the 1940 and 1950s. After a stocktake in the museum revealed the loss of hundreds of objects, Nevin's Cheswick council house was searched. The police found over two thousand stolen museum items; the house was fully furnished with invaluable works of art, furniture, ornaments, and trinkets — some of which were found stuffed in toilet cisterns and up chimneys. When asked why he would do such a thing, Nevin replied, 'I was attracted by the beauty'.[94] The third part of the text, written in first person, is one that has appeared, in abridged form, in this chapter — the tale of finding the items I had been working on in a museum on a market stall, and the realisation that the aura of importance attached to

See Appendix One for full text.

p. 86., fig. 371.

Chapter 2, p. 51.

[92] https://www.litromagazine.com/essaysaturday/museums-museums-museums/ [last accessed 7 January 2021]
[93] *D. H. Lawrence and Italy: Sketches from Etruscan Palaces, Sea and Sardinia, Twilight in Italy*, ed. by Simonetta De Filippis, Paul Eggert, and Mara Kalnins, London: Penguin Classics, 2007, p. 435.
[94] See: Chris Hastings, 'How a modest council house was furnished with thousands of items from the V&A', in *The Telegraph,* 3 January 2009. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/4091349/How-a-modest-council-house-was-furnished-with-thousands-of-items-from-the-VandA.html [last accessed 7 January 2021]

museum artefacts exists, in part, because of the situation in which they are found.

The fragments conjoin; more than the sum of their parts.

These three short texts work together to create one narrative about the museum and the objects found there, in the same way museum artefacts are accumulated to relay a bigger story. The changing narrative voice is intended to separate these three tales, yet their content brings them together, creating a hybrid narrative about the museum, the allure of the artefacts it houses, and also its shortcomings.

2.6. Museum Interventions

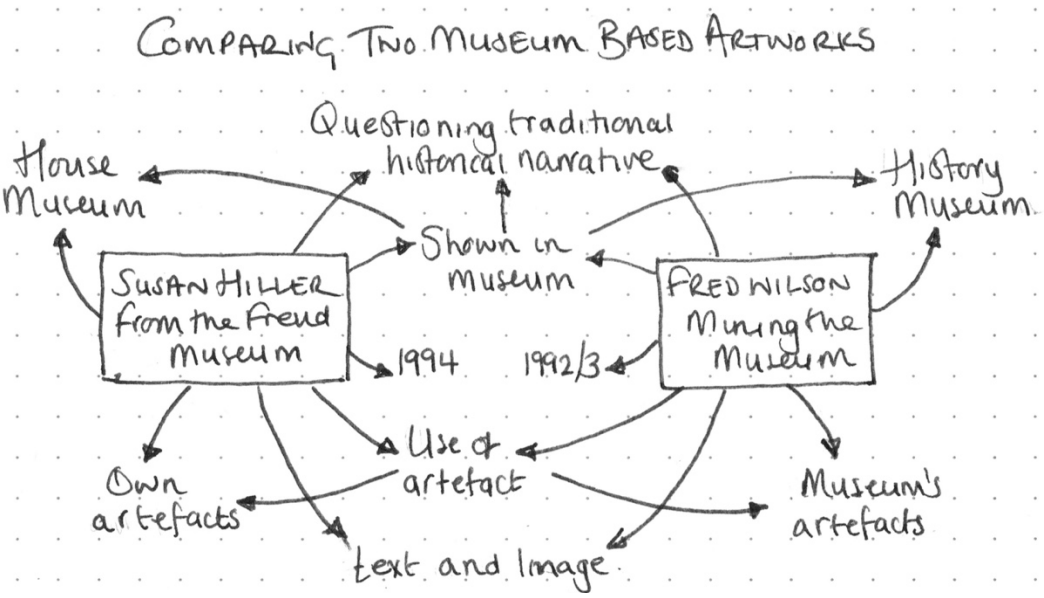
Claire Robins's *Curious Lessons in The Museum: The Pedagogic Potential of Artists' Interventions* examines how art practice operates in the museum. Though the book works I described were never shown in a museum, their appearance and content was appropriated from the museum systems into which I had gained insight. Robins writes that 'artworks seldom attempt to conceal the subjective nature of their concerns nor are they generally renowned for their straightforward modes of communication'.[95] Artist interventions in museums were particularly prolific in the late twentieth century, and artists such as Mark Dion, Andrea Fraser, Grayson Perry, Steve McQueen, Ai Weiwei, Sophie Calle, and Joseph Kosuth have all exhibited works that interact with or pass comment on museum collections.

p. 22., figs. 60 64.

As will be seen in the following examples, it is not unusual for artists to be invited to intervene in museum collections. A clear reason for this is increased exposure for the institution, but museums are also bound by hierarchies of guidance; from law, to boards of trustees, and in-house politics. An artist may be invited to respond to an issue a curator *knows* is apparent in their collection, but to try and resolve such a concern would be financially

[95] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in The Museum: The Pedagogic Potential of Artists' Interventions*, New York: Routledge, 2013, p. 8.

unachievable, or met with dissent in the many layers of influencing bureaucracy that dictate the way a collection is displayed and described.[96] This is where the artist may step in, and *temporarily* intervene, highlighting issues in current systems, and raising questions about ownership, colonialism, epistemology, environmental concerns, truthfulness, curator bias, and numerous further issues that surround museological practices. Artist interventions may be seen as a way of 'getting around' these obstacles, and it may be hoped that by raising these concerns more permanent changes may be implemented, but in the very least a viewer of such an intervention may be given the tools to question other displays.



p. 14., fig. 32.

[96] A poignant example of such 'regulatory issues' can be seen in the recent call by many (in particular by Pitt Rivers Museum curator Professor Dan Hicks, in his book *The Brutish Museum*, 2020) to return the Benin bronzes to their rightful home in Nigeria. Following recent developments in Germany [March 2021], whose government announced its intention to begin restitution arrangements with Nigeria, some British institutions have announced similar plans including the University of Aberdeen, and the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, however an article in the *Guardian* claims that 'the British Museum and other national institutions, such as the V&A, are prevented from permanently returning items by the British Museum Act 1963 and the Heritage Act 1983'.
Lanre Bakar, 'Regional museums break rank with UK government on return of Benin bronzes', *The Guardian*, 26 March 2021.
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/26/regional-museums-break-ranks-with-uk-government-on-return-of-benin-bronzes [last accessed 29 March 2021]

Perhaps the most well-known museological art intervention is Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum* (1992 3), which involved a curation, or re-curation, of museum artefacts a work that Robins calls 'an enduring, seminal example' of a museological art practice.[97] The work was commissioned in part to diversify the typical Maryland Museum audience, which was not ethnically representative of Baltimore's community. Wilson curated new displays that exhibited artefacts such as slave manacles in the same vitrine as beautifully crafted silver vessels from a similar time period, pushing the difficult, controversial, and often silenced histories of Baltimore up against those more openly recognised and celebrated, highlighting the marginalisation and censorship present in the typical museum exhibit. At the entrance to the exhibition Wilson placed a large, bronze globe with the word 'Truth' embossed on it. The globe is a trophy from the museum archives, presented for truth and accuracy in journalism and advertising, and by placing it at the entrance Wilson asks the museum visitor to consider what 'truth' they might expect to encounter inside the museum, and further, whose truth that is.

p. 13., fig. 27.

p. 13., fig. 29.

Globe = Global Truth?

Though I do not have space to look at the critiques and successes of Wilson's work here, it is noteworthy that *Mining the Museum* is often seen to convey its message through objects the physical artefacts that exist in the museum. Wilson states that one of his aims for the work was to explore 'the power of objects to speak when the "laws" governing museum practices are expanded and the artificial boundaries museums build are removed'.[98] I would argue, however, that as much as Wilson champions the object here, texts explaining what the artefacts are hold the key to the way this work is understood the objects alone cannot sufficiently speak of their past.[99]

V&A 2021 plans to reorganise collection by geography rather than design and material themes are not always arbitrary.

[97] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in The Museum*, p. 176.
[98] Lisa G. Corrin (ed.), *Mining the Museum: an installation by Fred Wilson,* New York: The New Press, 1994, p. 8.
[99] I will argue later on that a singular text also cannot not sufficiently speak of an object's past, or of the past at all, but I think that the combination of text and image is often underplayed in Wilson's work, and it is this combination that explains more thoroughly how museums operate to transfer information.

To add a contemporary element to this discussion, we may briefly consider the recent call for museums to house statues of slave traders during the Black Lives Matter protests.[100] This shows a general understanding of the museum as a space in which a text can be provided explaining an object's controversial status, yet preserving its physical existence a half-way-house between life and death where something endures in suspended animation outside of time and judgement. It posits the museum as a site in which history can be learned safely and inoffensively, and where difficult events or pasts may be 'deactivated' by an informative text panel. Jessica Moody, in an article in *The Independent* writes:

'The picturesque town of Salò in northern Italy is opening what has been billed as the country's first museum of fascism.' *The Art Newspaper*, Feb 2023

> Some of the statues currently under debate could certainly go into a museum where this history and context, the use and abuse of the past, can be more fully explored, so long as this was done in an appropriate manner with consultation.[101]

The need for this combination of text and object to simultaneously deactivate and prolong the life of a controversial artefact illuminates general opinion that the museum is a house of historical objectivity. It also reinforces Wilson's intimation that it is an elitist one; placing itself above conflicts of class, gender, or ethnicity, all of which are acknowledged from the perspective of impartial bystander.

Susan Hiller's work *At the Freud Museum* (1994)[102] more openly acknowledges its reliance on the relation between text and image to form understanding. Exhibited in the Freud Museum, Hiller's work is arguably aimed at a different audience one expecting to see something more subjective and dependant on interpretation than Wilson's, but the piece still necessarily raises questions about the objectivity of museum displays in broader terms. The work consists

p. 12. fig. 24.

[100] Ongoing at the time of writing June 2020.
[101] Vincent Wood, 'Bristol says it will retrieve slave trader statue from river and put it in a museum', in *The Independent*, Thursday 11 June, 2020. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/colston-statue-bristol-museum-river-avon-history-a9559771.html [last accessed June 13 2020]
[102] Later to be known as *From the Freud Museum* after being acquired by the Tate.

of an appropriation of archaeological archiving techniques[103] – small, identical boxes containing artefacts and labelled accordingly – in which Hiller displays more ephemeral, personal, every-day items, as well as objects of cultural relevance, both in contemporary and historical terms. These objects are then commented on (rather than described) in a more associative and subversive manner than would be expected from the museum.[104] She writes: 'my collection taken as a whole is an archive of misunderstandings, crises, and ambivalences that complicate any […] notion of heritage'.[105] Hiller also notes that when the Tate acquired the collection, they added a proviso that nothing could be changed or added; she states 'museums need things to be fixed and changeless'.[106]

Freud
The collection to which there are no new additions really is dead

2.7. Thirty Years Later…

The need to challenge the static nature of museum displays and attitudes is present in both Hiller and Wilson's work, and in innumerable museum-based art works to follow. Though the works differ in terms of objects used, Wilson mining objects solely held by the museum, and Hiller using those solely from outside the institution, both work to question a prescribed version of events. *At the Freud Museum* and *Mining the Museum* are around thirty years old, and archival art practices prevalently have held a key role in addressing the issues of historical representation since. This raises the question of whether my own work – or any museum or archive based work – may hold a position of relevance in contemporary culture, or if it has all been done before.

[103] This archaeological reference can also be seen in Wilson's use of the term 'mining', and the use of archaeology as a recurring analogy for the way we look at the past will be explored in more depth later on in this chapter.
[104] Hiller's training as archaeologist and anthropologist is as much under scrutiny here as the objects themselves.
[105] Hiller, cited in: Kynaston McShine (ed.), *The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect*, exhibition catalogue, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1999, pp.92–3.
[106] 'Retrievals; Susun Hiller, Yve-Alain Bois and Guy Brett in Conversation', in *Susan Hiller*, ed. by Anne Gallagher, London: Tate Publishing, 2011, p. 28.

2023 Glasgow becomes the first museum to repatriate artefacts to India.

Museums have certainly evolved in trying to make their displays more inclusive and less colonial, and as discussed, artworks provide a way of 'getting around' bureaucratic issues in museum settings, but a look at the reaction to artist Sonia Boyce's removal of John William Waterhouse's painting *Hylas and the Nymphs* (1896) from the Manchester Art Gallery suggests there is still a way to go.[107]

p. 26., fig. 74.

Boyce's event involved numerous interventions and performances in response to the gallery collection, but it was this act that generated the most response. Writing about the removal of the painting, an article in the *Guardian* claims that 'all hell broke loose'; the act was compared with Nazi curators' destruction of artworks that did not fit the party agenda, and the gallery was accused of 'censorship'.[108] In fact, the painting was only ever to be removed temporarily, and on the night of the event visitors were invited to add Post-it-note comments where the picture once hung. Boyce states that she removed the painting in response to 'a discomfort among the staff themselves, not only the conversations that they've been having publicly with visitors to the gallery, but about an overarching narrative'.[109]

p. 26., fig. 77.

Conversation > Conservation

The idea of an act as a product of a conversation is valuable, and makes clear that this is not a case of an artist imposing their views onto others (as was intimated by many of the people and groups that complained) but instead reflected a feeling of unrest and uncertainty from the people that worked in the gallery. The work is both product of conversation, and cause for conversation Boyce's removal of the Waterhouse painting arguably sparked more discussion around the work than there has been since it was put on display. It is also important to note that Boyce 'instigated several discussions

[107] Sonia Boyce, *Six Acts*, gallery 'take-over', 2018
[108] Charlotte Higgins, "The vitriol was really unhealthy': artist Sonia Boyce on the row over taking down Hylas and the Nymphs', in *The Guardian*, 19 March 2018 https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2018/mar/19/hylas-nymphs-manchester-art-gallery-sonia-boyce-interview [last accessed 21 March 2021]
[109] Ben Luke, '"At the heart of all of this is the question of power": Sonia Boyce on the notorious Hylas and the Nymphs takedown', *The Art Newspaper*, 29 March 2018 https://www.theartnewspaper.com/interview/sonia-boyce-hylas-and-the-nymphs [last accessed 29 March 2021]

on her visits to the gallery over a period of months conversations that involved curators, gallery assistants, volunteers, cleaners',[110] challenging the usual hierarchical power structure and class-system of the museum, and whose voice is heard.

The reaction to Boyce's work demonstrates how artist's interventions can produce critical discussion about how the past is represented. The sphere of understanding to which Hiller and Wilson's works contribute has evolved radically postmodernism has been usurped by a new wave of thought and experience.[111] Now the digital age of 'post-truth', and cultural age of 'post-postmodernism' have been entered, there are new concerns to be addressed. I argue that a more nuanced and intricate approach to the retelling of the past, acknowledging unavoidably biased curation, multiplicity, and multi-temporality, is required.

A broader question that should be asked, however, is *why* art practice is a useful or pertinent way to scrutinise historiographical structures. Robins writes that 'the interventionist work of art, even at its most didactic, does not have the weight of authority carried by the gallery or museum's legitimised label or text panel or catalogue'.[112] That the text accompanying an exhibit or display is what carries the ability to create and transfer 'knowledge' is something that my work questions. The use of the artist's book was my first way into this the book-shaped-object itself representing a structure associated with knowledge acquisition but it also provided an exploratory space; one in which multiple iterations of the same objective motif containing differing and contradictory information could sit side by side. These works

Dany Louise
Interpretation Matters Handbook

Timotheus Vermeulen & Robin van der Acker

[110] Ibid.
[111] The debates around what has succeeded postmodernist are rich and varied, and even a term to define such a time is contested; 'post-postmodernism', 'supermodernism', 'transmodernism', 'ultramodernism', 'metamodernism', 'digimodernism', 'pseudomodernism' and 'hypermodernism' are all labels used to describe the age in which we are living. In this project, metamodernism will be considered the most useful of these terms, and will exemplify the work made here.
[112] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in The Museum*, p. 16.
This idea of the museum information board carrying authority will be addressed directly by my work, *Encounters*, detailed in chapter four.

function as *maquettes* a place where ideas could be tested ahead of the installation works that follow, and as a foundation for the research yet to come. The use of taxonomic structure and diagram related to the archive endures through the work, and offers a spatial way to consider both the smaller, fragmentary remnants of the past and the way that they can be communicated.

Jenkins
'[…] we read the historicized past as we read everything else, creatively and imaginatively […]'

The combination of multiple voices and modes of address as a destabilising tool used to highlight associative ways the past is experienced is another tactic first tested in these catalogue card works, and persists throughout. Both ways of working assert the claim that art practice is not just an 'interesting' or 'alternative' way to look at the past, but a valid and necessary one, using its status as a creative and subjective pursuit to elucidate these same traits in any other method of retelling history. This again situates this practice in the minor key; as Manning writes:

> Artful practices honour complex forms of knowing and are collective not because they are worked on by several people, but because they make it apparent, in the way that they come to problem, that knowledge at its core is collective.[113]

2.8. Working Under an Assumption

One of problems with my book works is that they were bolstered by a naïve notion that the narratives I created purposefully contradictory, subjective, and often fictional served the function of questioning any notion of 'historical truth'. I saw art practice as a vehicle that could be used to undermine the reading of the past in a way prescribed by disciplines in search of facts, truths, and validity. Following postmodern ideas and sensibilities the idea of 'historical truth' is outdated philosophically, yet this did not translate

[113] Manning is responding here to Deleuze and Guattari's third condition of minor literature: that it is always 'collective'.
Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 13.

History
Study of the past
Historiography
The methods of writing history

O'Sullivan
'*[…]becoming* minor in the sense of producing movement from 'within' the major.'

to my practical experience at the museum.[114] I turned to historiography to explore this tension, and will summarise what I learned from this journey here, as it contributes to the framing of this research and the terrain that this thesis attempts to map. It is a foundation for much reading that not only informed my thinking and work, but also gave me a language with which to speak about ideas that I had been forming.

[114] The jarring between the acknowledgement of the philosophy of a postmodern approach to the past and the practice of it will be looked at further on in this chapter. The tension between 'thinking about' something and being able to practically 'do it' creates a charged space in which art may function, considering a way this gap may be bridged.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 901-907.2 HISTORIOGRAPHY / HISTORY-PHILOSOPHY

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
E.H. Carr	What is History?	1960	London, UK	Pelican Books	901	Opposition to Elton
Geoffrey Elton	The Practice of History	1969	London, UK	Fontana	901	Opposition to Carr
Richard Evans	In Defense of History	1997	London, UK	Granta Books	901	
John Tosh	The Pursuit of History	1984	London, UK	Routledge	901	
Frank Ankersmit	Meaning, Truth and Reference	2012	New York, USA	Cornell University Press	907.2	see 'Postmodern'
	in Historical Representation					
Keith Jenkins	Rethinking History	1994	London, UK	Routledge	901.2	"
Antoinette Burton	World Histories from Below	2016	New York, USA	Bloomsbury Academic	901	
Pierre Nora	Between Memory and History	1989	California, USA	Representations No 26		see 'Archive'
Keith Jenkins	Refiguring History	2004	London, UK	Routledge	907.2	See 'Postmodern'
Hayden White	The Historical Imagination	1973	Baltimore, MA, USA	John Hopkins University Press		Precursor to postmodernism
Ann Curthoys	Is History Fiction?	2015	Michigan, USA	University of Michigan Press		
Walter Benjamin	On the concept of History	1940	London, UK	Pimlico (1999)	904	In 'Illuminations' published posthumously
Susan Buck-Morss	The Gift of the Past	2010	North Carolina, USA	Small Axe, Duke University	904	See 'On the concept of History'
Perez Zagorin	History, the referent and narrative	2008	Connecticut, USA	W.W. Norton and co.		See Jenkins 'Rethinking History'
Gertrude Himmelfarb	Telling it as you like it	1997	London, UK	Routledge	907.2	In Jenkins 'post-modern history reader'
Peter Novick	That Noble Dream	1988	Cambridge, UK	Cambridge University Press		
Joyce Appleby	Telling the truth about History	1994	New York, USA	W.W. Norton + co.		
Bjornar Olsen	In Defense of Things	2013	Plymouth, UK	Alta Mira Press	930.1	See 'archaeology'
Ian Hodder	Reading the Past	1986	Cambridge, UK	Cambridge University Press	901	"
Francois Hartog	Regimes of Historicity	2015	New York, US	Columbia University Press	907.2	See 'Time'
Eric Hobsbawm	On History	1997	London, UK	Weidenfield and Nicolson	901	
Marc Bloch	The Historians Craft	1949	Manchester, UK	Manchester (1992) University Press	901	
Julian Barnes	A History of the World in 10½ chapters	1989	London, UK	Jonathon Cape		See 'Fiction'
Linda Hutcheon	Poetics of postmodernism:	1988	London, UK	Routledge		See 'postmodern' 'fiction'
	History, Theory, Fiction					
J.F. Lyotard	The Postmodern Condition	1979	Paris, France	Les Editions de Minuit	001	See Fredrich Jameson
Georges Didi-Huberman	Bark	2011	Cambridge, MA, USA	The MIT Press	940	See 'Time', 'memoir'
Neil MacGregor	A History of the World in 100 objects	2011	London, UK	Allen Lane		See 'collection'

Foundational reading

2.9. The Elton-Carr Debate

The idea of ever-present subjectivity in historiographic study was brought to the forefront of the discipline by E. H. Carr in his 1960 text, *The Pursuit of History.* This line of thought is pursued through the rest of his writing in *What is History?* (1973), he writes:

> The historian is neither the humble slave nor the tyrannical master of his facts. The relation between the historian and his facts is one of equality, of give-and-take. As any working historian knows, if he stops to reflect on what he is doing as he thinks and writes, the historian is engaged on a continuous process of moulding his facts to his interpretation, and his interpretation to his facts. It is impossible to assign primacy to one over the other.[115]

A negotiation always in action

Throughout, Carr reiterates that the historian is in constant conversation with the fragmented remnants of the past, rendering it impossible to create an accurate version of events that is not rooted, at least partly, in the present. Although this line of thought is readily accepted now by most disciplines concerned with retelling the past, at the time this idea was vehemently opposed by Geoffrey Elton in *The Practice of History* (1969). Elton writes that he has been concerned 'only to deny the charge that the past cannot be re-enacted therefore there is, by definition, no such thing as historical truth'.[116] These books, despite being over fifty years old, are still considered core reading for both undergraduate and postgraduate history students, and the Elton-Carr debate continues on student forums online.[117] Readings such as Hayden White's *Metahistory*,[118] and Eric Hobsbawm's *On History*,[119] give further nuanced insights into this debate, and culminate in postmodern history theory.

'Old School' V 'Revisionist'

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[115] E. H. Carr, *What is History*, p. 29.
[116] G. R. Elton, *The Practice of History*, London: Fontana, 1969, pp. 74–75.
[117] https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/showthread.php?t=57074 [last accessed 24 September 2020]
[118] Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe*, Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1973
[119] Eric Hobsbawm, *On History*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997.

In 1991 historiographer Keith Jenkins published *Re-thinking History*, which takes a more philosophical stance on the reading of history, and is one of the books that has been most pertinent to this research. Jenkins differentiates between history and the past:

> The past and history are not stitched into one another such that only one historical reading of the past is absolutely necessary. The past and history float free of one another, they are ages and miles apart. For the same object of enquiry can be read differently by different discursive practices.[120]

The Post-Modern History Reader (1997), edited by Jenkins, contains multiple texts that advocate a more considered, self-aware approach to reading the past, but also the moralistic implications of a postmodernist, 'anything goes' approach to the writing of history. In particular, the essays 'The Holocaust and Problems of Representation' by Robert Braun,[121] and 'Telling it as you like it: postmodern history and the flight from fact' by Gertrude Himmelfarb,[122] address this concern, especially in relation to events such as the Holocaust. Himmelfarb examines the contrast between the portrayal of the Holocaust as a sacred, undeniable piece of history, and the 'less sensitive occasions' in which 'the postmodernist imagination is uninhibited and unapologetic'.[123] Himmelfarb demonstrates that an 'anything goes' approach to history is not morally viable if it cannot be applied to all aspects and events of the past. In response, Jenkins clarifies that the postmodern approach to history is not concerned with the denial of events of the past, but that multiple or plural versions of the same event is a more representative view of the way the past is encountered.

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[120] Keith Jenkins, *Rethinking History,* London: Routledge, 1991, p. 7.
[121] Robert Braun, 'The Holocaust and Problems of Representation', in *The Post-Modern History Reader*, ed. by Keith Jenkins, London: Routledge, 1997, pp. 418–425.
[122] Gertrude Himmelfarb, 'Telling it as you like it: postmodern history and the flight from fact', in *The Post-Modern History Reader*, pp. 158–174.
[123] Ibid. pp. 164–5.

2.10. An Archaeological Aside

Georges Didi-Huberman addresses the site of Auschwitz in *Bark*, acknowledging that his perspective is a personal one, speaking about the site, the events that happened there, and his own reaction to the space. Recognising that he views the site through contemporary eyes, he pays as much attention to the space in its current existence as its historical one. Didi-Huberman advocates an 'archaeological way of looking' one that sees not only the layer of earth which the archaeologist is trying to reach, but also the layers that are excavated to get to that point, the 'post-event', physical layers of time that have accreted over the one that is sought: 'to look at things from an archaeological point of view is to compare what we see in the present, which has survived, with what we know to have disappeared'.[124]

p. 15., fig. 37.

Foucault
'Archaeology describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive'

Archaeology is a commonly used analogy when considering historiography as it physically embodies the removal of layers and layers of history until the period of time that is sought is reached, as though the literal stripping away of decades of debris allows a physical jump into the past with no barriers. What I think Didi-Huberman suggests, and what I certainly believe, is that each of those periods removed alters the one below, and all of the layers need to be acknowledged as having played a part in the understanding of the artefact which lies beneath them.[125] This analogy can also be seen in Sigmund Freud's *Civilisation and its Discontents*. Freud invites his reader to imagine the city of Rome, with all of its previous architectures and incarnations present at once, occupying the same space. Then he asks us not to think of Rome as a city, but as 'a psychical entity with a similarly long, rich past, in which nothing that

[124] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Bark*, trans. by Samuel E. Martin, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2017, [*Écorces*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2011] p. 66.

[125] Didi-Huberman writes about a watching a bird land on a barbed wire fencing that surrounds the camp, drawing his attention to the fact that some of the fencing had been installed after the site was repurposed: 'Realizing this made my heart ache. This signifies that Auschwitz the "place of barbarism" (the camp) installed the background wire during the 1940s, whereas the wire in the foreground has been placed there by the "place of culture" (the museum) far more recently.' Following this sense of an 'archaeological way of looking', he writes that the bird 'landed between two terribly disjointed temporalities, two very different arrangements of the same parcel of space and history'. *Bark*, pp. 29 30.

p. 46., fig. 188.

Borges
On Exactitude in Science

ever took shape has passed away'.[126] This powerful image of the past and the present coexisting in the same space shows how layers of history cannot easily be delineated from one another, and how, in memory, they interact, informing the shape of thought and reasoning.

2.11. Postmodern Historiography

Jenkins's postmodern historiographical texts *Re-Thinking History* and *Re-Figuring History* have been crucial in shaping how this project has come together and the work that has been made alongside my reading. The main premise of both books is that there is no definitive version of events to be found in the study of the past. He states an awareness that this is readily accepted in many circles, but claims that history studies remain resistant to postmodernism, and the discipline is still occupied by a search for 'truth'. Jenkins writes that 'history remains inevitably a personal construct, a manifestation of the historian's perspective as a 'narrator''.[127]

E. H. Carr

The view that we cannot read history outside our own contemporary position, both socially and culturally, founds my research. Jenkins, paraphrasing cultural critic Steven Giles, writes that 'what has gone before is always apprehended through the sedimented layers of previous interpretations',[128] reinforcing Freud's image of the city in which multiple timeframes coexist. The tension between the then and the now, and the necessity of acknowledging what has come in between (as well as the here, the 'I', the site of encounter, and the mode of study), is addressed throughout my work.

In *Re-figuring History* (2004) Jenkins hones his ideas of what a postmodernist approach to history is, and clarifies the ethical problems accompanying this

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[126] Sigmund Freud, *Civilazation and its Discontents*, trans. by David McLintock, London: Penguin Books, 2002 [*Des Unbehagen in der Kultur*, Vienna: Austria, Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag Wien, 1930], p. 8.
[127] Keith Jenkins, *Rethinking History*, p. 14.
[128] Ibid., p. 14.

system. He begins the book in the same way, remarking that 'most mainstream historians still strive for 'truths-at-end-of-enquiry'.[129] Jenkins may be considered anti-historian, and indeed, one of the main criticisms of his work is that he has no right to comment on the writing of history, as he does not write history himself.[130] Yet given Jenkins's complaint that history, especially in the UK, is written predominantly by white males of a certain schooling and age, it is important to allow other voices to contribute to historiographical discussion.

To address the issues of this text being over twenty years old, I will briefly list contemporary sources that intimate the same sentiment:

- 'The substantial majority of academic historians continue to claim that they have reconstructed the past "as it actually was", and consequently, they can in all probability know "what it most likely means".' Alan Munslow, 2016[131]
- 'Although it has become trendy of late to deride all "grand narratives" on the grounds that such official narratives have been elevated to that status as a result of the workings of power, historians need to remind themselves and their students that the bedrock of history is the discovery and analysis of historical facts.' Farish A. Noor, 2023[132]
- 'Whilst academic historians continue to seek to present accounts of the past that are plausible and testable by other historians […]' Graham Black and Chris Reynolds, 2020[133]

[129] Keith Jenkins, *Re-figuring History*, p. 3.
[130] Alexander Macfie, review of *Keith Jenkins Retrospective*, (review no. 1266) https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/1266 [Last accessed: 4 October 2019]
[131] Alan Munslow, 'Narrative Works in History', in *Narrative Works: Issues, Investigations, & Interventions 6(1)*), 2016, pp. 108 125, p. 115.
[132] Farish A. Noor, 'The history versus fiction debate revisited (again) thanks to 'The Crown', in *Times Higher Education*, 23 January 2023 https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/history-versus-fiction-debate-revisited-again-thanks-crown [last accessed 23 April 2023]
[133] Graham Black and Chris Reynolds, 'Engaging Audiences with Difficult Pasts', in *Curator: The Museum Journal Vo. 63, No. 1*, 2020, p. 31.

2.12. 'The Before-Now'

One of the key terms in *Re-figuring History* is 'the before-now', which Jenkins advocates using instead of the terms 'history' or 'the past'. Jenkins argues that this term ties the events of the past to the present; one cannot look at what has happened 'before', without an awareness of what is happening 'now'. Jenkins writes that objects endure, but their past does not, and that multiple variations or narratives surrounding a singular event are essential there is not one truth, but an infinite amount of small truths existing simultaneously.

'One past many histories'

This recalls a passage in John Forrester's essay 'Freud and Collecting'. Speaking of a vase buried at Pompeii, Freud is noted to have commented that its destruction only began once it was excavated. This can be read in physical terms: the vase was protected by volcanic ash while it was buried in the ground, untouched by the elements, but it may also imply that that the vase held a position of purity or 'truth' while it was unseen and unknown.[134] Once it has been excavated it is immediately viewed by contemporary eyes; contextualised and subjectified by each person who studies it. This reflects Forrester's view on Freud's collection of artefacts: 'while he was alive, adding to it, it too remained alive; when he died it became a museum piece'.[135]

Pompeii = Site of disjointed temporality

Alain Badiou
Truth exists outside of human consciousness

p. 12., figs. 21, 25.

Again, I consider the damage to statues during the Black Lives Matter protests of June 2020. Like the vase, these statues have been suddenly awoken from their slumber and subjected to a completely different gaze,

[134] Hiller considers Freud's parallels between archaeology and psychoanalysis in *Thinking Through Objects*, writing: 'He of course said explicitly that the psychoanalyst, like the archaeologist, was constructing a past through excavating fragments. He went to on to say that the psychoanalyst was, in fact, privileged over the archaeologist in this sense that the analyst would discover a truth that was more profound, because none of the fragments would have been lost or destroyed, since the mind never loses any memories'. This prompts the consideration that an object discovered archeologically must always require a form of fictionalisation in order to make sense of it and communicate it to others.
Susan Hiller, 'Thinking Through Objects', p. 44.
[135] John Forrester, 'Freud and Collecting', p. 227.

firmly rooted in current, contemporary attitudes.[136] Though I am not arguing that the statues have a place in modern society, their object-ness is secondary to what they are seen to represent when looked at through contemporary eyes. Yet it is their object-ness that raises the issue statues are a way of glorifying someone or something, an accolade that does not now seem ethical in the current social and political climate.[137]

The multitude of opinions and reactions to the destruction or proposed preservation of these statues has produced an acute opportunity to look at the way 'history' is viewed, and indeed what constitutes 'history', and the potential dangers of erasing or rewriting a collective past. The call to house these statues in museums echoes Forrester's belief that once Freud died and stopped adding to his collection it too 'died' and became 'a museum piece'. It is implied that placing these statues in a museum will deactivate them in some way, and they will no longer cause offense. These contemporary situations serve as reminders that an examination of historiography and the way the past is communicated is still a relevant discussion.

Returning to *Re-Figuring History*, Jenkins argues that no matter how well researched a historical investigation may be, 'we can *never* show a definitive

[136] Of course, the current situation has come to a tumultuous head because of years' of institutionalised racism, disparity, and injustice not one singular event but the statues serve as a poignant example of how a contemporary gaze can change an object's role in history and the way we look at the past.

[137] Before the toppling of Edward Colston's statue in Brighton, artist Kara Walker, was making work that considered the status of the monument amidst student demonstrations to remove colonial statues in the US and the UK. *Fons Americanus*, a four-tiered fountain shown in the Tate's Turbine Hall, addresses issues of slavery and colonialism as well as the once common practice of monumentalising such events. From the Tate website: 'Rather than a celebration of the British Empire, Walker's fountain inverts the usual function of a memorial and questions narratives of power.' Referencing suffering, trauma, and enslavement, Walker's work presents the sides of colonial monuments that are not seen, switching viewpoint from victor to victim and raising questions about silenced and marginalised histories and how they might function in the present. She claims 'my work has always been a time machine, looking back across decades and centuries to arrive at some understanding of my "place" in the contemporary moment'.
https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/kara-walker-2674/kara-walkers-fons-americanus
[last accessed 14 Dec 2020]

p. 26., figs. 76, 78.

example of it'.[138] He continues: 'this requires that we read the historicized past as we read everything else, creatively and imaginatively, of course, but also, whether we know it or not unfaithfully, disobediently, and between the lines'.[139] This in-between space is where art practice can function, operating as a destabilising force against the grand narrative of history (which is what postmodernism fervently rails against). Jenkins writes:

Jean Francoise Lyotard
'I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives'
Metanarrative (for Lyotard) = Grand, totalizing, overarching account of historical events

> The before now has never unfolded in (say) a linear fashion as part of some kind of inherent structure in line with some sort of evolutionary or narrative process, the before-now knows nothing of our geometrics. Linearity is thus [...] an illusion derived from another illusion, namely that language also unfolds in a linear fashion.[140]

The argument against linearity is an old one, and another naïve idea I carried into this project with me, but again is implemented practically less that it is accepted philosophically. In 2021 the V&A Museum revealed plans to rearrange the European and American parts of their collection chronologically, and further, to separate non-Western artefacts and display them outside of this chronology. This decision is seen by many as a move against the steps museums have made to address marginalisation and colonial stereotypes in their collections.[141] Christina Farraday writes in *The Telegraph*, that such a move will create 'an outdated, ahistorical "othering" of anything non-Western."[142] This points to an accepted (even preferred) linearity and

[138] Keith Jenkins, *Re-figuring History*, p. 15.
[139] Ibid. p. 25.
[140] Ibid., p. 65.
[141] There are, of couse, underlying reasons to this reshuffle outside of historiographical thinking. Because of decreased revenue due to Covid-19, the museum is in dire straits financially, and the proposed curatorial changes would reduce the amount of specialist staff needed to care for the collection. Again, this a dubious proposition, and Farraday notes, 'In fact the new arrangement would privilege generalism, potentially jeopardising specialist collections care, and allowing specific objects and periods to fall through the cracks'. Reference in footnote 141.
[142] Christina Farraday, 'The proposed changes to the V&A would be catastrophic', in *The Telegraph*, 26 February 2021 https://www.telegraph.co.uk/art/what-to-see/tristram-hunts-proposed-changes-va-will-catastrophic/ [last accessed 21 March 2021]

chronology in the display of artefacts, and is also present in the written account.

p. 52., fig. 222.

Addressing the written account, Jenkins turns to Jacques Derrida's concept of *différance* and the impossibility of the existence of a 'transcendental signifier' – a word that is wholly self-explanatory without supplementary influence or nuance. In the same way that the reading for this Ph.D. has proliferated, and associations have led to further associations, the supplementary signifiers attached to a singular word to make it understandable in the truest sense are infinite. The word remains resistant to any fixed meaning. This simplified account of Derrida's signifier can be interchanged for a moment in time. No moment can live in isolation from those moments surrounding it – other signifiers – and as these are infinite, dependent on space, time, individual account, memory, et cetera, a moment is neither fixed nor autonomous. *Différence* is, of course, also crucial because the main communicative method of history is language, and if language itself is unstable, then no accurate account of the past exists. This destabilizes the historical account, and if something is unstable, it has the potential to collapse and to be rebuilt, though the foundations will be no more solid than before.[143]

Deleuze & Guattari

Though many of Jenkins's ideas are readily accepted philosophically, the reading of his work has enabled me to situate my practice in the language and discipline to which it responds. If this work is to be considered 'minor', then it *must* be in conversation with the 'major', and the readings previously outlined enable this.

Kate Briggs
This Little Art

[143] It should be noted that the problem of translation is recognised here: Derrida's original text has been read by Jenkins—presumably – in translation from its original French, and is then being relayed by me, through him. Thus the signifiers are destabilized yet again. This is the case with much historical source material of which we do not always have thorough knowledge or insight into the language used, or the circumstance under which it was written.

2.13. Postmodern Criticism

The most well documented critique of Jenkins comes from the American historian Perez Zagorin, the debate between them spanning years. Zagorin's refusal to accept Jenkins's concepts — often based on European philosophy — is sometimes considered a cultural difference. This appears to add weight to Jenkins's argument that the subjectivity of the historian is as important in looking to the before-now as the source material used.[144] In 'History, the Referent, and Narrative: Reflections on Postmodernism Now', Zagorin writes that Jenkins 'is simply unable to conceive the viability or value of the historical effort to restore to comprehension a vanished past'.[145] He acknowledges that there are faults in the study of history, but presents the view that a truthful account of the past is, in fact, attainable.

Critiquing the current models of studying history,[146] Zagorin notes that it is areas such as women's studies, social history, and cultural history that are receptive to postmodernism. He extends the opinion that though these 'minority' groups are getting more attention in the study of the past this owes 'none of its original information to postmodernism and has developed independently of it'.[147] It is no surprise that postmodern ideas gain traction with minority and marginalised communities, whose stories and voices have been excluded from records of the past for so long. In arguing against Jenkins, Zagorin strengthens the view that there is still value in raising concerns about

Fredric Jameson
Crisis of historicity=
No correlation between history taught in school and lived experience

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[144] 'In his article, Zagorin explained at some length that American history had for some time been threatened by mainly continental postmodernism and relativism. But in the end, thanks largely to the strength of American (mainly analytical) philosophy, it had succeeded in resisting the assault. As a result, most American historians, convinced that knowledge of the past, as a vanished reality, is attainable, have continued to write history based on the principles of rationality, logicality, objectivity and truth.'
Dr Alexander Macfie, review of *Keith Jenkins Retrospective*, (review no. 1266)
https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/1266 [Last accessed 4 October 2019]

[145] Perez Zagorin, 'History, the Referent, and Narrative: Reflections on Postmodernism Now', in *History and Theory, Vol. 38, No. 1,* Feb 2008, pp. 1–24, p. 12.

[146] Which for Zagorin are too segmented, politicised, and multifarious — Marxist, feminist, or queer readings of history cannot produce accuracy, as they are approached with an agenda. For Zagorin, the only concern should be the search for truth.

[147] Ibid. p. 9.

who writes the past, and the linear way it is relayed to us.

2.14. *Read History*

While my reading into history and archive studies was underway I made a booklet entitled *Read History* (2015). It contained scanned images of various ephemeral items I had collated as material from which to make work. These included a statement from a divorce settlement (1927), a letter detailing an elderly woman's encounter with a U.F.O. (1976), a psychiatric examination report from 1950, a page from a policeman's notebook (1966), a war time letter from father to daughter (1917), int. al. Together the images produce an incongruous and disparate representation of small moments from the past, isolated and without context or explanation, as they might be found in an archive.

p. 59., figs. 258 263.

These images are printed on the recto page of a double page spread; on the verso is a quotation about how we might read and interpret history. Such quotations include:

pp. 36 37., figs. 133 136.

- 'Usually the archive does not describe people in full. It cuts them out of their daily lives, cements them in some complaint or pitiful denial, and, even when they are consenting, pins them down like trembling butterflies.'[148]
- 'The historian's study is more capable of concerning itself with a truth which is more absolute than mere truthfulness. Verifiability is the enemy of objective truth because it consists of the operation of the observer and experimenter upon the subject matter studied.'[149]
- 'Despite the impact of post-structural theory, the guiding force among professional historians remains objective truth. However cynical the scholar, the goal is always to reveal truth, which historians do through their use of 'facts', 'evidence', and 'mastery'.'[150]

[148] Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, p. 26.
[149] G. R. Elton, *The Practice of History,* p. 43.
[150] Renée M. Sentilles, 'Toiling in the Archives of Cyber-Space', in *Archive Stories*, p. 140.

The historical artefacts that I had been working with were all text-based, and required being read and transcribed. Simultaneously, I was reading about how we should look at the past and interpret it. These two kinds of reading are presented in parallel in this booklet, directly exploring the conflict in the reading *of* the past and reading *about* the past. The use of two voices one academic, one archival, yet both 'found' anticipate the combination of voice used in future work. An outcome of this work was the realisation of the necessity of adding my voice to this discussion, that of the person trying, subjectively, to make sense of things. At the time, I referred to this work as a 'thinking through' of what I was working on and especially what I was reading, and expected that it would inform more conclusive works to come. I think, now, that all my work shows a 'thinking-through' of ideas about the past, heritage, memory, and understanding, and that this 'thinking-through' is the work itself, a processual, generative, and multiple practice that is in the minor key; one that 'creates sites of dissonance, staging disturbances that open experiences to modes of expression'.[151]

This margin functions in a similar way… The work filters into the thesis

2.15. Post-postmodernism

Given the argument that postmodern sentiment is outdated, it would be remiss not to situate this practice firmly in current thought, and outline what has followed. This discussion will not be overtly continued throughout this thesis, but is important nonetheless to the way work is made. As noted earlier, there are numerous propositions of what has followed postmodernism, and most useful here is 'metamodernism', because it acutely describes how I felt when working with archival material.

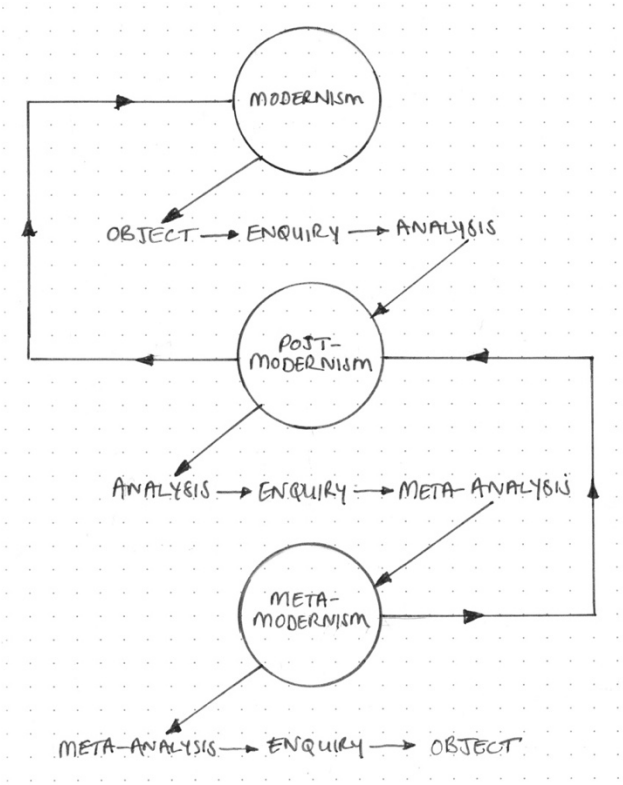
See footnote 111.

Metamodernism, outlined by Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van der Akker, explicitly claims 'oscillation' as its characterising quality, moving between modernist naivety and optimism, and postmodernist scepticism,

[151] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 2.

producing 'a kind of informed naivety, a pragmatic idealism'.[152] Vermeulen and van der Akker continue: 'the metamodern art work [...] redirects the modern piece by drawing attention to what it cannot present in its language, what it cannot signify in its own terms'.[153] It does not follow the temporal linearity of modernism, nor the 'anything goes' spatiality of postmodernism, but instead oscillates between the two 'a spacetime [...] that is neither ordered or disordered'.[154] This oscillation keenly echoes my experience working with artefacts: on the one hand I was in awe of them, and felt privileged to have the opportunity to handle them, on the other I had concerns about their ability to relay any 'knowledge', and was aware that their environment precipitated this reaction. This is also exemplified in my work; the authoritative voice of the museum is never fully undermined, its teachings never fully ignored, they are built upon to produce a wider, more multifaceted conversation.

p. 46., fig. 186.



[152] Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker, 'Notes on Metamodernism', in *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, 2:1, 2010, p. 5.
[153] Idid., p. 10.
[154] Ibid., p. 12.

In relation to the historical object, if modernism follows the route of: Object → Enquiry → Analysis, then postmodernism takes Analysis as its starting point and becomes Analysis → Enquiry → Meta-analysis. Following this sequence, post-postmodernism must take 'meta-analysis' as its starting point, which leaves the enquirer on very unstable ground reflective of our digital condition. A return to the tangible 'object' of modernism must be made, but this return must keep in consideration everything learned from the previous steps taken by postmodernism. As educator Martijn Stevens, notes 'in metamodern times we must express a 'renewed interest in materiality', but avoiding a 'narrative sequence' in order 'to retell familiar stories through "the creative construction of new narratives"'.[155] He writes: 'The museum object then changes into an object of an encounter, which does not seek to reconfirm pre-existing facts, beliefs and values'.[156] The idea of object as site of encounter distils my intentions to create a conversation about the past rather than to simply inform.

A thinking through

Vermeulen and van der Akker claim that their concept of metamodernism is not to be thought of as a proposed philosophy, movement, strategy, programme, or manifesto, but rather that it simply exemplifies a contemporary 'structure of feeling'.[157] It *describes* rather than *prescribes*. This is precisely how metamodernism functions in this project; it is a reading that typifies the conflict I felt in relation to working with museum collections, and also reifies the concepts of the 'minor' tied to my methods through the need to create new, more experiential narratives.

[155] Stevens is quoting O'Sullivan here: Simon O'Sullivan, *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guatarri: though beyond representation*, Basingstoke: Pallgrave McMillan, 2006.
[156] Martijn Stevens, 'Notes on the Metamodern Museum', *Notes on Metamodernism*, 2011 http://www.metamodernism.com/2011/11/19/experimentally-experiential-ambitions-some-thoughts-on-the-metamodern-museum/ [last accessed 20 February 2021]
[157] Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker, 'Misunderstandings and Clarifications', *Notes on Metamodernism*, 2015. https://www.metamodernism.com/2015/06/03/misunderstandings-and-clarifications/ [last accessed 28 March 2021]

2.16. Reflections

My experience of working in museum stores and archives created a desire to explore ways of communicating the past that reflected the fragmentary nature of the material itself. This activated a search for a critical discussion about how histories are accessed and communicated. Readings into historiography, postmodern history theory, and metamodernism, provide a foundational understanding of the territory in which this research operates, and underpin the work that is to come.

My practice at this stage touches on the idea of a spatial mode of presentation over a linear one, and I become comfortable in producing work that raises questions, rather than answering them, situating the practice in the 'minor key', as well as demonstrating an interest in the ephemeral, the everyday, the fragment, and the questioning of an overarching epistemological structure. The use of catalogue cards as seemingly neutral ground on which to map subjective readings and accounts paves the way for the diagram to be used as a site on which to map my process of trying to understand the material I am working with. Practice is used to address and access the questions that remain after reading theory and working in the archive, and reflects back on these concerns, informing the research and writing of this thesis, binding the processes together.

Manning
The Minor Gesture

Not sure about the tense in this paragraph…

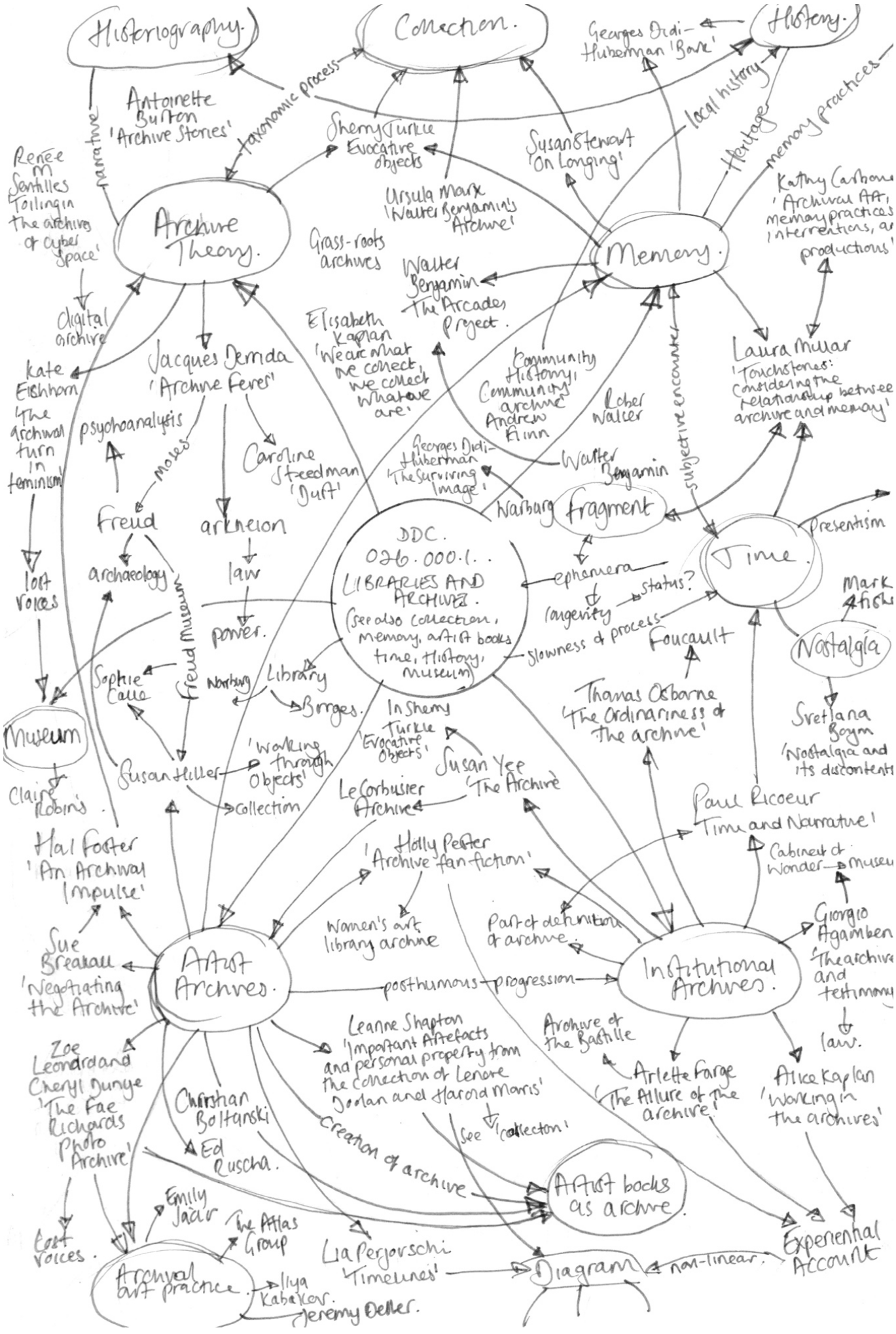
Considering the artefact, the remnant of the past, and the communication of these items to be the *what* that is considered in this Ph.D., the following chapters discuss the *where* the archive, and the *how* literature, creative writing, and the diagram.

There are things that happen and leave no discernible trace,
are not spoken or written of,
though it would be very wrong to say that
subsequent events go on indifferently, all the same,
as though such things had never been.

A. S. Byatt

Chapter Three

Archive


Historiography.
Collection.
History.
Georges Didi-Huberman 'Bare'
Antoinette Burton 'Archive Stories'
narrative
taxonomic process
Sherry Turkle Evocative objects
Susan Stewart 'On Longing'
local history
Heritage
memory practices
Renee M Sentilles 'Toiling in the archives of cyber space'
Ursula Marx 'Walter Benjamin's Archive'
Grass-roots archives
Archive Theory.
Memory.
Kathy Carbone 'Archival Aff, memory practices, interventions, ar productions'
Walter Benjamin The Arcades Project.
digital archive
Elisabeth Kaplan 'We are what we collect, we collect what we are'
Community History, Community archive Andrew Flinn
Laura Millar 'Touchstones: Considering the relationship betwee archive and memory'
Kate Eichhorn 'The archival turn in feminism'
Jacques Derrida 'Archive Fever'
Robert Walser
psychoanalysis
Moses
Caroline Steedman 'Dust'
Georges Didi-Huberman 'The Surviving Image'
Walter Benjamin
subjective encounter
Freud
archaeology
archeion
law
power.
Warburg
fragment
DDC. 026.000.1.. LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES. (See also collection, memory, artist books time, History, museum)
ephemera
Time.
Presentism
Mark Fisher
lost voices
Freud Museum
Sophie Calle
Warburg
Library
Borges.
ingenity
status?
Foucault
Nostalgia
Museum
Thomas Osborne 'The Ordinariness of the archive'
Svetlana Boym 'Nostalgia and its discontents'
Claire Robins.
Susan Hiller
'working through objects'
collection
In Sherry Turkle 'Evocative Objects'
Susan Yee 'The Archive'
Le Corbusier Archive
Paul Ricoeur Time and Narrative'
Hal Foster 'An Archival Impulse'
Holly Pester 'Archive fan fiction'
Cabinet of Wonder → museu
Sue Breakell 'Negotiating the Archive'
Women's art library archive
Artist Archives.
Institutional Archives.
Giorgio Agamben 'The archive and testimony'
Zoe Leonard and Cheryl Dunye 'The Fae Richards Photo Archive'
Leanne Shapton 'Important Artefacts and personal property from the collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris'
Archive of the Bastille
Arlette Farge 'The Allure of the archive'
Alice Kaplan 'Working in the archives'
Christian Boltanski
Ed Ruscha.
Creation of archive
See 'collection'
Artist books as archive.
Emily Jacir
The Atlas Group
Lia Perjovschi 'Timelines'
Diagram
non-linear.
Experiential Account
lost voices.
Archival art practice
Ilya Kabakov.
Jeremy Deller.

3.1. *An* Archive

Archive = Where

Now that I have established the *what* of this project – the 'before-now', I consider the *where*. The archive as a site for research and source material has been raised in the previous chapter,[158] but here I examine in more depth how such a space functions. The archive's fragmentary nature, its relation to time, and utility as a site for historiographical exploration makes it invaluable to this work. My practice always uses archival material – but I do not use the word 'archive' in its traditional sense – more as *an* archive, than *the* archive. I will clarify this distinction.

My original Ph.D. proposal demonstrates the importance of archive, as I write:

> Just as the dictionary and encyclopaedia are structures to which we refer in order to be informed, so are the index and the archive. I aim to dedicate my research to the exploration of these formats in a creative context, and how they can be used to blur the boundary between fact and fiction.

Though it has been a theme from the start, a consideration of how archive functions in my work has been under reconstruction and re-evaluation throughout this project. The inability to answer the simple question 'what do you mean by archive?' has haunted me. Using the definitions of others as a starting point, I elucidate this issue now.

3.2. Defining 'Archive'

Arkhé: *Beginning, origin, source of action*

I started where any good doctoral student would, with Jacques Derrida and his formidable *Archive Fever*. Derrida writes that the term archive stems from the Greek word *arkhé,* meaning both 'there where things commence', and 'there where men and gods command, there where authority, social order are

[158] In relation to the museum store, at which I was a volunteer. This type of setting is considered as 'archive' in this project, and the varying guises that archive can take are explained later in this chapter.

exercised, in this place from which order is given'.[159] Julietta Singh notes, on this dual definition, 'How, the philosopher asks, can we hold these two meanings together?'[160] Derrida's definitions show the root of 'archive' as a structure concerned with power over preservation, making a direct link to law: *arkheion* 'the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded'.[161] The sites (*arkheion*) which housed these documents of law mark 'an institutional passage from the private to the public'.[162]

p. 52., fig. 226.

Carmen Maria Machado
'What is placed in or left out of the archive is a political act'

Paul Ricoeur in *Time and Narrative*, reasserts this definition: 'Archives are a set, an organised body of documents. Next comes the relationship to an institution'.[163] Ricoeur's definition is problematic, primarily because of the link to an institution, but also because it infers completion. To refer to something as a 'set' is reminiscent of commemorative coins, or football stickers, and implies that one might be able to assemble all of the components to create a 'full set'; a complete collection. This project relies on the information that is not present in the archive, the lacunae that allow space for imagination to come into play, whereas Ricoeur's definition implies that all the information one may want to know about a certain topic will lie side by side on the shelf ready to be explored in its entirety.[164] As Nanna Bonde

Bauldrillard
It is the psychology of the collector that is to be studied, not the collection

[159] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. by Eric Prenowitz, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995 [*Mal d'archive: une impression Freudienne*, France: Èditions Galilée, 1995], p. 1.
[160] Julietta Singh, *No Archive Will Restore You*, Goleta, CA: Puntum Books, 2018, p. 24.
[161] Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, p. 1.
[162] Ibid., p. 2.
Derrida also comments that this change has taken place in the last house the Freud family lived in: 'It is what is happening, right here, when a house, the Freuds' last house, becomes a museum: the passage from one institution to another' (p. 3). This indicates that the museum may also be considered an archive.
[163] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative, vol. III*, p. 116.
[164] Ricoeur goes a little way to addressing the problems in this implication in his later publication *Narrative, History, Forgetting*, acknowledging the fragmentary nature of the material found in archives, but holds on to the necessity of a link to an institution, and that the role of the historian is 'to resist the temptation to dissolve the historical fact into narration'. Ricoeur, *Narrative, History, Forgetting*, p. 178.

Thylstrup writes; 'archival accumulation and containment is always followed by loss and abjection'.[165]

Derrida
'Nothing is less clear today that the meaning of the word "archive"'

Since Derrida's etymological exploration and Ricoeur's writings from 1985, classifications and characterisations have evolved radically, both in terms of what may be considered an archive, and the way such a structure can be used or accessed. In the introduction to the collection of essays *Archive Stories: Facts Fiction, and the Writing of History*, editor Antoinette Burton's opening line reads: 'In an era when the echo chambers of cyber space have given a whole new definition to the concept of the archive […]'. She continues: 'In the new Millennium "archive stories" are to be found in domains outside the academy and the law'.[166] Burton proposes that archive is not to be considered in the way prescribed by Ricoeur twenty years before it has developed, its meaning has evolved, and a new set of problems and discussions surround it.

The emergence of the digital archive is fundamental to this turn in perception, and Annet Dekker writes, 'digital documents have increased the fragmentary nature of archives'.[167] Though I am concerned primarily with the physical archival space, the digital is acknowledged and considered in my work, and the relation between the physical and digital is always of significant interest.[168] The change in the meaning and accessibility of the 'archive' reflects not only a world with an excess of information available but creates a nostalgic look to the archive and physical artefact in the face of technological overload. Referring to digital archives, Burton writes that they present a challenge to archival 'fixity', and the 'historian's craft'.[169] I question, however, if it should

Svetlana Boym

[165] Nanna Bonde Shylstrup, 'What the Archive Can't Contain', *Lost and Living (in) Archives; Collectively Shaping New Memories*, ed. by Annet Dekker, trans. by Alice Tetley Paul, Amsterdam: Netherlands, Valiz, 2017, pp. 141 158, p. 142.
[166] Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction; archive fever, archive stories', in *Archive Stories*, p. 2.
[167] Annet Dekker, 'Introduction: What it Means to Be Lost and Living (in) Archives', *Lost and Living (in) Archives; Collectively Shaping New Memories*, pp. 11 25, p. 12.
[168] Susan Yee, speaking about the digitisation of Le Corbusier's drawings writes that 'it made the drawings feel anonymous, and it made me feel anonymous.' Susan Yee, 'The Archive', *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With*, ed. by Sherry Turkle, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011, p. 34.
[169] Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction; archive fever, archive stories', p. 2.

take an archive to exist in completely digital form before the physical archive's 'fixity' is challenged, and the historian's craft is examined. Following Jenkins's assertion outlined in the previous chapter that the past is always read through the layers of representation given by those that have read it before us, every time an archive is newly repurposed its fixity must shift. As with Derrida's transcendental signifier, an archival document or artefact is effected by what surrounds it, where it sits in a collection, who chooses to view it, and for what purpose, disallowing any level of stability or fixity in meaning.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 026·0001 Libraries and Archives: Philosophy and Theory.

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Antoinette Burton	Archive Stories	2005	N.Carolina, US	Duke University Press	026·0001	
Elisabeth Kaplan	We are what we collect, we collect what we are	2000	Online	The American Archivist (63)	"	See 'Heritage'
Arlette Farge	The Allure of the Archive	1989	Paris, France	Editions du Seuil	944.04	See 'History'
Thomas Osborne	The Ordinariness of the Archive	1999	Online	History of the Human Sciences	026·0001	
Jacques Derrida	Archive Fever	1995	Maryland, US	John Hopkins University Press	153.1	See 'Law', 'Psychoanalysis'
Hal Foster	An Archival Impulse	2004	Massachusetts, US	The MIT Press October Vol 110	026·0001	See 'Contemporary Art'
Holly Pester	Archive Fan Fiction	2017	SAGE online	Feminist Review 115		See 'poetry' 'creative writing'
Elisabeth Kaplan	Many Paths to Partial Truths	2002		Archival Science (vol2)	026·0001	
Laura Millar	Touchstones	2006	Canada	Archivaria Spring Vol 61	"	See 'Memory'
Caroline Steedman	Dust	2001	Manchester, UK	Manchester University Press	153·1	See Derrida, Archive Fever
Walter Benjamin	The Arcades Project	1927–1940	New York, US	Harrard Uni. Press (1982)		See 'History' 'Memory'
Kathy Carbone	Archival Art: Memory Practices Interventions and Productions	2020	California, US	The Museum Journal		See 'Contemporary Art', 'Memory'
Giorgio Agamben	The Archive and Testimony	1999	New York, US	Zone Books	027 DC 22	In Docs of Contemp. Art: Archive
Alice Kaplan	Working in the Archives	1990	London, UK	Yale University Press	"	Yale French Studies No. 77.
Leanne Shapton	Important Artefacts...	2009	London, UK	Bloomsbury Publishing	702·81	See 'Artists' Books'
Ursula Marx (ed)	Walter Benjamin's Archive	2007	London, UK	Verso Books	838.912	See 'biography'
Andrew Flinn	Communicating Histories, Communicating Archives	2007	Online	Journal of the Society of archivists		(vol·28), See 'Heritage'
Susan Yee	The Archive	2007	Massachussets US	The MIT Press	155·9	See 'Collection'
Sue Breakall	Negotiating the Archives	2008	London, UK	Tate Papers: 'Perspectives'		See 'contemperary Art'
Julietta Singh	No Archive will Restore You	2018	California, US	Punctum Books		See 'autotheory'
Achille Mbembe	The Power of the Archive	2002	Dordrecht, Netherlands	Springer	026·0001	In 'Refiguring the Archive' Hamilton ed
Nanna Bonde Thylstrup	What the Archive Can't Contain	2017	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Valiz	"	In 'Lost and Living (in) Archives'
D.G. Burnett	Metafiction and the Study of History	2023	Online	Rethinking History (27)		"Makerly knowledge in the Archive"
Sara Callahan	Art + Archive	2022	Manchester, UK	Manchester Uni. Press		See 'Contemporary Art'
Sven Spieker	The Big Archive	2017	MA, US	The MIT Press		" "
Annet (ed) Dekker	Lost and Living (in) the Archives	2017	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Valiz	026·0001	
J.M. Schwartz + T. Cook	Archives, Records and Power	2002	New York, US.	Archive Science (vol2)		See 'memory' 'Heritage'

3.3. Non-Institutional Archives

The archives outside institutional power or control are often referred to as 'grass roots' archives, and are examined in Elisabeth Kaplan's essay 'We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity', in which she uses the archive of the American Jewish Historical Society as an example. Kaplan explores the problems inherent in archives that are produced actively, or in retrospect, and the issues of 'truth' and 'authorship' in these types of collections – and these problems are not solely linked to the digital archive, as intimated by Burton. Kaplan suggests that the histories constructed by groups of people regarding their own identity (or group with which they identify), are in direct retaliation to a broader social and historical narrative from which they have been previously excluded. She writes that the society mirrored the American Jewish identity they 'sought to forge', and that 'all hints of controversy were edited from the published version of minutes'.[170] She continues: 'As the founders set the parameters for the historical society, they were also deliberately defining an image of American Jewry for dissemination to the general public'.[171] This places the grass-roots or contemporary archive in an activity of *poiesis*, the act of bringing something into being, but also linked to poetry, to a creative act.[172]

Cheryl Dunye and Zoe Leonard
The Fae Richards Photo Archive

Simon O'Sullivan
Mythopoesis: or Fiction as Mode of Existence

The issue here is not that the American Jewish Historical Society is forging its identity as it would like it to be seen[173] – but that this is a necessary pursuit because their story remains untold in the main, 'official' narratives told by other American archives – the same level of bias is involved in writing a group or culture out of a historical discourse, as is present when writing themselves back in. This reinforces Jenkins's idea of 'one past – many histories',[174] and,

[170] Elisabeth Kaplan, 'We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity', in *American Archivist*, vol. 63. Spring/Summer 2000, pp. 126 – 151, p.137.
[171] Ibid., p.142
[172] The idea of poiesis as an outcome of archival encounter will be explored in the next chapter, and will be linked to the fictioning practice of mythopoesis.
[173] I suspect that this has always been the case, but in longer established archives the issue is not in recent enough memory for people to pass comment on.
[174] Keith Jenkins, *Re-figuring History*, p. 10.

returning to Burton, suggests that the destabilising of traditional archival structures through the appearance of digital archives, personal archives, artist's archives, and grass roots archives, has created a questioning of the archive 'proper' as a space where a fixed version of events can be discovered. Burton suggests that a more self-aware approach to archival studies should be implemented, and that it is not only the documents housed in archives that need to be studied:

Self-aware = Situated knowledge?

> The claims to objectivity associated with the traditional archive pose a challenge which must be met in part by telling stories about its provenance, its histories, its effect on users, and above all, its power to shape the narratives that are to be found there.[175]

Fiction and Poesis as Episteme

This proposed mode of examination fits with Manning's definition of the minor mode of investigation, which advocates for a more experiential, situated encounter with the knowledge structure of the 'major'; that questions should be asked rather than answered.

3.4. Time

Much of the work accompanying this thesis uses museum stores, archives, and institutional and private collections as sites of inspiration and production these spaces are what I refer to when speaking of 'archive' henceforth. In relation to these spaces, and this project as a whole, the concept of 'time' must be explored. How time is perceived, played out, and experienced in archival spaces is constantly considered, creating an underlying narrative that runs through the work.

Archive as Time Capsule

In the archive time is lost. Farge writes that the archival document is 'a tear in the fabric of time',[176] later suggesting that the utopian dream might be to

[175] Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction; archive fever, archive stories', *Archive* Stories, p. 6.
[176] Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives,* p. 6.

Temporal Dislocation
Pompeii

recover a time that is lost.[177] Indeed, most texts discussing the archive are strewn with references to time what is the archive if not a repository of time? a time capsule but the experience of time and the researcher's relation to it is seldom discussed. I outline my experience of time in an archive, and how it relates to 'presentism', nostalgia, and memory.

Dr Who

When working in museum stores and archives time goes slowly. Minutes tick by almost audibly, and the quietness seems to slow time in some way, or at least force an awareness of its passing. Yet the past the 'before-now' flies before the eyes as papers from the nineteen-twenties, thirties, forties, are sifted through in seconds. And then there are documents which take much longer to transcribe than the original must have taken to write. Considering this durational process, Farge writes that a transcribed document is a 'fragment of time that you have succeeded in taming'.[178] But surely time is not to be tamed; one cannot be a 'master' of time. Another five decades are sifted through in order to go back through time again, where one may linger for a while. And then there is personal time one's own time, own past. How might this look?

p. 55., fig. 236.

A document mentions the village where I grew up, and I am cast back to my childhood for a while: how I walked the fields with my parents after an evening meal, and how later, as a young adolescent, I roamed the streets with a gang of friends after dark. Among the pages of a notebook I find a handwritten recipe for a bread 'cobbles' and I remember the smell of my grandmother's kitchen on a Monday morning, and in turn think of the recent phenomenon of lockdown bread baking. Snapping out of these memories I look at the clock and realise that three whole minutes have passed in 'real time', but years decades have been traversed in my mind. It is fitting that memory should be recognised as something stimulated in archival research the archive is a selective storing and recycling of moments passed and what is this if not also a definition of memory? In the previous hundred words I (we) have travelled

[177] Ibid., p. 16.
[178] Ibid., p. 18.

from 2024 to 1926, forwards to 1991, and back again between 1943 and 2008, before returning to 2024 in what, for the reader, has taken less than a minute. Writing this makes me think of a diagram I once saw, explaining the timeline of the *Back to the Future* film trilogy, so we are brought back, again, to the diagram.

p. 46., fig. 189.

Mark Fisher discussing 'Sapphire and Steele'

3.5. Mapping a Multi-temporality

Given the previous section, a chronological timeline is counter-productive if trying to express a minor, experiential encounter with the archive; one that is far from linear. Simon O'Sullivan in *On the Diagram* suggests that art practices that employ the use of the diagram are 'world building', and inherently contain a process of poiesis. 'Here diagrammatics announces a kind of nesting of fictions within fictions to produce a certain density, even an opacity',[179] asserting Jenkins's claim that 'the past is a medium of different density'.[180] O'Sullivan continues:

> Might this diagrammatics also involve a different take on relations among the past, present, and future? This is the "drawing" of lines between different times, the building of circuits and the following of feedback loops; it is to understand time as specific to any given system (or practice) and not as neutral background.[181]

Three lines that form an a*ssemblage*:
A rigid line (precisions, questions and answers)
A molecular line (Interpretations silences, allusions)
An abstract line (the line of flight, a train in motion)

This 'drawing of lines' may be likened to Deleuze and Guattari's 'lines of flight', which denote a crossing; two or more paradigms or models of thought being spanned and thus connected: 'movements of deterritorialisation and

[179] Simon O'Sullivan, 'On the Diagram (and a Practice of Diagrammatics)', in *Situational Diagram*, ed. by Karin Schneider & Begum Yasar, New York: Dominique Lévy, 2016, pp. 13 25, p. 23.
[180] Keith Jenkins, *Re-figuring History*, p.68
[181] O'Sullivan, 'On the Diagram (and a Practice of Diagrammatics)', p. 24.

destratification'.[182] Such movements are linked to the authors' concepts of the process of 'mapping' in relation to the complex, diagrammatic root system of the 'rhizome', which produces an 'image of thought', rather than a hierarchical, objectively structured cartography. Simply, the process is more important than the product.[183]

Rhizome
'Ceaselessly established connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles'

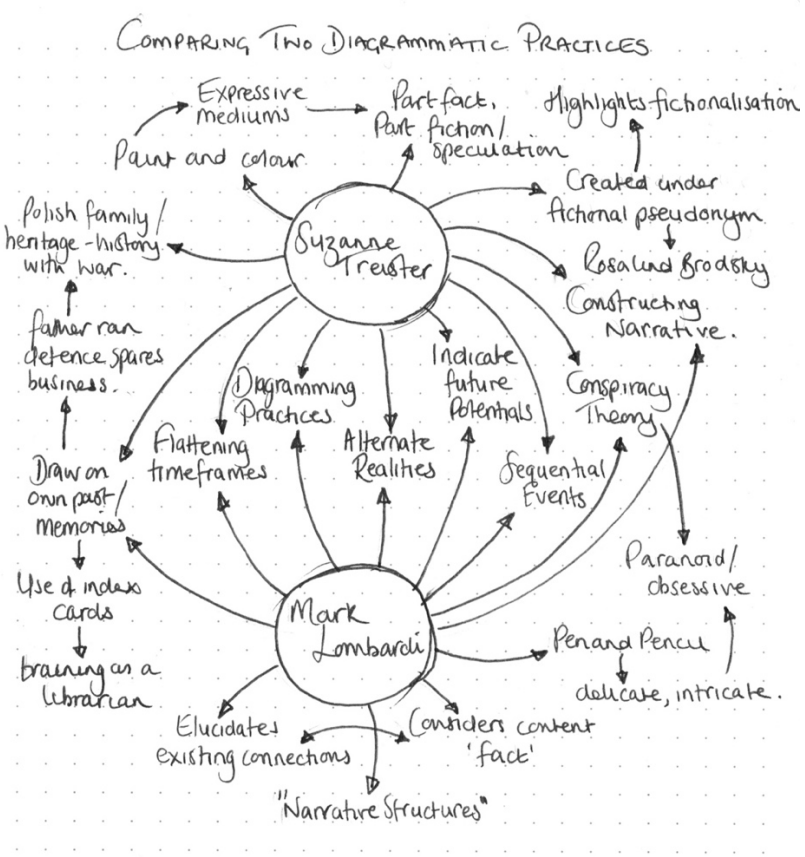
This is supported by John Bender and Michael Marrinan in *Culture of the Diagram*, who write: 'Diagrams incite a correlation of sensory data with the mental schema of lived experience that emulates the way we explore objects in the world'.[184] The authors use Diderot's encyclopaedia as a foundation for considering the diagram, expressing particular interest in the 'white space' of the page, not as an empty space, but a space that allows its viewer to consider what is also not known. The white space of the diagram mirrors the lacunae in fragmentary archival material; voids that may and must be filled by imagination. Emptiness becomes a space of possibility, an area in which this toing and froing through time can be considered, and that is personal to each individual prospective spectator. By utilising the diagram as a model for communicating subjectivity and the generative, associative nature of exploring the past, a minor encounter with the archive is exposed. Creative practice becomes a valid and necessary way to communicate a historiographical process, and following Deleuze and Guattari, it is the *process* and connections of understanding that should be mapped.

p. 26. fig. 79.
p. 27., figs. 80, 81, 86.

Much like this margin…

[182] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi, Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 1980 [*Mille Plateaux*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1980], p. 3.
They continue to define the line of flight: 'the possibility and necessity of flattening all of the multiplicities on a single plane of consistency or exteriority, regardless of their number of dimensions'. (p. 9.)
[183] As outlined in the chapter 'Introduction: Rhizome' in *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 3 25.
[184] John Bender and Michael Marrinan, *Cultures of Diagram*, California: Stamford University Press, 2010, p. 21.

3.6. Two Diagrammatic Practices



p. 53. fig. 227.

The diagram is a particularly useful form to present multiple timeframes, alternative versions of events, or unorthodox pasts. Artist Susan Treister uses the diagram as a format to explore emergent technologies, surveillance, and potential futures. Often she presents her work as that of Rosalind Brodsky, Treister's time travelling alter-ego, alluding to semi-fictitious aspects in her work. Marissa Olsen writes that Triester's work 'has blended history and speculation in ways that many are moved to call hallucinatory, if not slightly paranoid'.[185] Treister openly acknowledges that her work is, at least in part, fantasy, but blurs the points where the transition from history to speculation occurs. Her work is often linked to that of diagrammatic artist Mark Lombardi, and both artists have drawn a particular audience in 'conspiracy theorists'. Lombardi's large, beautiful, intricate pen and pencil diagrams chart the

p. 32. figs. 108, 111.

[185] Suzanne Treister, interviewed by Marisa Olson, October 15 2019 https://www.artforum.com/interviews/suzanne-treister-on-black-hole-space-time-and-post-surveillance-art-81036 [last accessed Januray 14 2021]

connections and abuses of power relating to oil companies, banking systems, and big pharmaceutical businesses.[186] In appearance Lombardi's work is much more methodical and fastidiously organised than Treister's painted, colourful diagrams, intimating a mind that is orderly, to the point of obsessive.

p. 32. figs. 109, 114.

In Triester and Lombardi's works the diagram is used to make connections, to show links between things that may not have been previously or comprehensively considered, akin to the diagrams shown through this thesis. I am wary, however, of the linear, cause-and-effect nature of such diagrams, and this aspect is understated in works that are exhibited publicly. The blending of fact and fiction in Treister's work is similar to my methods, and is also used as a way to navigate or represent the digital information age. Roger Luckhurst writes: 'In the era of the internet, Treister's combination of interests in the history of technology, the military-industrial complex, and magical thinking about occult inter-connectedness makes her work an important reflection on our weird and wired condition of being'.[187] Lombardi's large, intricate diagrams are the culmination of an in-depth and lengthy research process, which, in part, involves writing names and organisations on index cards borrowing from his previous career as a librarian which are then be moved around to produce a web of connections that he famously termed 'narrative structures'.[188]

Diagram = Space of speculation, not of problem-solving

p. 32., fig. 113.

Nabokov

Triester and Lombardi use the diagram as a means to chart a different version of reality to one that is readily accepted or believed, supporting O'Sullivan's

[186] If you are to follow, down the rabbit hole, Lombardi's conspiracy theory works and career, you will find that he committed suicide just before what critics expected to be the major breakthrough in his career, and of course it is speculated now that his suicide was not, in fact, a suicide at all.
See 'Mark Lombardi's work was full of conspiracies, now his death has become one': https://www.newsweek.com/2015/10/16/contemporary-artist-mark-lombardi-death-379532.html [last accessed January 14 2021]

[187] Suzanne Treister, Interview with Roger LuckHurst, 2009. https://www.suzannetreister.net/info/Interviews/Treister_Luckhurst.html [last accessed 14 January 2021]

[188] Mark Lombardi, 'The Recent Drawings: An Overview', in *Cabinet Magazine*, Spring, 2001. https://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/2/lombardi.php [last accessed January 14 2021]

assertion that diagrams 'operate as a map for thinking more broadly, for spotting passageways, openings and lines of flight',[189] and that the diagram is 'rhythm emerging from chaos, the manipulation of chance to suggest the "emergence of another world"'.[190] This is further reinforced by Zdebik: 'the diagram makes us aware of abstract forces at play in the organization [sic] of systems. Insofar as it brings to light these connective traits between isomorphic systems, the diagram is a map'.[191] In these cases — and in my own practice — this 'map' flattens timeframes, and allows the viewer to see multiple narratives at once, and is reflective of the way information is accessed in the digital age, and the way archival material is navigated experientially.

Abstract. Rhythmic. Chaos.

Isomorph (in mathematics) = structure-preserving mapping between two structures of the same type that can be reversed by an inverse mapping

3.7. Presentism, and A Crisis of Time

French historian, François Hartog, is considered one of the most influential voices in contemporary historiographical discourse, especially in relation to time and the experience of it. Hartog's book *Regimes of Historicity* examines the concept of 'presentism': the idea that nothing exists outside of the present. The phenomenon is characterised by an inability to separate the 'past' from the 'now', or to interpret the past outside our individual experience of the now:

> It is a candid expression of our collective inability to shake off what is generally called 'short-termism' and which I prefer to call 'presentism': the sense that only the present exists, a present characterized at once by the tyranny of the instant and by the treadmill of an unending now.[192]

The slow cancellation of the future…

Hartog writes that presentism occurs when there is a *crisis of time*. History

[189] David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan, *Fictioning*, p. 9.
[190] Simon O'Sullivan, 'From Stuttering and Stammering to the Diagram: Deleuze, Bacon and Contemporary Art Practice', p. 255.
[191] Jakub Zdebik, *Deleuze and the Diagram: Aesthetic Threads in Visual Organisation*, p. 9.
[192] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, trans. by Saskia Brown, New York: Columbia University Press, 2017, p. xv.

education scholar, Peter Seixas, defines a crisis of time as 'when events outstrip the modes of understanding that had given people their temporal orientations, and they are forced to re-shape the relationships between past, present and future'.[193] For Hartog, this crisis is the 2008 financial crash, which represents an acute example of 'post-truth', when the overwhelming amount of contradictory information and predictions about the future make what is to come unclear and unforeseeable 'In a sense there is nothing but the present, not as infinite, but as indefinite'.[194] At the time of writing this [March 2021] we are undeniably facing what Hartog would refer to as a 'crisis of time'. The Covid-19 pandemic is continually described as 'unprecedented', and there is a strong narrative of things never being the same again, a re-evaluation of what is 'important', and a silent yet solemn promise not to 'take things for granted' in the future, all giving rise to a proposed 'new normal'. This current situation gives more meaning to Hartog's 'presentism': 'Today the future is a threat, not a promise'.[195]

I have made a deliberate decision not to bring this paragraph up to date [2024], as it exemplifies anachronistic elements this research addresses

I find these crises of time analogous of my experience of the archive, where time is spent sifting through the remnants of the past, with feet firmly planted in the present. When I started working with World War One ephemera at Sheffield Museums, I was continually struck by the strange desire to rub out letters to loved ones written in pencil, to literally erase a part of the past. If for Farge the transcribing of a historical document is the 'taming' of it, this erasure would perhaps be a 'setting free' a releasing. This desire shows a feeling of power over the fragments in the archive. As Hartog writes; 'writing history is also a way of making history'.[196]

Carmen Maria Machado
'it's the power, the authority that's the most telling element [of the archive]'

With the recent coronavirus pandemic acting as a particularly powerful example of a crisis in time, it is hard not to empathise with Hartog's argument for 'presentism', but I would suggest that this way of reading the past and

[193] Peter Seixas, ''Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time' *International Network of Theory for History*, 2016.
[194] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, p. 202.
[195] Peter Seixas, ''Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time'.
[196] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, p. 147.

looking back through time is not applicable only in these more acute crises of time, but all the time. The influx of art works addressing the archive in the last thirty years and the rise in historical fiction and dramatisation is testament to an increased interest not only in the past, but how it is retold. This is characterised by some as the product of an inability to look to the future. In *Ghosts of my Life*, Mark Fisher refers to the 'slow cancellation of the future'.[197] Using contemporary science-fiction and music references, Fisher outlines the inability to anticipate what is to come, as technology moves so quickly that nothing is inconceivable any longer technologies first anticipated in television shows like *Star Trek*, that once seemed incomprehensible, are now commonplace, or even surpassed.

[197] A term inspired by Franco Berardi's text *After the Future* in which Berardi outlines a future or advancement no longer driven by physical production as in the industrial revolution but one that exists in a virtual space, dealing in signs and signifiers, leading to a depersonalisation of the individual within the infinite digital machine, or the 'consensual hallucination' that he terms the Internet.
Franco 'Bifo' Berardi, *After the Future*, ed. by Gary Genosko and Nicholas Thoburn, California: AK Press, 2011

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 115. Time, Nostalgia, Hauntology

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Jacques Derrida	Spectres of Marx	1993	London, UK	Routledge (1994)		See 'capitalism'
Mark Fisher	Ghosts of my Life	2014	Hampshire, UK	Zero Books	115	See 'Spectres of Marx'
Svetlana Boym	Nostalgia and its discontents	2005	Charlottesville VA, USA	The Hedgehog Review	115	
Francois Hartog	Regimes of Historicity	2003	New York, US	Columbia (2015) University Press	907.2	See 'historiography'
Deborah Levy	The man who saw Everything	2019	London, UK	Penguin Books		See 'Creative Writing'
Paul Ricoeur	Time and Narrative	1983	Chicago, IL, US	University of Chicago Press	809.5	
JME McTaggart	The Unreality of Time	1908	Oxford, UK	Mind No 68 OCT 1908	115	
Svetlana Boym	The Future of Nostalgia	2001	New York, US	Basic Books	966.003	
Maggie Nelson	The Red Parts	2007	London, UK	Simon and Schuster		See 'autotheory'
Rachel Moore	Hollis Frampton (nostalgia)	2006	London, UK	Afterall Books	791.43	See 'Hollis Frampton' in 'film'
Georges Didi-Huberman	Bark	2011	Cambridge, MA, USA	The MIT Press	940.53/8072	
Amelia (ed) Groom	Time	2013	London, UK	Docs of Contemp. Art, White Chapel		See 'Contemporary art'
Shira Segal	Photography, film + the transmission of cultural memory in Hollis Frampton's (nostalgia)	2005	Austin, TX, US	Text, Practice, Performance Vol. 6.	791.43	See 'film'
Caroline Steedman	Dust	2001	Manchester, UK	Manchester University Press	153.1	See 'Archives' 'Derrida'
Vladimir Nabokov	Speak, Memory	1969	London, UK	Penguin Books	791.73	See 'memoir'
Linda Hutcheon	Irony, nostalgia + the post-modern	2000	Ciudad, Mexico	Poligrafias Vol. 3.		See 'Literary theory'
Henri Bergson	Time and Free Will	1889	New York, US	Dover (2001) Publications	342.01	See 'philosophy'
Kazuo Ishiguro	The Remains of the Day	1989	London, UK	Faber and Faber	820	See 'fiction' 'Creative Writing'
Peio Aguirre	Semiotic Ghosts	2011	Chicago, IL, US	Afterall Journal (28)		
Colin Davis	Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms	2005	Oxford, UK	French Studies Vol. 59		
John Tierney	The Science of Nostalgia	2013	New York, US	New York Times (2013)		
Marcel Proust	In search of Lost Time	1913–1927	Paris, France	Editions Grasset	843.192	See 'memoir'
Ray Bradbury	Dandelion Wine	1957	London, UK	Harper Collins (2008)	813.5	
Francois Hartog	Chronos: The West Confronts Time	2022		Columbia University Press	907	See 'Historiography'
Mark Fisher	The Weird and The Eerie	2016	London, UK	Repeater Books		
Achim Landwehr	Chronisms: on the Past and future of the relations of times	2019	Published Online.	Rethinking History Vol. 23		See 'anachronism'
Jorge Luis Borges	A New Refutation of Time	1944/1946	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Sur Literary Magazine		

3.8. Nostalgia

Nostos = Home
Algia = Longing

An unavoidable term when making work from the archive is 'nostalgia': literally, a longing for home. The act of searching through archives; of exploring a more analogue time, through more analogue methods, creates a longing for the past. While nostalgia was considered a pejorative word for some time, representing a sentimentality that had no place in academia, in the past two decades it has enjoyed a revival as a critical term, describing a present mode of being. Svetlana Boym writes; 'I would define it as a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed'.[198] She continues, 'Nostalgia is not merely an expression of local longing, but a result of a new understanding of time and space that makes the division into "local" and "universal" possible'.[199] Boym's definitions of nostalgia intimate a temporal disjunction, and link to Fisher's development of Derrida's 'Hauntology': the returning of the past, or concepts of the past, as spectres or ghosts. Derrida writes 'to haunt does not mean to be present'.[200] Fisher asks, then, whether this ghost belongs to the past, from whence it came, or if it is present *and* past, both and neither. He quotes Andrew Stott and Peter Buse: 'Ghosts arrive from the past and appear in the present. However, the ghost cannot be properly said to belong to the past [...] Surely not, as the idea of a return from death fractures all traditional conceptions of temporality'.[201]

Derrida
Spectres of Marx

Hauntology
Portmanteau of 'Haunting' and 'Ontology'

Susan Stewart
On Longing

Fisher expands upon Derrida's hauntological returning of the past, and defines the hauntology of the twenty-first century as the haunting of a future that has never arrived. Moving the focus from the past to the future, Fisher also readdresses nostalgia, not in its definition, but in the temporal trajectory. For Fisher nostalgia is not simply an affectionate look to the past, but is a

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[198] Svetalana Boym, 'Nostalgia and its Discontents', *Hedgehog Review*, summer 2007. https://hedgehogreview.com/issues/the-uses-of-the-past/articles/nostalgia-and-its-discontents [last accessed 20 March 2021]
[199] Ibid.
[200] Jacques Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*; *The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, Trans. By Peggy Kamuf, London: Routledge, 1994 [*Spectres de Marx*, Paris: Editions Galileé, 1993], p. 202.
[201] Mark Fisher, 'The Metaphysics of a Crackle: Afrofuturism and Hauntology', *Dancecult*, vol. 5(2), pp. 42–55, p. 44.

product of trying to look to the future. When this proves impossible, the gaze is inevitably reflected back to the past: to try to look forwards is to have to look backwards. To define nostalgia, Fisher turns to postmodern theorist Frederic Jameson's concept of the 'nostalgia mode'; which Fisher explains as: 'aris[ing] only when a coherent sense of historical time breaks down'.[202] This can be linked to Hartog's concepts of presentism, and likened to my description of working in the archive, through which ghosts of the past come forth into present, speaking through me, belonging to neither their time nor mine.

Jameson
Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism

Walter Benjamin
The angel of history
p. 29., fig. 95.

Hollis Frampton's film *(nostalgia)* (1971) addresses ideas of disjointed timeframes and temporalities. In the black-and-white film Frampton tells the viewer they will be listening to 'recollections of a dozen still photographs made several years ago',[203] yet as Frampton begins to describe the photograph shown on the screen, it becomes clear that the story and image do not correlate. After about a minute we see that photograph is over a heat or fire, and is starting to smoke and smoulder, eventually turning black and shrivelling to ash in silence. Once the first photo is destroyed, a new one appears, recognisable from Frampton's description of the first photograph, and the film continues in this asynchronous way, through thirteen photographs.[204]

p. 54., figs. 229, 230.

The use of film and photography in Frampton's work relate to ideas of conservation; both mediums allow for the preservation of moments passed, so that they might be encountered or 'lived' again in the future. Through the destruction of these photographs, and the disjointed time frames, Frampton hints at the impossibility of reliving the past, and pre-empts Boym's idea that

[202] Mark Fisher, *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*, U. K.: Zero Books, 2014, p. 35.
[203] Hollis Frampton, *(nostalgia)*, narrated by Michael Snow, run time 38 minutes, 1971.
[204] There is also something interesting in this work about the silence that follows the narration, a gap in the storytelling where the photograph smoulders on the screen. These periods of quietness give the viewer pause to think about the narrative that has just been told, and, once the premise of the film is established, a void in which one can try to commit the details to memory so they might be looked for in the correlating photograph that will be shown next. Yet this is difficult once the next narration starts, and the viewer is left trying to juggle two timeframes in the mind at once.

nostalgia is something unattainable; a fragmented memory that doesn't exist. Asserting Fisher's link between nostalgia and the future, Shira Segal writes, 'Frampton's *(nostalgia)* is the articulation of an essential transformation of perception and an ever-evolving memory of the future'.[205]

3.9. Heritage

David Lowenthal 'Heritage uses historical traces and tells historical tales'

Ideas of nostalgia, lost futures, personal histories, and hauntings are bound in the language of archival practices, and inherent in all of these terms are the concepts of memory, and heritage. 'Heritage' has become a buzzword in the past decade, particularly in relation to archival art practices, and is seen here as a narrative process that interacts with archival fragments. Like Fisher's change in trajectory for nostalgia – from the present to the future – heritage has also undergone a temporal shift in the twenty-first century. In *Understanding the Politics of Heritage*, Rodney Harrison outlines two different types of heritage; 'tangible' and 'intangible',[206] while Laurajane Smith, in *Uses of Heriatge*, argues that heritage can create identity as much as retrospectively inform it.[207] In Harrison's idea of 'practices' of heritage, and Smith's formation of future identity, a poesis is occurring – a bringing into being – placing heritage practice in the realm of creative act.

Tangible Heritage = physical objects and places of heritage
Intangible Heritage = 'practices' of heritage that help to create a collective social memory

Hartog describes 'heritage' as the 'alter ego' of memory, writing that 'our contemporary fascination with heritage can be understood as the expression of a crisis of time, and as a further sign of the emergence of presentism'.[208] If 'heritage' falls under the subheading of 'memory', a collective memory – such as the archive produced by the American Jewish Historical Society, explored by Kaplan, or a personal memory, such as one summoned forth when

[205] Shira Segal, 'From the Private to the Public: Photography, Film, and the Transmission of Cultural Memory in Hollis Frampton's *(nostalgia)*', *Text, Practice, Performance*, vol. 5. 2005, pp. 34–54, p. 51.
[206] Rodney Harrison, *Understanding the Politics of Heritage*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2010.
[207] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, 2006.
[208] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, p. 149.

examining artefacts – then it is both subjective and productive. Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook write that archives *are* memory, and that 'archivists wield power over the shape and direction of historical scholarship, collective memory, and national identity'.[209] The authors use the term 'collective' memory, which is directly linked to 'heritage', and implies a one-way relation: archives *are* memory, archives *create* memory. But what of the individual memory? What of the researcher that has gone to the archive to explore a past that is not their own, or, in fact, explore nothing in particular at all? In these cases I argue that personal memory and experience inform the way archival material is read as much as the material informs the identity of its viewer. It is a conversation, a two-way exchange, but the living researcher will always have the last say, the archive only speaks what one wants to hear. Hartog writes:

Singh
Archive is 'enabling fiction'. You will always find what you are looking for

> 'Our memory' is based on a relation to the past in which discontinuity predominates. The past is no longer 'solid and steady'. Hence we have moved from a history sought in the continuity of memory to a memory cast in the discontinuity of history.[210]

[209] Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, 'Archives, Records and Power: The Making of Modern Memory', *Archive Science*, vol. 2, 2002, pp. 1–19, p. 2.
[210] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, p. 125.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 153.12 MEMORY - PSYCHOLOGY / 612.823312 MEMORY - HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Simon Critchley	Memory Theatre	2014	London, UK	Fitzcarraldo Editions	153 12	
Frances Yates	The Art of Memory	1966	London, UK	Routledge	"	
Pierre Nora	Between Memory and History	1989	California, USA	University of California Press	907.2	See 'History'
Laura Millar	Touchstones: Considering the	2006	Canada (online)	Archivaria 61	026-0001	See 'Archive'
	relationship between archive + memory					
Brian Dillon	In the Dark Room	2005	London, UK	Fitzcarraldo Editions		see 'photography'
Giordarno Bruno	De Umbris Idearum	1582	Paris, France	Aegidius Gorbinus	945.6.34	
Svetlana Boym	Nostalgia and its Discontents	2007	Virginia, USA	The Hedgehog Review	966.003	See 'nostalgia'
Gaston Bachelard	The Poetics of Space	1958	Paris, France	Presses Universitaires de France		See 'Architecture'
Daniel Miller	The Comfort of Things	2008	Massachusetts, USA	Polity Press	114 DC 20	See 'Collection'
Kathy Carbone	Archival Art: Memory Practices	2020	California, USA	The Museum Journal	153.1	See 'Archive' 'Archival Art Practice'
	Interventions and Productions					
Walter Benjamin	Excavation and Memory	1932	Cambridge, MA, USA	Harvard (2005) University Press	612.823312	
Sigmund Freud	A note upon the 'mystic writing pad'	1924	London, UK	The Hogarth Press (1961)		see 'psychoanalysis'
Roland Barthes	Camera Lucida	1980	Paris, France	Editions de Seuil	771.92	See 'Photography'
Penelope Lively	Moon Tiger	1987	London, UK	Penguin Modern Classics (2006)	891.73	
Maggie Nelson	Bluets	2009	Seattle, USA	Wave Books		See 'poetry' 'autotheory'
Vladimir Nabokov	Speak, Memory	1951	London, UK	Penguin Books (1999)	891.73	See 'humour', 'memoir'
Lynne (ed.) Schwartz	The Emergence of Memory	2010	New York, USA	Seven Stories Press		See 'Sebald'
Jorge Luis Borges	Funes the Memorious	1942	Buenos Aires, Argentina	La Nacion (newspaper)		Also in 'fictions' part 2.
Joe Brainard	I Remember	1975	New York, USA	Granary Books (2001)	818.5403	See 'memoir' 'poetry' 'lists'
Henri Bergson	Matter and Memory	1896	Connecticut, USA	Martino Fine Books (2011)	342.01	Reaction to 'The matter of memory'
mark fisher	Ghosts of my Life	2014	Hampshire, UK	Zero Books		'see 'Nostalgia'
Carmen Maria Machado	In the Dream House	2020	London, UK	Serpent's Tail		See 'memoir'
Maria Stepanova	In Memory of Memory	2017	London, UK	Fitzcarraldo Editions		See 'memoir' 'essay' 'History'
Julian Barnes	The Sense of an Ending	2012	London, UK	Jonathan Cape	082	
W.G. Sebald	The Emigrants	1993	London, UK	The Harvill Press (1997)	833.941	See 'memoir' 'fiction'
Robert Walser	Microscripts	1985	New York, USA	New Directions Publishing (2010)		
Rebecca Solnit	The Faraway Nearby	2013	New York, USA	Viking Press		

3.10. An Aside, On Memory

I have read Simon Critchley's book *Memory Theatre* three times, each time misremembering the text and the outcome, and each time recalling something pertinent about the story that is absent upon rereading it. As Critchley's text is about remembering and memory, this is somewhat embarrassing, yet the book resonates with this project in ways that at times I do not understand. Critchley, or the character of Critchley, is sent, from his former philosophy tutor, Michel Harr, eleven mysterious boxes, labelled as symbols of the Zodiac, containing, among other things, astrological charts that seem to plot the works and eventual demise of certain philosophers. Some of these philosophers are not yet dead (including Critchley himself), yet the predictions are correct for those that are. A final twelfth box, arriving late, contains a *maquette* of Giulio Camillo's 'Memory Theatre', a physical representation of a psychological device used to recall memories and information in an ordered and efficient fashion.[211] Critchley decides that it is his task to recreate this theatre in order to recall his life in its entirety just before the prescribed moment of his death, predicted by Harr.

p. 55, fig. 240.

Critchley builds a physical Memory Theatre, filling it with statuesque figures, assigning certain memories, works, and experiences to each, symbolising his life as he knows it. He practices recalling his entire life through these figures until he has it memorised by heart, ready to recite one last time upon the moment of his death. He writes: 'Time had become space. History was geography. Everything was a map and I'd mapped everything'.[212] Driven mad by the pursuit of the mapping of his life, Critchley stands on the moment of

Recently used in Mark Gatiss's modern day adaptation *Sherlock*

See **Frances Yates** *The Art of Memory* ➔ Warburg

[211] 'The theatre itself refers to mnemonic techniques called "The art of memory", a series of methods allowing better memorisation of information through the association of mental places to information, or, through the spatialization of memory into ideal places. Giulio Camillo takes it a further step by imagining an actual materialization of human memory and extending it to collective knowledge, making the theatre a sort of ancestor of the encyclopaedia or even of the Internet.'
Mariabruna Fabrizi, *Spatializing Knowledge: Giulio Camillo's Theatre of Memory (1519-1544)*, March 3 2019, http://socks-studio.com/2019/03/03/spatializing-knowledge-giulio-camillos-theatre-of-memory-1519-1544/ [last accessed 22 November 2020]
[212] Simon Critchley, *Memory Theatre*, London: Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2014, p. 64.

his death and achieves total recall. And then he does not die. Financially ruined, with no space to create new memories, he has no way forward but to assume he has simply 'done it wrong' and imagine another kind of memory theatre, an organic, moving, natural one, in which memories become a part of the nature around them, ebbing and flowing with the moon and tides, outliving him, eventually becoming the sun around which the world revolves.

Borges
The Library of Babel

To make something static that was once full of life, and in Critchley's case, which *was* his life, is to render it destitute. To try and comprehend something in its entirety, and as a finality, is to strike it dead. While things are unfixed and moving, and lacunae exist between objects and 'known' matter, then there is the possibility of life. This is how archival material is seen in this project: fleeting, mobile, and capable of a renewed existence, or perhaps simply a retelling of an old story. For a tale to be told, and retold, and be open to retelling again, is to keep it alive. Although it is by no means a perfect analogy for this project, Critchley's book has lingered on its peripheries for a long time, because of the striking schematic imagery it conjures and the warning that once we think we have learned everything there is to learn, or remembered all there is to remember, there is no moving forwards. Critchley physically recreates a diagrammatic structure, but leaves none of the 'white space' of possibility that Bender and Marinnan argue for, and thus no space for new memories or experiences.

Ray Bradbury
Fahrenheit 451

Bender and Marinnan
Culture of the Diagram
➔ Diderot

3.11. Between Archive and Memory

Artist Nicky Bird addresses many of the themes explored so far in *Ghosting the Castle* (2017). The work focusses on Helmsdale Castle, a gothic medieval castle built in Scotland in 1488, its ruins demolished in 1970 to make way for the A9 road bridge. Bird writes that the project, event, and activity programme surrounding this work 'brought together art and archive, memory and history, to build a multi-layered and multi-voiced understanding of a dramatic change

p. 58., fig. 255.

Ghosting as verb. To ghost. To become Fisher's ghost of Derrida's hauntology, both of the present and the past, both and neither

to part of Helmsdale's landscape, which many people now simply drive through'.[213]

Freud
'All previous phases of development exist beside the most recent'

The map works made by Bird mimic an Ordinance Survey map, showing layers of history together in one space: 'the result of talking and walking between archive and memory. It is both work of art and document, a lasting reminder of a transient site-specific project and its research process'.[214] This concept of the transient made permanent is fundamental to many archival art practices, and exemplifies via the artist the historian's role in such activities. The use of the map as a way of exploring the site suggests that a journey is to be undertaken and navigated, between the physical remnant of a place and the memories of it, opening up not only discussion about Helmsdale Castle, but the multiple ways the histories of such sites and the past, in general, may be accessed. That the subject of Bird's work is in recent memory for people of the area forces a consideration of the 'now' in the project. Like Jeremy Deller's work *The Battle of Orgreave*,[215] addressing an issue that is in recent memory means that understandings and feelings have not been reduced to a simplified historical narrative of a secondary generation: the work is multifaceted, and full of life, possibility, and emotion.

p. 58., figs. 251, 253.

A temporal cartography

p. 58., fig. 254, 256.

On the connection between archive and memory, Laura Millar writes: 'Our memories, and the records that remain of past events, are both only fragments of a vanished whole'.[216] Millar distinguishes between records kept and the memory of the person that made the record: 'records are not memories. Rather, they are triggers or touchstones that lead to the recollection of past events'.[217] This can also be applied to the memory of the person that did not

[213] Nicky Bird, *Ghosting the Castle*, 2017. https://nickybird.com/projects/ghosting-the-castle/ [last accessed 20 November 2022]
[214] Nicky Bird, *Between Archive and Memory,* 2018. https://nickybird.com/projects/a-map-between-archive-and-memory/ [last accessed 22 November 2022]
[215] Jeremy Deller, *The Battle of Orgreave: An Injury to One is an Injury to All*, [film], 2001
[216] Laura Millar, 'Touchstones: Considering the Relationship between Memory and Archives', in *Archivia 61, Special Section on Archives, Space and Power*, Spring 2006, pp. 105 126, p. 114.
[217] Ibid., p. 114.

make the record – the one who is encountering it for the first time – in an archive, for example. Millar considers records in archives 'touchstones', which trigger memories of the viewer, rather than an insight into those of another. She disagrees with Schwartz and Cook's position that the archive *is* memory, but reasserts that it might help form identity:

Schwartz and Cook
Archives, Records, and Power

> Records and archives are not memories, and by themselves they do not imbue us with knowledge. But they are a means by which we gain knowledge of ourselves and our society, leading ultimately, one hopes, to greater understanding, compassion, and wisdom.[218]

As Hartog argues, however, our situation in the present always interferes with our views of the past, shaping and reshaping any memory, singular or collective, that may be formed. In the lockdown 'crisis of time', for example, recollections of a gathering that once focussed on the music played, or the conversations had, are now centred on the proximity of people, a physical closeness that, in that time, seemed a distant past. Different aspects of the same memory are foregrounded depending on the situation in which they are remembered. As such, the present, and its contemporary subjectivities, is, as always, crucial to any understanding of the past. Millar writes: 'The process of remembering […] relies on the discrete acts of creation, storage, and retrieval',[219] and the requirement of 'creation' here means that art practice is an effective way to explore the 'before-now' – a poiesis is required. Kate Eichhorn writes: 'a turn toward the archive is not a turn toward the past but rather an essential way of understanding and imagining other ways to live in the present'.[220]

Just as in the archive

[218] Ibid., p. 119.
[219] Ibid., p. 113.
[220] Kate Eichhorn, *The archival turn in feminism: outrage in order*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013, p. 9.

3.12. A Conversation

Thinking about time and the archival encounter leads me to an ongoing email exchange lasting the duration of this research.

As outlined in the introduction, on beginning this Ph.D. I realised that I needed information, artefacts, or documents from which to work. Being jaded with museum affiliated documentation, I decided to branch out on my own, to find documents with which I could make my *own* archive in the way that *I* wanted to. In June 2014, I purchased a collection of first world war letters and postcards on eBay, and struck up what has become an ongoing conversation with the seller, Barry.

p. 59., fig. 259.

Though we have never met, Barry is a humorous, enlightening, and live element in this research, and a constant reminder of the effect of the contemporary moment in looking at the past. Our conversations have endured his wife's hip replacement, his running for local council, the transitioning of his mother-in-law into a care home, alongside the unexpected death of my partner, my busy work life, the current pandemic, and the general confusion and mental struggle that seemingly accompanies the Ph.D. process. We have become a sounding board for each other's ideas and our conversations have become more important to me than the archival material he provides. After all, the physical artefacts that Barry chooses specifically for me and sends on are generated by the snippets of digital conversation that we share. The stories and ideas that we disclose to each other inform his ideas of what I may 'find interesting', and our conversations are intrinsically linked to the historical documents that are now in my possession.

This creates a multi-temporality. There is the time of the original document, the time of my receiving of the documents, the conversations between Barry and I that pre-empted the decision to send me a particular thing (linked to the time of the autobiographical anecdotes I disclose to him, and him to me), and my choice, now, to consider our friendship as something relevant to this

research, and frame it in such a way. Each of these jumps-through-time interrupt a chronological ordering of events. As Hartog notes, when considering what the modern study of history should become: 'more importantly [history] is concerned as a process with the idea that events do not simply occur in time, but also through time, with time itself as an agent, and even *the* agent'.[221]

The following transcripts have been abridged for the sake of the word count.

24th June, 2014

Hi,
I recently bought your letters to C. Lawton. I wondered if you had any information about the person these letters are to? I'm interested in knowing a little more about the person, if at all possible.

Best wishes.
Louise

24th June, 2014

Hello Louise

Thank you for your question. My interests cover the military service of people and the info about how the war effected those at home. C Lawson, didn't have anything particular outstanding in his record of service (that I could find). He received letters from three(?) females. One, a 'girlfriend', wanted to leave husband/child for him. Another seemed just to be a friend, and another his future (intended) wife. Some called him Charles, rather than Claude. I don't research people after the war unless their history indicates something out of the ordinary.

[221] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, pp. 104 105.

I'm sorry that I can't be of more help.

Good luck and best wishes,
Barry

25 June, 2014

Hello Barry,

Thanks for that, it's really helpful. I'm a PhD student, interested in personal archives and what they can tell us about people and everyday life. That's why I bought the letters I like the idea that they are all to the same person, rather than from, which is far more common.
I've volunteered for 3 years with a museum sorting out and transcribing WW1 letters. Obviously during this time, I had access to a lot of resources that are not available to me now (Ancestry subscription etc), so it is useful to know where to start now I'm going solo!
If you will permit me to ask you one more question; do you always sell on the information you work from after you have gleamed what you can?

Best wishes,
Louise

25th June 2014

Hello Louise,

You are so lucky to have done what you have with the museum. It's just the sort of thing I would do if younger. As you will know the real history of our nations' people is not in books etc, but in the personal letters, diaries etc of those who lived during events. These tend to be in lofts, and in the backs of cupboards and sadly skips.
My discipline was phil/lit, but I do like to learn about how 'ordinary' folks coped (never actually met anyone ordinary myself). Your WW1 letters

are a perfect example. You will have seen the official cards with the tick box content: "I am well", "I am ill" etc. Or letters with the censor's stamp. It's the letters given to those going on leave to post from home that give a clearer picture. Wars are big events, but I also like much smaller ones too. Strikes, health care, wages, holidays and the like. All pieces in the incomplete jig-saw of the history of our society.
As for your final question. I sell on much of my material to raise money to allow me to buy other material to research. There is no allowance in the pension for it. :o) I'm 64 this year. I took early retirement a few years ago on 'health' grounds. I was rubbish at me job and it made me boss ill. <<<Small old man joke.

Best wishes for your studies,
Barry

26th June, 2014

Dear Barry,

I think you are right in what you say. I suppose that the individual stories and people that pass amongst us hold just as much, if not more, 'truth' (if such a thing exists) and 'history' than facts and figures.

I too am interested in smaller events as well as the war; in fact, I find the war difficult territory to work with (I don't know if I've said, but I am an artist), as it is such well-trodden ground. Perhaps if you are selling anything else that you think could be of interest to me, you could let me know? My practice (in a nutshell) is to use narrative and storytelling to highlight unseen versions of history, or alternate and contradictory ones, and offer them as holding as much as importance as any other version. I am interested in the gaps of information that are ever present in archival material, and try to fill them with narrative (particularly everyday and domestic).

Best wishes,
Louise

27th June, 2014

Hello Louise,

No, I didn't know that you are an artist. How interesting, and I suppose you realize that narrative and storytelling are the age old way in which 'history' and traditions were told to people and passed down through generations. So long before our more sophisticated(?) methods, yours was the main source for passing on news and knowledge. You carry on a proud tradition from at least as far back (and before) as Homer etc.
Your like will probably save 'knowledge' when it's been ruined by 'Wiki', so please do your bit to help it survive!
What do I do with the info? One of the few benefits of retirement is that don't need to 'do' anything with it. No exams, essays, or reports. Knowledge as an end in itself, not as a means (To earn, or get better qualified). I just like to know stuff. We don't get many benefits of age. It's so unfair. My generation gave society free love and rock n roll. What does society give US in return? A bleddy bus pass. :o(

Best wishes
Barry

Initially I did not realise the full importance of Barry's messages in relation to the documents he sent; the first works I made addressed the relation between the object and the catalogue card used to signify it and my own subjectivity. Soon, however, I used snippets of our conversations in describing the artefacts, recognising that these exchanges were the reason the objects were in my possession, and that to disregard our conversations would not only be remiss when describing the documents, but when making comment about the experience of working with remnants of the past more generally. I produced the booklet *Conversation Pieces*, published in an edition of twenty-five for the PAGES Leeds International Contemporary Artists Book Fair. The book is

p. 16., fig. 40.

p. 16., fig. 41.

thirty-six pages long, A5 in size, and is introduced by a transcript of two emails from me to Barry.

The main content of the book consists of ten three-page-spreads, outlined in an inventory that stands in lieu of a contents page. The first page of each three-page-spread (which I call 'section'), shows an image of an archival document that I have been working with, either given to me or purchased from Barry. Examples include divorce papers, a policeman's notebook, pocket

p. 17., figs 42, 43.

diaries, a psychiatric referral form, and war letters. The second page of each section shows the front and back of a correlating catalogue card, filled out by hand to museum specifications, and detailing the size, shape, description, inscriptions, etc., of the document. The third page of each section shows the same double sided catalogue card filled in as I prefer when not bound by museum standards. The result of this process is a personal, subjective description, intentionally playful and often giving the impression that I had misunderstood what the sections of the card were asking from me. Although it was extremely satisfying to fill in the cards as I would like, it also proved underwhelming without the institution of the museum looming over the process the risk was minimal.

The key element of this work became how the three pages of each section worked together. The image of the document and both completed catalogue cards provided a more rounded view of the artefact, detailing simultaneously its existence in the world as a historical document, its status as museum-worthy material, and its subjective relation to me, for whom it was chosen and passed on to.[222] The catalogue cards contradict one another, providing two

[222] Hiller writes about the artefacts in *From the Freud Museum* having three components: 'They present the viewer with a word (each is titled), a thing or object, and an image or text of chart, a representation. […] There could be a number of different kind of relationships between those three aspects. The 'meaning' or the entire unit, of each box, would need to be investigated by seeing the entire relationship between the word, the picture, and the objects, as well as by the placement of an individual box I an extensive series of boxes.' This triad of meaning, which is understand best when all three components are considered simultaneously is akin to the aims of this piece of work.
Susan Hiller, 'Thinking Through Objects', p. 42.

readings of the same source material, each as useful as the other in understanding how the original document exists in a contemporary context, and destabilising the structure of the taxonomic device. Presenting supposedly objective forms alongside, or intertwined with, more subjective, creative text and information became a significant theme in my work from this point. I explored the ways of doing this effectively – eventually leading to work made using the diagram, a similar 'objective' structure.

18th April, 2015

Hello Louise,

Well, I have now read your work and I am not only impressed, but I am proud to have played a small part in it. How you set out your work, and show your descriptions of each item is really interesting. I don't know if it's intentional or not, but I love the way you refer to your family and upbringing, and tie them into your learning process. It is unusual and helps to remind people that you are dealing with real people and their life, and how their lives impact on later generations. Even long past generations who leave us their papers have much to teach us.
I would love to see more, BUT only if you allow me to share in the costs involved in me doing so. We can both only hope that in the distant future your work falls into the hands of someone like us. Being in book form it has more chance of doing so, rather than in digital form.

Thank you for sending these books Louise.

Best wishes
Barry

P.S. There is/was an undertaker's in Blackpool named "Box Brothers". I kid you not.

23rd April, 2015

Hi Barry,

Thank you so much for your kind words about my book.
In regards to the references to my family, they are both intentional and unintentional. The aim of the second catalogue cards is to offer a very subjective, personal response to the items I am cataloguing often this means that I try to find an anchorage point in my own life through which to relate to the otherwise foreign item being viewed. This means I naturally relate certain phrases or experiences to those I have encountered through my family or upbringing. This was an unconscious association, then, but the decision to note these references and keep them was deliberate for the reasons you have stated.
I often have problems in explaining the wider use of my research as a whole because it always so personal to me. I try to explicitly state that the versions and interpretations of history I present are of course autobiographical in a way, but that their merit lies in a way to highlight the possibilities of the archive and interpretation. In other words 'don't look at what I have done, but rather the way I have done it'.
Best wishes, and thank you again for your kind response,
Louise

3.13. Archive Fan Fiction and Unheard Voices.

Holly Pester's essay 'Archive Fan Fiction: experimental archive research methodologies and feminist epistemological tactics'[223] explores the making of *Go to Reception and Ask for Sara in Red Felt Tip* (2015).[224] She describes her methods for producing a creative, fragmentary text from archival research or findings, echoing some of my own methods and thoughts. Pester delivers a sense of the investigator or detective when describing her time in the

p. 88., figs. 383, 385.

[223] Holly Pester, 'Archive Fan Fiction', pp. 114 129.
[224] Holly Pester, *Go to Reception and Ask for Sara in Red Felt Tip*, London: Book Works, 2015.

Women's Art Library, exploring her personal relation to the archive, while still remaining academically rigorous in her references and concepts. One of the most significant themes is the acknowledgement of the romanticism of the environment in the archive. This is spoken about at great length in archive studies texts, but what Pester also mentions and is less frequently acknowledged is the influence of the archivist, the live person who is the guide to the information, and the effect they have on the work and research that is produced. She writes:

> I would like to add another set of material condition that shapes a research project [...] the significant relationship that the researcher builds with the archive custodian [...] the developed intimacy or lack thereof with the archivist, influences the relationship the researcher has with the material.[225]

Acknowledging that a conversation with a particular person in a particular building at a particular time can completely shape the way we read historical material is significant. Often the words of those to whom I have spoken about certain projects appear in the work itself, recognising their role in my understanding of a situation, object, or space. This is yet another factor that adds to the complexity of archival work and research, creating another layer of subjectivities that shape the way historical information is accessed, processed, and presented by the individual researcher.

My works not only highlight the influence of external voices when negotiating with versions of the past, but assert that they are crucial in the shaping of understanding. Such voices are often under-represented, and while they may be the well-trained voices of professional archivists, there are also less institutional archives in which volunteers, enthusiasts, or simply other 'interested' parties are those with whom the researcher communicates. These individuals often have a sense of attachment to and even affection for a site or collection that is different from one that is academic, or

Antionette Burton, Arlette Farge, Elizabeth Kaplan, Hilary Mantel, Carolyn Steedman, Susan Yee, Julietta Singh
The list goes on…

An archaeologist, on a dig I attended, told me that the discipline of archaeology is more accepting of postmodern history theory than history studies, but the problems of practically implementing such ideas means that they will always stay just that; ideas, theories. This has stayed with me more than anything I did or learned on the dig.

Particularly in relation to grass-roots archives. See **Elizabeth Kaplan** *We Are what we Collect, We Collect what we Are*

[225] Holly Pester, 'Archive Fan Fiction', p.118.

employment based. These are the people I meet repeatedly along this journey; their level of enthusiasm shapes my own, and my decision to include their words in my work deliberately addresses ideas of class and authority. Pester writes: 'This positioning of 'informal', fragmented communicative forms of knowledge interrelates *lived experience* and scholarly interpretation, such that material and socio-political conditions are mutually exclusive'.[226]

Pester takes these interactions, not just as inspiration, but cites anecdote and gossip *as methods* to create work, and refers to this as 'archive fanfiction', writing that it: [227]

> [R]ecodifies how documents constitute evidence and treats the archive as interactive apparatus of discursive materialities through which few narratives […] can be produced. Alternative research methodologies and imaginations that operate against the archive structure are therefore political strategy as much as research gesture.[228]

3.14. A Minor Practice

Many of Pester's ideas here coincide with Manning's expansion of Deleuze and Guattari's minor. The voices of 'lived experience' may be seen as minor voices, which contribute to a system of knowledge transferal and production, but are rarely acknowledged as such. Manning writes that the minor practice produces 'an engaged encounter with the very constitutive nature of knowledge' that is 'at the level of new forms of subjectivity'.[229] A practice that includes and recognises these subjective voices and interactions in opposition to 'major' modes of epistemology is therefore minor.

The political action of reading the archives is also a minor gesture. Manning defines this idea: 'New modes of existence call forth an articulation of the

[226] Holly Pester, 'Archive Fan Fiction', p.118–9.
[227] Ibid., p.115.
[228] Ibid., p.115–6.
[229] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 43.

political that is not reducible to preexisting constituencies',[230] while Pester writes 'this literary strategy for counter-narratives works against the grain of patriarchal categories of information'.[231] A political act can be achieved through a remapping or resituating of archival material *and* the encounters and experiences that surround it, as well as one's own situated position in this remapping.

The second condition of a minor literature is that it is political

Futher, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the minor language is constructed 'within a major language'.[232] Following Pester's argument for gossip and anecdote to be considered as valuable methods, I argue similarly that autobiography, fact, fiction, conversation, parody, and humour can be used in conjunction to produce a valid, intentionally 'aberrant' tool for communicating archival material. By using the more dominant voice of information dissemination alongside a personal and situated one, a minor practice is produced, following Deleuze and Guattari's assertion that the minor voice is always in conversation with the major. The process of testing and putting these modes of communication into practice are discussed in the following chapter.

The first condition is that it 'deterritorialises' major language

The third is that it is 'collective'

3.15. Towards the *How*

'The How' = Chapter 4, **Fiction**(**ing**)

Though a call for the recognition of subjectivity when examining the past may seem like a simple or obvious goal, there are many nuances in this aim, and these have been outlined through the varying theories and philosophes from history studies, archive studies, and historiography in the last two chapters. As in Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome, a network of interconnected ideas, readings, discussions, actions, and concepts (some of which I find ineffable) form a complex root system beneath this thesis, and I will to go on to examine how they might be elucidated through practice. I have discussed the diagram,

[230] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 123.
[231] Holly Pester, 'Archive Fan Fiction', p. 115.
[232] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, p. 18.

with its position between text and image, and its 'white space' representing the gaps in archival information, yet the diagram functions not only as a spatial way to map text, but as a kind of language itself.

Language and the written word are fundamental in relaying the past. In my work text is not intended to elucidate, but to create layers of interpretation and information that culminate in a polyphony of voices, providing space for viewers to add their own voice to the layers, becoming part of the conversation produced. The complicated experience of time, abundance of available information in the digital age, and 'crises of time' creates the need for a generative work that considers non-linearity, multiplicity, and hybridity as necessary and relevant methods of communicating the past. A fragmentary way of working reflects the fragmentary material one is constantly negotiating with in the archive.

Mythopoesis

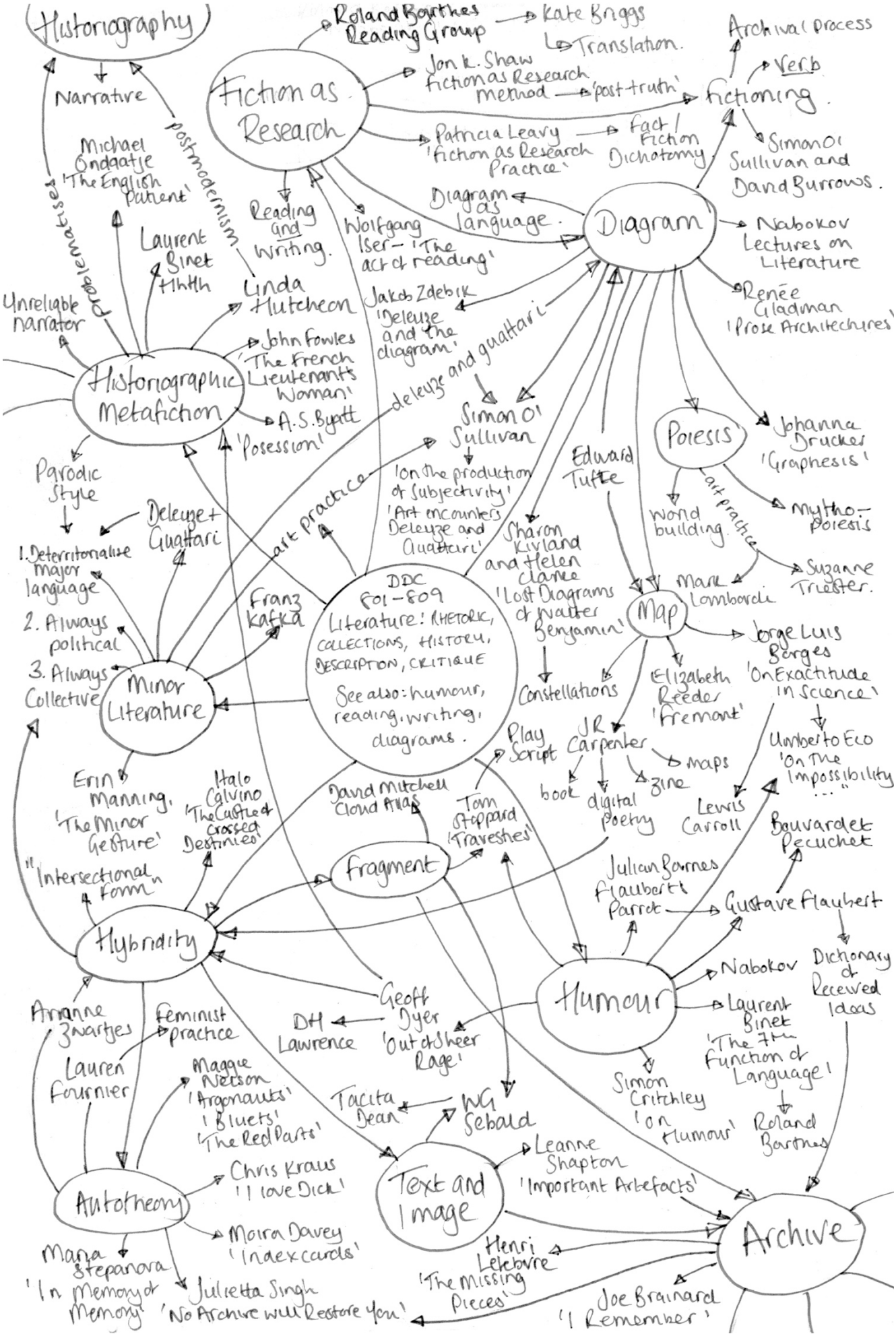
climate crisis,
mental health crisis,
financial crisis,
energy crisis,
cost of living crisis,
a crisis of meaning
and truth

Where does a story begin?
The fiction is that they do, and end, rather than
that the stuff of a story is just a cup of water
scooped from the sea and
poured back into it.

Olivia Laing

Chapter Four

Fiction(ing)


Historiography
Narrative
Michael Ondaatje 'The English Patient'
Laurent Binet 'HHhH'
Linda Hutcheon
Unreliable narrator
John Fowles 'The French Lieutenant's Woman'
A.S. Byatt 'Posession'
Historiographic Metafiction
postmodernism
problematises
Parodic Style
1. Deterritorialise major language
2. Always political
3. Always Collective
Deleuze + Guattari
Minor Literature
Franz Kafka
Erin Manning 'The Minor Gesture'
Italo Calvino 'The Castle of Crossed Destinies'
"Intersectional Form"
Hybridity
Armanne Swartjes
Lauren Fournier
Feminist practice
Maggie Nelson 'Argonauts' 'Bluets' 'The Red Parts'
Autotheory
Chris Kraus 'I Love Dick'
Moira Davey 'Index cards'
Maria Stepanova 'In Memory of Memory'
Julietta Singh 'No Archive will Restore You'
Roland Barthes Reading Group
Kate Briggs
Translation.
Jon K. Shaw fiction as Research method
'post-truth'
Fiction as Research
Patricia Leavy 'Fiction as Research Practice'
Fact / Fiction Dichotomy
Reading and Writing.
Wolfgang Iser – 'The act of reading'
Jakob Zdebik 'Deleuze and the diagram'
Diagram as language.
Diagram
Archival Process
Verb
fictioning.
Simon O'Sullivan and David Burrows.
Nabokov Lectures on Literature
Renée Gladman 'Prose Architectures'
deleuze and guattari
Simon O'Sullivan
'On the production of Subjectivity'
'Art encounters Deleuze and Guattari'
art practice
Poiesis
Johanna Drucker 'Graphesis'
mytho-poiesis
world building.
art practice
Suzanne Treister.
Mark Lombardi
Edward Tufte
Sharon Kivland and Helen Clarke 'Lost Diagrams of Walter Benjamin'
Map
Jorge Luis Borges 'On Exactitude in Science'
Umberto Eco 'On the Impossibility ...'
Elizabeth Reeder 'Fremont'
Constellations
JR Carpenter
maps
book
zine
digital poetry
Play Script
Lewis Carroll
DDC 801–809
Literature: Rhetoric, Collections, History, Description, Critique
See also: humour, reading, writing, diagrams.
David Mitchell Cloud Atlas
Tom Stoppard 'Travesties'
Fragment
Julian Barnes Flaubert's Parrot
Gustave Flaubert
Bouvard et Pecuchet
Dictionary of Received Ideas
Humour
Nabokov
Laurent Binet 'The 7th Function of Language'
Roland Barthes
Simon Critchley 'On Humour'
DH Lawrence
Geoff Dyer 'Out of Sheer Rage'
Tacita Dean
WG Sebald
Text and Image
Leanne Shapton 'Important Artefacts'
Archive
Henri Lefebvre 'The Missing Pieces'
Joe Brainard 'I Remember'

4.1 Defining Fiction(ing)

p. 7., fig. 3.

The third and final ring of my Borromean structure is 'Fiction(ing)'. I originally referred to this ring as 'Literature', but both the lack of reference to active making, and the suggestion that a 'literature review' in the traditional sense may be contained within, prompted a reconsideration. Fiction(ing) is a term I use to encompass both the reading and writing of texts that may not be considered 'fact' the commonly used antonym to 'fiction'. Simply, Fiction(ing) is the way I make work. Given the constant questioning of the possibility of 'fact' retrieval when looking to the before-now, this chapter's title reinforces this line of enquiry, rather than suggesting that what is created and studied herein is fabricated. The term fiction(ing) is employed as a considered alternative to the word 'fictionalising' an expression that implies a re-creation of something that exists in a fixed state, and indicates a novelistic structure rather than a spatial one.

Fiction(ing) = How

Fiction(ing) ≠ Fictionalising

The brackets in my term 'fiction(ing)' are used in the way brackets or parentheses would be traditionally used in a sentence to include elucidating information that is not crucial to the understanding of the main clause. Though the word 'Fiction' alone might suffice as this chapter heading, the brackets draw attention to the 'verb-ness' of the word. It is not just reading of that has evolved this project, but creation as well the active process of writing and art practice. The bracketing creates a syncretism in the word, allowing two elements to co-exist, and suggest that they are part of the same singular action, reading *and* writing, practice *and* research.[233]

Deleuze and Guattari's **Both/And** rather than **Either/Or**.

My use of parentheses also distinguishes my term from that of O'Sullivan and Burrows, which, though very similar, is focussed solely on process and

[233] Thinking about brackets, I am reminded of Immanuel Kant's phenomenological use of the term bracketing, expanded upon by Edmund Husserl, which defines bracketing as the process of thinking of the world or nature not as something that exists independent to the individual, but rather exists via the individual subjectivity of the observer which now seems appropriate, but is coincidence rather than intention.
See: Iso Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, The Hague, Netherlands: Nijhoff, 1964

Kant Transcendental Idealism
Derrida Transcendental Signifier

Greek
Parentithenai
'put in beside'

production – the word is solely used as a verb, whereas my bracketed version amalgamates both verb and noun – both are part of my process.[234] The authors write:

> By using the term fiction as a verb we refer to the writing, imaging, performing or other material instantiation of worlds or other social bodies that mark out trajectories different to those engendered by the dominant organisations of life currently in existence.[235]

Stammering.
Stuttering.
'Becoming a stranger' in one's own tongue

First condition of a minor literature → deterritorialise 'major' language

The opposing of the dominant organisations or languages suggested by O'Sullivan and Burrows places fictioning in the realm of the minor.[236] O'Sullivan and Burrows go on to explore 'how fictioning can take on a critical power when it is set against or foregrounded within a given reality', reinforcing the idea that the minor must operate within the major. Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term 'territorialise' is particularly relevant when considering a diagrammatic method, which Deleuze explains to be a 'mapping' practice. An abstraction of the territory of the map, and, by extension, diagram, is also an obfuscation *of* territory a deterritorialisation.[237]

O'Sullivan and Burrows continue: 'a fictioning practice, then, involves performing, diagramming, or assembling new and different modes of existence through open ended experimentation'.[238] This resonates with the

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[234] O'Sullivan and Burrows's book was released after I had decided on the use of 'fiction(ing)', and though initially disheartening, their definition of the term has forced me to think in more depth about my own, and where the differences and similarities lie. The differences in these terms are subtle, as stated above the nounness of the authors' term is intentionally discarded, and also O'Sullivan and Burrows's fictioning is, perhaps linearly, future-oriented – fictioning creates new modes of existence – that is its purpose. My term involves the use of the words of others, and a reflection, that might create a look to a possible future but only through the way it examines the past and present – a multi-temporality is a necessity.

[235] David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan, *Fictioning*, p. 1.

[236] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, p. 16.

[237] 'The diagram is no longer an auditory or visual archive but a map, a cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field. It is an abstract machine.'
Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. by Sean Hand, Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1995 [*Foucault*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1986] p. 31.

[238] David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan, *Fictioning*, p. 6.

O'Sullivan
Time is not a neutral background

pp. 50 51., figs. 211 220.

aims of this project in particular the use of diagram not only as a structure to which a non-hierarchical, multi-temporal, subjective narrative can be attached, but as a fictioning language in itself. One result of this experimentation is my work *Encounters*, which was shown in Bishop's House Museum. The work involved the rewriting and replacing of all of the informative text panels in the museum with my own texts. These texts were written as part prose, part play script, in which historical tenants of the house, museum volunteers, authors, historiographers, and philosophers, and I exchanged sentiments about the space, and how it felt to inhabit it. Before writing about this work in depth, I write about the kinds of reading that shaped the formation of it, and how they have influenced the research.

O'Sullivan
We might note that a text can operate diagrammatically

4.2. Fiction as Research Method

While O'Sullivan and Burrows posit fictioning as a kind of creation, my term fiction(ing) also refers to the act of reading fiction as research method. The reading of works considered fiction, or creative writing, act as catalysts for work I am making and inspire and inform in equal measure. Participation in the Roland Barthes Reading Group[239] has informed ideas of what constitutes reading, writing, reading about writing, writing about reading, and doing so collaboratively. Our reading of Barthes alone, aloud, together has informed individual and collaborative writing about what it is to read, write, and research. Unlike Barthes, who, in *The Preparation of the Novel*, refers repeatedly to the same core canon of writers, my categories and authors at times seem disparate and multifarious. I will later bring together my examples and investigate their commonalities, via the minor.

p. 28., fig. 87.

Flaubert
Proust
Rimbaud
Rilke
Kafka
More Flaubert

[239] The group is convened by Sharon Kivland, and for five years we have been reading, reading about, writing about, and writing around Roland Barthes's lecture series *The Preparation of the Novel*, translated by Kate Briggs. Our collaborative publications include *The Desire for Haiku* (2018), *Roland Barthes's Party* (2020), *Setting a Bell Ringing: After an Unmaster Class with Anne Boyer* (2021) all published by MA BIBLIOTHÉQUE and *The Work as Will*, published as an excerpt in *Inscription Journal, Issue 1*, 2020, and in *Barthes Studies*, an open-access journal for research in English on the work of Roland Barthes, Autumn 2021.

p. 39., figs. 146 149.

Jon K. Shaw, in *Fiction as Method*, writes 'the act of reading moves us through, and superposes, various gradations of imagination, criticality, insights, outsight, and so on'.[240] Similarly, Eileen John refers to 'philosophical fiction' the idea that 'experience with fiction can lead us to conceptual knowledge',[241] while Kimberly Andrews writes: 'Reading […] must be viewed as a critical practice, one informed and complicated by context, history, and theory'.[242] Such acts of reading have brought much clarity to this Ph.D., and are considered a critical process. Shaw writes that fiction has gained more weight in research communities since the term 'post-truth' has been accepted as a descriptor for the current political climate. He comments that this, of course, implies that there was once a 'truth', a 'pre-post-truth', where the surfeit of contradictory information via the internet was not available.[243]

We might call this modernism, or earlier, the romantic period.

Britain's decision in 2016 to leave the European Union, now understood by many to have been voted for based on lies, empty promises, propaganda, and false advertising, is an significant example of an inability to be able to separate fact from fabrication, or 'truth' from 'propaganda', and more importantly determine whether there is any separation to be made.[244] For such reasons the use of fiction as practice and research method is a vital tool in mirroring how information is disseminated in contemporary society, and the inherent problems, including a general mistrust of information and a wariness of 'facts'

[240] Jon K. Shaw and Theo Reeves-Evison [eds], 'Introduction', *Fiction as Method*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2017, 5–58, p. 58.
[241] Eileen John, 'Reading Fiction and Conceptual Knowledge: Philosophical Thought in Literary Context Author(s)', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Autumn, 1998, Vol. 56, No. 4., pp. 331-348, p. 331.
[242] Kimberly Andrews, 'A House Divided: On the Future of Creative Writing', *College English*, no. 71. Vol. 3. 2009, p. 242–255, p. 242.
[243] Jon K. Shaw and Theo Reeves-Evison [eds], 'Introduction', *Fiction as Method*, p. 26.
[244] The 'NHS Bus' is a prime example of this. The bus was branded with the information that the National Health Service would receive an extra £350 million in funding from the money saved by Britain not being a part of the European Union. This has since been declared a 'clear misuse of official statistics' by the UK Statistics Authority. For more information and further examples see: Shehab Khan, 'Final Say: The misinformation that was told about Brexit during and after the referendum', in *The Independent*, 28 July 2018. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/final-say-brexit-referendum-lies-boris-johnson-leave-campaign-remain-a8466751.html#explainer-question-0 [last accessed 27 June 2020]

p. 65., fig. 278.

presented with agenda. In current cyber culture it is almost essential that a story or news report has a photograph or image attached to the headline to grab the reader's attention, and this has become the expected way for a reader to experience digital information.[245]

[245] A quick online search about how to boost social media interaction will reveal that posts with an image attached will receive between 650% and 1000% more engagement than those that are 'text only', and is 40 times more likely to be shared.
See: https://medium.com/@onlinelogomaker/why-images-are-so-important-to-social-media-b941ddd678a8 [last accessed 3 December 2020]
and: https://smartbirdsocial.net/5-reasons-use-visual-content-social-media/ [last accessed 3 December 2020]

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 801-809 – Re: Reading, Writing, Writers.

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Brian Dillon	Suppose a Sentence	2020	London, UK	Fitzcarraldo Editions	808.2	See 'classic literature'
Jon K Shaw (ed)	Fiction as Method	2017	Berlin, Germany	Sternberg Press	808. 00014	
Patricia Leavy	Fiction as Research Practice	2013	California, USA	Left Coast Press	"	
Linda Hutcheon	Historiographic Metafiction	1989	Baltimore, MA, US.	John Hopkins University Press	808.06	See 'postmodernism'
Vladimir Nabokov	Lectures on Literature	1982	Boston, MA, US	Mariner Books	401	See 'Humour' '20th Century lit'
George Orwell	Politics and the English Language	1946	London, UK	Horizon vol. 13, issue 76.	808	See 'politics'
Italo Calvino	Why read the classics?	1991	London, UK	Penguin Classics (2009)	808.1	See 'Literary criticism'
Margaret Atwood	In other Words	2011	New York, US	Random House	808.2	See 'Science fiction'
Lauren Fournier	Autotheory as Feminist Practice	2021	London, UK	The MIT Press	802	
Kate Briggs	This Little Art	2017	London, UK	Fitzcarraldo Editions	410	See 'Translation', Barthes
Ananna Zwartjes	Autotheory as Rebellion	2019	Michigan, US	Michigan Quarterly Review	802	
Jen Soriano	Multiplicity from the Margins	2018	Tennessee, US	Assay Journal No 51.	802	See 'autotheory'
Roland Barthes	The Preparation of the Novel	2003	Paris, France	Editions du Seuil	808.3	
Robert Walser	Microscripts	2012	Cambridge, MA, US	New Directions Publishing		
Lynne (ed) Schwartz	The Emergence of Memory	2010	New York, US	Seven Stories Press	829	See 'Sebald' 'memory'
O'Sullivan and Burrows	Fictioning	2019	Edinburgh, UK	Edinburgh University Press	801	See 'diagram'
Alberto Manguel	With Borges	2006	London, UK	Telegram Books	920	See 'Borges' 'memoir'
Deleuze and Guattari	Kafka Towards a Minor Literature	1975	Paris, France	Editions de Minuit	801	See 'Kafka'
Brian Boyd	Stalking Nabokov	2011	New York, US	Columbia University Press	827	
Raymod Queneau	Exercises in Style	1947	London, UK	John Calder	808	See 'Oulipo'
Francis Spufford	The Child that Books Built	2002	London, UK	faber and faber	920.2	
Geoff Dyer	Out of Sheer Rage	1997	Edinburgh, UK	Canongate Books	920.2	See 'D.H. Lawrence' 'Humour'
Georges Perec	An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris	1975	Cambridge, MA, US	Wakefield Press (2010)	840	See 'Oulipo'
Wolfgang Iser	The Act of Reading	1980	Baltimore, MA, US	John Hopkins University Press	801	
Jaques Derrida	Writing and Difference	1978	London, UK	Routledge (2001)	410	
Laurent Binet	The 7th function of Language	2015	London, UK	Harvill Secker	843.92	See 'Roland Barthes' 'Humour'
Virginia Woolf	The Common Reader	1925	"	Vintage Classics (2003)	809	
Kimberley Andrews	A House Divided	2009		College English No. 71.		See 'creative writing'

4.3. Text, Image, Object

Jean McNeil writes that W. G. Sebald has 'become the gold standard for analysing the relationship between images and text'.[246] Sebald's books *The Emigrants* and *Austerlitz* shaped this project before it began, and prompted contemplations of text, image, reliability, and instability in narrative that have been crucial to the evolution of this research. Sebald's literary works employ found images to reinforce narrative, concomitantly giving authority to the images.[247] The photographs that punctuate Sebald's stories momentarily pause the reading of text, and create a narrative break in which the reader must consider whether what they are reading is completely fiction after all. Conversely and simultaneously, the images undermine the narrative, suggesting that the story has been moulded to fit the found images, rather than the images illustrating the text.

Constellations

For Sebald, these images serve as a way of 'making obvious that you don't begin with a blank page'[248] every writer collects substantial research material, which gets left behind when the book is published. In using source images, Sebald elucidates research material and methods the reader is not usually privy to, suggesting that the research is as significant as the outcome; the process as important as the product. My work similarly elucidates the making process, including fragments of writing disclosing the development of the work and considering it durational, rather than static, finished. In an interview about *The Emigrants*, Sebald suggests that the function of the photograph is two-fold: first, to add plausibility to the text, and secondly, to 'arrest time' there is something positive about 'slowing down the speed of

Sebald
'We all tend to believe in pictures more than we do in letters'

p. 60., fig. 268.

[246] Jean McNeil, 'Ghost writer', in *The Spectator*, magazine issue 18 May 2019. https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/ghost-writer [last accessed 20 March 2021]

[247] In *The Emigrants*, for example, Sebald's character describes meeting a dervish boy, 'wearing a very wide gown that reached to the ground and a close fitting jacket made, like the gown, of the finest linen'. A photograph of this image is placed alongside the description, allowing a visual reference, giving weight to the text, making the reader *believe* that the character had actually met this boy. *The Emigrants*, pp. 134 135.

[248] Arthur Lubow, 'Crossing Boundaries' in *The Emergence of Memory; Conversations with W. G. Sebald*, ed. by Lynne Schwartz, New York: Seven Stories Press, 2010, pp. 159 173, p. 163.

Echoing time spent in the archive

reading'.[249] That the combination of text and image can both reveal and obscure simultaneously informed much of the early work made in this project, and though the use of image as a depiction of a 'real' thing eventually gave way to the use of diagram as a visual language, Sebald's work has been instrumental.

Ruth Franklin
These tropes 'obscure as much as they reveal'

The unreliability and self-referentiality of Sebald's narrative is also of influence. Sebald weaves his own biography and memory through that of his characters, while addressing historical events, places, and making subliminal nods to other literary figures. These tropes culminate in an instability, or fragmentation, in the work as a storyline settles, there is a twist, a narrative device, a photograph, even just a sentence that destabilises the text, causing a re-questioning or re-considering of the narrative. Artists such as Karen Stuke, Tess Jaray, Grant Gee, Tacita Dean, and countless more pay homage to the author. Dean's essay 'W. G. Sebald' adopts its namesake's undulating narrative, recalling her reading of Sebald's *Rings of Saturn* at a bus stop, and progressing to weave autobiography, memory, and history, with snapshot images Dean has collected and taken.[250] The fragmentary nature of Sebald's works enables this constant re-appropration and re-consideration of his narratives and themes. Works and texts made in response to Sebald's novels are often as absorbing and well-crafted as the material to which they refer the meandering, disjointed nature of the original text opens a generative lacuna for further creative practices and responses.

p. 33., figs. 115, 116.

My interest in collection prompted a move from Sebald's use of image to books that consider object.[251] Of particular interest to me was Orhan Pamuk's novel, *The Museum of Innocence*,[252] though actually it was not the book itself

[249] Eleanor Watchell, 'Ghost Hunter (An Interview)' in *The Emergence of Memory; Conversations with W. G. Sebald*, p. 42.
[250] Tacita Dean, 'W. G. Sebald', *October*, Autumn, 2003, Vol. 106 (Autumn, 2003), Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, pp. 122 136.
[251] As mentioned in chapter two, books such as such as Daniel Miller's *The Comfort of Things*, Edmund De Waal's *The Hare with Amber Eyes*, and Bruce Chatwin's *Utz* all informed thinking about 'object' and 'collection'.
[252] Orhan Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence.*

that piqued my interest. Accompanying Pamuk's fairly conventional love story, set in Istanbul, is a physical museum constructed by the author, with a vitrine of objects for each chapter.[253] Pamuk states: 'I wanted to collect and exhibit the "real" objects in a fictional story in a museum and to write a novel based on those objects'.[254] He writes that he wanted to create 'a sort of encyclopedic [sic] dictionary in which not only objects [...], and places [...], but also concepts would be subheadings'.[255] That site, artefact, and concept can all be explored via the museum is of keen interest here, and is reflected in my museum-based works *Encounters* and *Along These Lines*.

p. 42., fig. 160.
p. 42., fig. 161.
Both of which will be discussed later.

Pamuk's collecting for the museum predated the writing of the novel.[256] In *The Innocence of Objects,* he writes that the initial idea was to produce a catalogue of the objects he was gathering that would act as a novel itself. He continues: 'I quickly realised that writing my novel as an annotated catalogue would not allow me to adequately explore or express the full import of Kemal and Füsan's romance and the entire culture of the period through objects'.[257] This asserts the historiographical importance of text and image/object in conjunction neither will suffice alone. Pamuk's aims can be directly linked to Leanne Shapton's work *Important Artefacts and Personal Property of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris* [...],[258] in which the love story of the two main protagonists is told through auction catalogue format. Where Pamuk's novelistic form keeps a tight control over his story, Shapton's work is more diagrammatic the fragmented auction catalogue format allows for silences in the narrative, gaps that may be filled by the reader's imagination.

p. 20., fig. 54.
p. 42, fig. 162.
The importance of *white space*.

[253] The museum was awarded the 2014 European Museum of the Year award, demonstrating the fact though although its contents were constructed around a fiction, it is still seen to give a comprehensive representation of Istanbul and the remnants of its past.
[254] Orhan Pamuk, *The Innocence of Objects*, p. 15.
[255] Ibid.
[256] Though Pamuk's novel was published (in its original Turkish) in 2008, and the museum did not open until 2012,
[257] Orhan Pamuk, *The Innocence of Objects*, p. 17.
[258] Leanne Shapton, *Important Artefacts and Personal Property from the Collection of Lenore Doolan and Harold Morris*, 2009.

4.4. Historiographic Metafiction, Autotheory, and the Intersectional Form

As a reader, my favourite books have always been ones that include techniques such as metafiction, unreliable narrators, non-linear narratives, intertextuality, and fragmentation. Traditionally these tropes are found in novels categorised as 'postmodern', such as Italo Calvino's *If On a Winter's Night a Traveller*, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*,[259] Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*, Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, and Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*. Linda Hutcheon's writing on the genre Historiographic Metafiction further classified such tropes in works that explore historicism. Hutcheon writes:

p. 30., figs. 98 101.

> Historiographic Metafiction works to situate itself within historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction. And it is a kind of seriously ironic parody that affects both aims: the intersects of history take on parallel (though not equal) status in the parodic reworking of the textual past of both the "world" and literature. The textual incorporation of these intertextual past(s) as a constitutive structural element of postmodernist fiction functions as a formal marking of historicity both literary and "worldly".[260]

It is clear from Hutcheon's definition that the texts which fall into the historiographic metafiction genre are quite different from what is termed 'historical fiction'. Hutcheon outlines a method that considers historiography over history, a metanarrative about the story's epistemological value, and a fictioning process that suggests a future-making, through the act of creative writing. Examples of historiographic metafiction include *HhHh* by Laurent Binet, *Flaubert's Parrot* and *Levels of Life* by Julian Barnes, *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje, and *Out of Sheer Rage* by Geoff Dyer. The latter recounts Dyer's attempts to write a scholarly text about D. H. Lawrence, resulting in an autobiographical account of the struggle of writing, part travel journal, and

Chiastic = Repeated and developed in reverse order, A,B,C,D,C,B,A
p. 30., fig. 100.

[259] My initial plan for this thesis was for it to mimic the chiastic structure of Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*, moving forwards to the centre, and then back outwards again, creating a loop and mirroring itself through the nested stories that move forwards and backwards through time around a central nucleus.
[260] Linda Hutcheon, *Historiographic Metafiction*, p. 4.

part literary criticism. Although this book is the product of an *inability* to write about Lawrence, much of his life and writing is revealed through this struggle. Dyer's book is also funny parts of it even 'laugh out loud' funny but this does not take away from the shrewdness of the book. It is smart, witty, and critical particularly towards the academic institution and moreover, it *is* a book about D. H. Lawrence, despite its claim not to be.

D. H. Lawrence
'Never trust the artist.
Trust the tale'

Following Historiographic Metafiction, the genres autotheory and intersectional text refer to writing in which multiplicity is a strategic method, producing a text closer to lived experience than a linearly narrated story. Unlike their supergenre, 'autofiction', autotheoretical texts recognise the value of autobiography in a scholarly or theoretical pursuit, rather than in the writing of 'fiction',[261] and are often more experimental and complex, presenting an embodied account of research and theory. Arianne Zwartjes writes: 'the field of autotheory allows not only a multiplicity of form, of innovation, of medium, but also a multiplicity of experiences, of perspective and embodied subjectivity'.[262] Similarly, Jen Soriano writes, 'intersectional form is not so much a subgenre of literary non-fiction as it is an approach, a practice, an evolving third space, a journey of possibility'.[263] This posits the genres in the realm of Manning's minor gesture: 'The minor is a continual variation on experience […] it's rhythms are not controlled by a pre-existing structure, but open to flux'.[264] Lauren Fournier considers autotheory a feminist practice, releasing the accounts of lived experience by female authors from the 'frivolous' category of 'memoir' 'Autotheory reveals the tenuousness of maintaining illusory separations between art and life, theory

Autofiction =
Portmanteau of
'autobiography' and
'fiction'
Autotheory =
'autobiography' and
'theory'

[261] 'If much contemporary American autofiction aims to establish an honest or open dialogue with the reader, then autotheory's sincerity lies in the exposure of a vulnerable self that recognises its contingency and social/linguistic constructedness while nevertheless insisting upon the "reality" and value of lived experience.' Clare Ralph, 'Becoming Autotheory', in *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory*, John Hopkins University Press, Vol. 76, No. 1., Spring 2020, pp. 85–107, p. 85.
[262] Arianne Zwartjes, 'Under the Skin: An Exploration of Autotheory', in *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies,* no. 6.1, Fall 2019.
[263] Jen Soriano, 'Multiplicity from the Margins: The Expansive Truth of Intersectional Form', in *Assay: a Journal of Nonfiction Studies,* no. 5.1, Fall 2018.
[264] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 1.

and practice, work and the self, research and motivation'. [265]

The genre autotheory is often accredited to writer Maggie Nelson, particularly her 2015 book *The Argonauts*; but it also is used to categorise texts such as *I Love Dick* by Chris Kraus, and *Zami: A New Spelling of my Name* by Audre Lorde, which both predate the term itself.[266] Contemporary examples include Sharon Kivland's *Freud on Holiday* series, *No Archive Will Restore You* by Julietta Singh, *Index Cards* by Moira Davey, *Bluets* and *The Red Parts* by Nelson, and *In the Dream House* by Carmen Maria Machado.

The Red Parts[267] is usually categorised as 'non-fiction' by booksellers, yet it reads in a way that feels quite different. The book relays the reopening of a thirty-five-year-old murder trial — the victim is Nelson's aunt, Jane — and uses autobiography, philosophy, memory, conversation, newspaper reports, readings of books about true crimes, and a reflection on her own book *Jane: A Murder*, and more, to explore the trial in all of its complexities of both judicial conviction and personal emotion. Nelson's blending of narratives and approaches gives an insight into the experience of the event, discussing the forensic findings of the trial alongside the associative nuances and individual subjectivities that accompany any situated look into the past. It is simultaneously memoir, journalism, and theory. The subtitle of the book

Famous Anachronisms

Back to the Future
Marty's guitar in 1955

Raider of the Lost Ark
A map mentions Thailand in a time it was known as Siam

The Green Mile
The electric chair wasn't in use until 5 years later

Braveheart
Tartan kilts weren't seen for at least another 400 years

[265] Lauren Fournier, *Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art Writing in Art, Writing, and Criticism*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2021, p. 3.

[266] Kraus's book was published in 1997, and Lorde's in 1982. The poignance of retrofitting one kind of language to another is not lost here, and these problems of anachronism are discussed by Achim Landwehr and Tobias Winnerling in their 2019 text *Chronisms: On the Past and Future of the Relation of Times*. The authors write that in refusing to judge the past by the standards of the present, history is being made into a linear, static timeline of events that is fixed and correct. 'The problem of whether one can transfer concepts of the present into the past must be turned into a necessity: anachronisms are indispensable because only with their help one can ask questions that the past could not ask'.
Achim Landwehr and Tobias Winnerling, 'Chronisms: On the Past and Future of the Relation of Times', *Rethinking History*, 24: 3, 2019, pp. 435–455, p. 446.

[267] Nelson's books *The Argonauts* (perhaps the most famous example of autotheory), or *Bluets*, could both have been used as examples here; however the focus on a criminal trial in *The Red Parts* forces a stark contrast between Nelson's autobiographical, associative writing with the hunt for facts and truths in the criminal trial, and epitomises best what autotheory means to this research.

Autobiography of a Trial pre-empts the personal writing style but also suggests that, in such matters, one's own story is all there is to communicate.

Nelson writes about the items that are displayed for the jury as evidence, held up and described by the examiner. She records that while this was happening she made her own list, detailing the items her own way, including 'one wide, powder-blue scarf, pure silk, very lovely', and 'one wool overcoat, you could call it blue or grey [...] looks bloodstained, hard to tell'.[268] This passage recalled my catalogue card works and the attempt to record something personal, or simply acknowledge uncertainty in an activity focussed solely on objectivity, truth, and accuracy.

The Archive. The Criminal Trial = Negotiation with events past
➔ **Derrida** *Arkheion* Links archive to power, law

As Shaw suggests that fiction-as-research-method has gained more traction since the 'post-truth' era has been entered,[269] autotheory also responds to contemporary digital culture. Zwartjes states: 'we live in an era where our modes of learning have largely become spatial and associative rather than linear. In this sense, that the multimedia aspects of autotheory are appealing is little surprise'.[270] Fournier writes that autotheory is not solely a literary technique, but a way of working and thinking that spans writing, criticism and art practice.[271] The multiple, situated approach of autotheory and the intersectional form, combined with the historicity of historiographic metafiction exemplify the generative and syncretic techniques that underpin my fiction(ing) methods, in research and in production.

[268] Maggie Nelson, *The Red Parts: Autobiography of a Trial*, London: Vintage, 2015, pp. 122 – 123.
[269] Jon K. Shaw and Theo Reeves-Evision [eds], 'Introduction', *Fiction as Method*, p. 26.
[270] Arianne Zwartjes, 'Under the Skin: An Exploration of Autotheory'
[271] Lauren Fournier, *Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art Writing in Art, Writing, and Criticism*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2021, p. 3.

4.5. Parody, Parafiction, and Humour

Expanding ideas of intersectionality and historiographic metafiction into art practice, Carrie Lambert Beatty outlines the term 'parafiction'.[272] She writes that parafiction 'does not perform its procedures in the hygienic clinics of literature, but has one foot in the field of the real'; that 'unlike historical fiction's fact based but imagined worlds, in parafiction real and/or imaginary personages and stories intersect with the world as it is being lived'. Like Hutcheon's description of historiographic metafiction, parafictional artworks use fictive narratives to impact contemporary modes of understanding, making them not historical, but historiographical, and political. Lambert Beatty writes that the territory of parafiction is to reveal the way things are, and how they might be, it 'does not give up on the idea of facts, but rethinks them as matters of investment, debate, and desire'.[273] Considering this kind of museum-based art work, Bishop writes that 'the effectiveness of parody relies on its ability to jolt visitors into questioning, however momentarily, the cultural and social values, assumptions, and prejudices that might be legitimised in such displays'.[274]

Landwehr and Winnerling
'What is perceived as a historical 'source' from the past is nothing other than a way of relating to the past'

Lambert Beatty focusses on *A Tribute to Safiye Behar* by Michael Blum (2005), an installation that recreates a historical house museum relating to Safiye Behar, a Turkish Jew, rumoured to have had a romantic relationship with and influenced the political decisions of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic. However, Blum's installation was fictional, and Safiye Behar an invented character, fooling viewers and critics alike.[275] Though fabricated, the work suggests that an understanding of the past, and thus the present, may have to be rethought. Lambert Beatty asserts that parafiction

p. 41., figs. 154 156.

[272] Carrie Lambert Beatty, 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility', *October,* vol. 129, 2009, pp. 51 84.
[273] Carrie Lambert Beatty, 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility', p. 82.
[274] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, p. 90.
[275] It is rumoured that Safiye Behar was included on a list of the most influential Turkish women, despite the fact that she never existed. Other examples of parafictional works include *Naomi V Jelish* (2004) by Jamie Shovlin, and Zoe Leonard's and Cheryl Dunye's work *The Fae Richards Photo Archive* (1993 1996).

p. 41., figs. 157 159.

'intersect[s] with the world as it is being lived',[276] and Blum's work was shown at a time when the Turkey's inclusion in the E.U. was under debate a poignant time to call its heritage into question.[277] Referring to Lambert Beatty's definition of parafiction, O'Sullivan writes: 'fictioning has efficacy that it only has a power when involving or addressing life or reality and, most importantly, through a play of fiction *as* life and reality'.[278]

The Atlas Group an imaginary collective formed by artist Walid Raad also demonstrate a parafictional practice. In the series 'Funny, How Thin the Line Is', 'the group' exhibit items such as photographs, documentary film footage, and literary artefacts relating to the contemporary history and memory the Lebanese civil war (1975 1990) in a museum-like setting to question ideas of authenticity around such devices.[279] Text panels on the wall indicate that the works shown are at least partly fictional in nature, and the title of the series draws attention to the thin line between fact and fiction. The works are reminiscent of Borges's labyrinthine weaving of layers of fictions, and accumulate to make the viewer question not only the effects of war on a country, but the ways that such events are recorded and reported. As Mark

p. 35., figs. 125 129.

Borges
'Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge'
➔ *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins*

[276] Carrie Lambert Beatty, 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausibility', p. 54.

[277] It is interesting to note that Blum's installation occupies an area in very close geographical proximity to the museum and setting of Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence*. In *The Innocence of Objects* Pamuk notes that this area of Istanbul was purged of traditional artefacts from the 1950s by its new 'Westernised middle-class' inhabitants. He writes 'As the city grew wealthier and more modern between 1950 and 1980 the things left behind from its Ottoman past and its non-Muslim inhabitants printed matter, almost unlimited quantities of photographic equipment, and vast amounts of papers, furniture, books, old money, and other assorted knickknacks that filled the used bookshops, antique shops, and flea markets across the city were incinerated, pulped, or otherwise destroyed.' (p. 43.) This situates Blum and Pamuk's work in a process of recovering a lost heritage through the only means possible fiction. This recovery of lost heritage can also be seen in the parafictional work *The Fae Richards Archive*, by Zoe Leonard and Cheryl Dunye, in which footage and artefacts relating to a black, lesbian actress are fictionally created to fill the void, or marginalisation, of such a presence in official archives.

[278] David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan, *Fictioning*, p. 4.

[279] For example, in the work *My Neck is Thinner than a Hair* (2001) the 'group' (Raad) exhibits photographs of all of the cars used as car-bombs during the Lebanese civil war, alongside notes made by Dr. Fadl Fakhouri an expert in Lebanese civil wars. But there is no Dr. Fakhouri, and the journalistic images of the cars turn out to be modern-day photographs taken by Raad on the streets of Lebanon, though they are based on the models and colours of the actual cars used. They are thus factually representative, though not authentic to the correct time period.

p. 38., figs. 140, 141.

Beasley asks, in *Frieze*; 'Is the Atlas Group's work simply an overwrought examination of truth, the first casualty of war?'[280]

Pardoy/Humour
➔ Deterritorialise major language

One of the main tactics of parafictional artworks is parody, particularly in relation to processes and objects that suggest a 'truth telling' documentary film and photograph, archival material, and the museum. It may seem obvious that to parody a style used by a museum is an effective way to subvert it, but Robins considers the role of humour in relation to parody:

> In artists' interventions humour is often integral to parodic and disruptive processes and is used to de-familiarise the familiar, demythologise the exotic and invert 'common sense'; the intention is often to change the balance of power.[281]

She goes on to suggest that in museum interventions humour is a destabilising force, that it can 'undermine an audience's confidence in the museum'.[282] If parody is a device used to make viewers question the authority of the museum, then humour, for me, is a way to humanise this experience, challenging the objective voice.

Boyd
Nabokov's humour 'does not yield easily to academic analysis'

Though rarely something I discuss, humour plays a role in my practice.[283] I strive for a level of playfulness a mischievousness that stands against the neutral authority of the museum, as seen in *Conversation Pieces*. Filling out catalogue cards in an associative, whimsical manner is founded in a more critical aim to expose and subvert the authoritative voice of information dissemination, acknowledging the idiosyncrasies of the maker. This use of humour goes beyond the parodic tropes of postmodernism and creates, as

pp. 16 17., figs. 40 43.

[280] Mark Beasley, 'Walid raad/The Atlas Group', in 'Reviews', *Frieze*, 17 March 2006. https://www.frieze.com/article/walid-raadthe-atlas-group [last accessed 1 April 2021]
[281] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, p. 95.
[282] Ibid., p. 108.
[283] Remarks about my work being 'quite funny' are often communicated to me after an exhibition. This is rarely an overt decision, but I will try and unpick the tactic briefly here as it certainly has a contributory value to the message I want my work to convey.

O'Sullivan notes, 'something more affirmative, celebratory, even'.[284] Simon Critchley explains: 'By producing a consciousness of contingency, humour can change the situation in which we find ourselves and can even have a *critical* function with respect to society'.[285]

O'Sullivan
We might point to humour as a deterritorialisation of language

Many texts to which I repeatedly refer, and find the most memorable, are humorous, or playful.[286] Brian Boyd writes that humour 'bring things together in unexpected ways'.[287] Humour often relies on something being two-sided, or multi-faceted[288] the reality and the un-reality and this potential for something to exist as more than one thing at once underpins my research, making humour not 'light relief', but a deliberate, destabilising tactic, pushing against the objective 'major' voice, and humanising an epistemological experience.

Freud
''Humour is not resigned it is rebellious'

[284] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice', in *Drain: Journal of Contemporary Art and Culture*, 2 (2) Issue on Syncretism, 2005, p. 4.
[285] Simon Critchley, *On Humour*, London: Routledge, 2002, p. 10.
[286] Jorge Luis Borges's *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins*, Geoff Dyer's *Out of Sheer Rage*, Umberto Eco's *On The Impossibility of Drawing a Map of the Empire on a One to One Scale*, Gustave Flaubert's *Dictionary of Received Ideas*, Vladimir Nabokov's *Speak, Memory*, and his *Lectures on Literature* to name but a few.
[287] Brian Boyd, *Stalking Nabokov*, Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2011, p. 149.
[288] Thinking about a pun, it must contain both its intended meaning and another at the same time, an 'innuendo' if you like, and it is in this being-two-things-at-once Deleuze and Guattari's both/and that a type of critical humour is produced.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 814 ESSAYS, HUMOUR, JOKES — TEXTS ABOUT HUMOUR / TEXTS THAT ARE FUNNY

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Simon Critchley	On Humour	2002	London, UK	Routledge	910	
Sigmund Freud	Jokes and their relation	1905	Freiburg, Germany	White Press (2014)	910	See 'psychoanalysis'
	to the Unconscious					
Claire Robins	Curious Lessons in the Museum	2013	Surrey, UK	Ashgate Publishing	707.5	See 'artist interventions'
Jorge Luis Borges	On Exactitude in Science	1946	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Los Anales de Buenos Aires	912	
Vladimir Nabokov	Lectures on Literature	1982	Boston, MA, USA	mariner Books	401	See 'literary theory'
Umberto Eco	On the Impossibility of drawing a	1992	London, UK	Vintage Books (2001)	853.914	See Borges 'on exactitude...
	map on a scale of 1:1					
Geoff Dyer	Out of Sheer Rage	1997	Edinburgh, UK	Canongate Books	940.4272	See 'Literature Studies'
Brian Boyd	Stalking Nabokov	2011	New York, USA	Columbia University Press	813.54	"
Julian Barnes	Flaubert's Parrot	1984	London, UK	Jonathan Cape		See 'historiographic metafiction'
Alan Bennett	Talking Heads	2007	London, UK	BBC Books	823/914	See 'memoir' 'monologue'
Gustave Flaubert	Bouvard et Pecuchet	1881	London, UK	Penguin (1976) Books	843.8	
"	The Dictionary of Received Ideas	"	"	"		See 'Dictionary' 'Encyclopaedia'
Tom Stoppard	Travesties	1975	London, UK	Faber and Faber		See 'Theatre' 'Playscripts'
Vladimir Nabokov	Speak, Memory	1951	London, UK	Penguin Books (1999)	891.73	See 'memory'
Laurent Binet	The 7TH function of Language	2015	London, UK	Harvill Secker	843.92	See Roland Barthes
JK Jerome	Three men in a boat	1889	London, UK	Wordsworth Classics		
Terry Eagleton	Humour	2019	London, UK	Yale University Press	910	
Ben Lerner	Leaving the Atocha Station	2013	London, UK	Granta		
Umberto Eco	Foucault's Pendulum	1988	" "	Penguin (2001) Books	223, 800	
Raymond Queneau	Exercises in Style	1947	Paris, France	Editions Gallimard	800	See 'Oulipo'
Albert Camus	The Stranger	1942	"	"	843.91	See 'existentialism' and 'absurdism'
Alice Raynor	Comic Pursuasion	1987	Berkley, CA, USA	University of California Press		See 'Shakespeare' and 'Stoppard'
Andre Breton	Anthology of Dark Humour	1966	Paris, France	Pauvert	808.87	See 'Surrealism'
OHessa Moshfegh	My Year of Rest and Relaxation	2018	London, UK	Jonathan Cape	813	
Oscar Wilde	The Importance of Being Earnest	1895	St James Theatre London			See 'Stoppard-Travesties'
Jonathan Coe	What a Carve Up!	1994	London, UK	Viking Press	823/914	See 'Satire'
Paul McDonald	The Philosophy of Humour	2012	London, UK	Humanities		

4.6. *Stops and Starts*

Contemplating the influence of the types of readings I have undertaken recalls a text I wrote, published by Dostoevsky Wannabe. The piece is solely text based, but the methods employed are similar to those of my diagrammatic visual practice. I was invited to write for this anthology in November 2018, the only stipulation being that the text must refer to reading in some way and be no longer than three thousand words. My piece is entitled *Stops and Starts* and comprises two texts woven together through a metanarrative detailing the process of writing the text the reader is reading.[289]

p. 88., fig. 382.

Perec
'A certain history of my tastes will come to be inscribed in this project'

The first text is an appropriation of Georges Perec's essay 'Notes Concerning the Objects that are on my Work-table',[290] framed as an exercise to be undertaken when writer's block occurs. The second is a short story, in a more traditional sense, about a couple arguing over a differing opinion of Nabokov's controversial novel *Lolita.* This section of the text, though framed as fiction, is partly a critical reading of Nabokov's seminal work, through which a husband's failure to understand his wife's empathy for Humbert Humbert reveals something of the book itself. The named character in this section is 'Laura', after Nabokov's *The Original of Laura,* his incomplete, fragmentary final novel, foreshadowing the disconnected nature of the texts to come.

Akin to D. H. Lawrence in Dyer's book *Out of Sheer Rage*

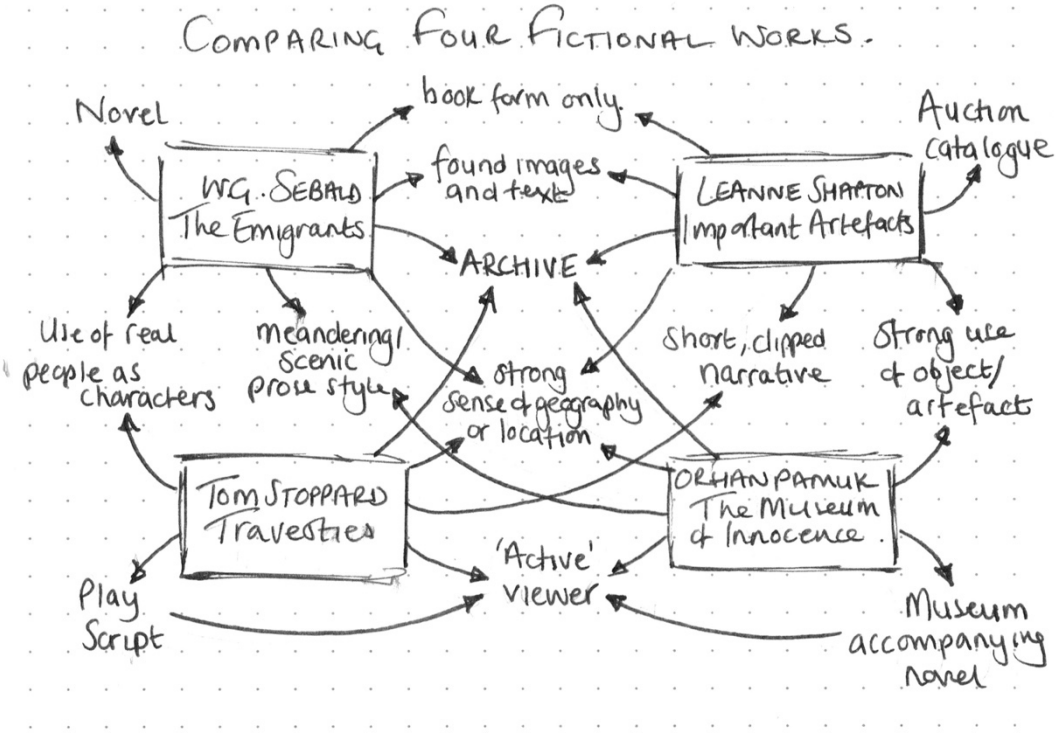
p. 19., fig. 50.

The two texts weave amongst one another, flitting between readings, fiction, autobiography, and an explanation of the writing process underway. Nabokov and Perec (and a fleeting appearance of Sebald, writing a fleeting appearance

See Appendix Two for full text

[289] Louise Finney, 'Stops and Starts', in *Sheffield*, ed. by Emma Bolland, Manchester, England: Dostoyevsky Wannabe Cities, 2019, pp. 87–101.
[290] Georges Perec, 'Notes Concerning the Objects that are on my Work-table', in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. and trans. by John Sturrock, London: Penguin Classics, 1997, pp. 144–147.
Though not explicitly mentioned in this thesis, early experimental writers such as Georges Perec, Raymond Queneau, Italo Calvino and the general literary constraints and methods used by the Oulipo group are a constant peripheral interest, especially in the combination of mathematical ideas and creative writing.

of Nabokov)[291] are thrown together. They are voiced by me the author/artist and appropriated for my own purposes, as forgotten voices in the archive are ventriloquized by historians, writers, and so on. Though this work is constrained by the book format, it is akin to other works through the acknowledgment of the author's subjectivity, and the multiple themes, voices, and timeframes that unfold at once, denying a traditional linearity, and detailing the process of making the work itself.[292]



p. 60., fig. 264.

p. 33., fig. 120.

[291] Sebald's book *The Emigrants* contains, in one chapter, a photograph of a man with a butterfly net (which actually is a photograph of Nabakov), which becomes the title of a painting in another section of the book (*Man with a Butterfly Net*), while echoes of Nabokov's *Speak, Memory* flow through Sebald's prose. Nabokov's spectral presence punctuates all four sections of Sebald's novel.

[292] After I read a section of this text at the book launch, a woman stopped me on my way to the toilet to say that she had bought the book because she needed to know what happened to the couple in the end. She may have been disappointed to learn that, like much of my work, it is left without definitive conclusion.

4.7. *Encounters*

Following these readings, and readings that become writings, I will write about the work mentioned at the start of this chapter, *Encounters*, which functions in two ways. Firstly, it is a work in its own right, a manifestation of the reading and thinking herein. Secondly, it has become a project of retrieval, memory, autobiography, and circumstance. The same methods I use when working with archival material must be used to navigate this particular work. I explain the process of making this work fully, as the recovery of such processes from my memory has been a particularly poignant exercise in relation to this Ph. D. as a whole.

Borges
We are our memory, we are that chimerical museum of shifting shapes, that pile of broken mirrors

In 2016 I received Arts Council funding to produce a work at Bishop's House; an early sixteenth century timber-framed house-museum in Meersbrook Park, Sheffield. The project brief was to use contemporary art practice to 'activate' stories *from* and *about* the house and its history. The funding bid was completed and approved in February 2016, and the work installed at the end of April 2016. Following its installation and scheduled run time, the museum requested that the exhibition be left up longer, as it was engaging the local community well, and increasing the footfall of visitors to the museum. Scheduled to be taken down in May 2016, it remained until June. This gave me more to time to adequately document the work and responses to it. On 18 May 2016, my partner passed away in our home suddenly, unexpectedly. I subsequently did not take part in the taking down of the show, did not write up any feedback received, and did not document the work. I forgot about it all, never collected my installation, and did not think about the work in the depth that it merited. I suspended my studies and did not return to the university or do any work towards this Ph.D. for eighteen months.

p. 47., fig. 190.

Fred Wilson
Mining the Musuem

23 June 2016

Hi Barry,

Firstly (and as usual, apologies for the delay in response) - for once it is not because I've been too busy. My partner, Luke, passed away very unexpectedly last month (18th May) so I've been a bit all over the place to be honest. I was the person that found him and tried to resuscitate him but

the paramedics said he'd been dead for around three hours when I got to him so I never stood a chance. For some reason I feel I need to send you something I wrote for our local newspaper about it, because I know we haven't met each other and I don't want you to think I've been stringing you along to drop some tragic story and swindle you out of money or something. But I am, as ever, happy to swindle you out of the occasional historical document... Here's the link anyway:

http://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/news/tributes-paid-to-popular-boss-of-chesterfield-bar-chandlers-1-7949677

To be honest I didn't really want to write anything but the newspaper said they were going to publish something regardless of my input, so I thought it best I take control and write about him professionally as they emailed the bar and not me personally. Sorry to just drop this on you, I meant to email a few weeks ago but have been procrastinating heavily on almost everything that needs to be done.

I look forward to receiving the package you have sent; it will be nice to get something other than a condolence card.

Very best wishes,
Louise x

23 June 2016

Hello Louise,

I was so sorry to hear about your partner. Whatever one says at a time like this sounds like a platitude, so all I can say is how truly sorry I am to hear this tragic news. I looked at the link that you sent to me. It is obvious that he was a very talented, and well liked and loved, man. I have to say that anyone who has touched so many people's lives in such a positive way is a special person indeed. To have succeeded in doing so in such a short time, is testimony to just how special.

Some people can live a much longer life, and impact so positively on very few people. Some none at all. To have forty people attend a funeral would be a good attendance. To have four hundred, speaks for itself. Your words and that of his brother, expressed 'him' beautifully.

I'm sat here thinking how unfair it is, that I'm writing this to you, about your partner. You both so young (too young). I am only comforted in the knowledge that you have a loving family to help you through this sad period in your life.

Did you think that I had lost the plot, when I told you (confessed), about my thinking in terms of how to stage small dramas to get a point/idea across? Don't worry, if I have no one who knows me would be able to tell.

My thoughts are with you at this time. Please write whenever, about whatever you like.

Your invisible old friend,

Barry x

As this is one of the art works most demonstrative of my research, I am now trying to piece together this work and its processes from notes I made at the time, blog posts that accompanied the show, what I remember of my methods, influences, and the feedback I received. This parallels my research methods when planning for the show. In the numerous incarnations that this thesis has assumed to date, one of the main matters of coherency is that events of this exhibition, and those events surrounding it, intertwine so much that the writing about the making of the work in the past becomes the remembering of the making of the work in the present, informed retrospectively by what I have read and done since. Multiple time periods collapse in on themselves and any attempt to produce a coherent overview of this project achieves entirely the opposite. To quote Hartog: 'we have moved from a history sought in the continuity of memory to a memory cast in the discontinuity of history'.[293]

Borges
Creativity is suspended between memory and forgetting

What follows is written from memory.[294]

[293] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, 2015, p. 125.
[294] I have considered ignoring the personal events that surround this exhibition for the purpose of this thesis, and act as though it was a complete and successful piece of work, but it seems to me that to do so would be to miss out on something poignant that contributes to this Ph.D. as a whole. An acknowledged subjectivity, and the use of autoethnography throughout my work and research means that it would be remiss to ignore its role here, especially when the retrieval so closely mirrors the way I make work in the first instance.

4.8. Two Encounters

I remember two particular encounters that shaped this work; one with a book, the second with a person.[295] The book was the play script of *Travesties* by Tom Stoppard.[296] The play focusses on a central character, Henry Carr, who, concerned primarily with his role in a production of Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, relates his experiences and memories of Vladimir Lenin, Tristan Tzara, and James Joyce. Stoppard's endless cunning, puns, metaphors, appropriation of Wilde's play script, intertwining histories, and blend of fact and fiction, is a stunning work. Like many works mentioned previously, Stoppard's work delights me for its intricate weaving of documented and imagined events. Carr was a once a living person who did play the role of Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest* for a theatre company managed by James Joyce. Joyce is also noted as having refused to compensate the real-life Carr for the expense of his costume for Wilde's play, which is one of Stoppard's fictional Carr's central complaints in *Travesties*. This small archival footnote has been used by Stoppard to unite three men famously known to have been in Zurich during the First World War, using Carr as an anchor, pulling them together despite there being no evidence that they had contact with one another during this time.[297]

Wilde
'The truth is rarely pure and never simple.'
The Importance of Being Earnest

Stoppard
'I learned three things in Zurich during the war. I wrote them down. Firstly, you're either a revolutionary or you're not, and if you're not you might as well be an artist as anything else. Secondly, if you can't be an artist, you might as well be a revolutionary… I forget the third thing.'
Travesties

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[295] This dual inspiration is often noticeable in my works I am equally informed by what I am reading, or have read, *and* with whom I have spoken. I am always interested in the way these two types of voice work together, formal and informal, academic and non-academic. In a way I think these modes of address convey who I am as a person, or how I see myself, at least. My working class background and job in hospitality mean I am comfortable striking up conversation with strangers from all backgrounds, and I find value in what they say. Equally I have been an avid reader since a child, and I used to relay the books I had read, from memory, to my school friends, paraphrasing, and speaking about the characters as though they were people I knew, desperate to share the joy I got from reading with others. This seems still to be the case.

[296] Tom Stoppard, *Travesties*, London: Faber and Faber, 1975.

[297] Again, the use of humour here is striking, yet having read the play many times I was surprised when I watched a recording of its performance. The humour that I considered artful, smart, and subtle, came across in the adaptation as slapstick; the play felt farcical, and the characters were caricatures of the people they represented. Though slightly disappointed by this, it does highlight the difference between the written word and the reader's interpretation of it, adding to the layers of understanding and depth in a written work and exemplifying that text alone is not a sufficient form of communication, and that in the reading of any text the reader will take what they are looking for from it.

I remember that I was thinking about this play and how a playscript might be used to bring together disparate and multi-temporal voices in Bishop's House, when I had a brief conversation with a museum visitor. While planning the exhibition I had gotten into the habit of sitting on the floor in various rooms of the museum and writing about my reactions to the space. This might be what Jane Rendell refers to as site writing, but I do not think I was yet aware of the term.[298] One day, when I was sitting on the floor, writing, a mother and her child entered the room. The child came over to me and asked what I was doing.

p. 48., fig. 198.

'What are you writing?' asked the child.

The mother looked my way apologetically and said 'Come back over here, leave the nice lady alone'.

'No,' I said, 'it's fine. I'm writing about how I feel sitting in this really old house. How does it make you feel?' I asked him.

The boy looked shy and ran away to find one of the toy mice hidden around the house to keep children occupied. The mother started to go after the child, then stopped, and asked 'So how does it make you feel?'

'Y'know what?' I replied, 'I kind of feel like I'm on a boat. I can't explain it, but when I walk around I feel a bit sea-sick.'

I had been thinking this for a while, the huge oak floorboards in the house had warped over time, causing them to swell and bulge, making moving around feel as though the house were rocking gently with the rise and fall of the ocean. The large, white chimney breast in the room seemed to billow, recalling a sail.

p. 48., fig. 196.

p. 47., fig. 194.

My new acquaintance nodded, with a slightly furrowed brow. 'I think I know what you mean.'

[298] 'Site-writing is a critical and ethical spatial practice that explores what happens when discussions concerning situatedness and site-specificity enter the writing of criticism, history and theory, and writers reflect on their own subject positions in relation to their particular objects and fields of study, and on how their writing can engage materially with their sites of inquiry and audiences.'
https://site-writing.co.uk [last accessed 21 March 2021]

Didi-Huberman
Bark

> We chatted for a few more minutes about how really old houses have a strange vibe about them, but how such a feeling was probably conjured in our minds, a kind of pre-conception playing out into reality. I told her about my trip to Auschwitz when I was eighteen, and how there seemed to be no air there, and how I've always wondered since whether that space has a genuine physical aura to it, or whether it was a psychosomatic conjuring on my behalf.
>
> As she left to go and find her son, the lady turned back to me in the doorway, and said something like:
>
> 'It's been nice to chat to someone rather than just read the boards and move on.'

I remember thinking about this conversation a lot, and at the same time I was thinking about writers such as Gaston Bachelard and his works on the experience of architectures, and Walter Benjamin, for his writing on history and subjectivity, but also possibly because a historical tenant of the house had carved his initials 'W. B.' into some of the beams. Ken Dash, a local archaeologist and volunteer at the house was a font of all knowledge, and shaped my understanding immeasurably, and then there were the people I chatted to in the house, whose opinions also influenced my own. I decided I wanted to replace the museum signage boards in the house with ones I had written, creating conversations that reflected all of these different understandings of a space.

p. 48., figs. 199, 201.

My information boards were split into acts and scenes, each starting with a section of prose at the top, mostly written in the space, and followed by a section of dialogue, written as a script. In a blog post documenting the progress of my work, I write:

pp. 50 51., figs. 211 220.

> The conversation is disjointed, as though the speakers cannot hear one another, each making their own point. By writing as though for a play, Bishops' House itself becomes a theatre, the play already unfolding within its walls. As a visitor makes contact with one its artefacts, their

> voice becomes another layer of the dialogue, and them another actor in the play. [299]

The characters in my play included previous tenants of the house, whose voices I had fictionalised, current museum volunteers, my own voice, those that I overheard in the space, and writers whose texts seemed most pertinent to me when encountering the space. As a result, Gaston Bachelard speaks to volunteers, Emily Brontë passes comment on words I have put in the mouths of tenants from centuries ago, and Walter Benjamin reminds the reader of the importance of acknowledging the self in pursuit of interpretation. Through these boards the House became a hybrid space – both historical and fictional.

I remember that when my mother visited the exhibition she overheard another visitor questioning why it was not more widely known that Emily Brontë had previously lived in the house, as there were quotations from *Wuthering Heights* on my information panels.[300] I initially thought that this was an aspect of the work that had failed – it had clearly not been understood by the viewer that I was trying to create a speculative sense of my own reaction to the space – yet it speaks also about the authority that is assumed to be held by this particular model of information dissemination.

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[299] https://curioushouse.wordpress.com/2016/04/07/in-the-making-louise/#more-505 [last accessed 10 December 2020]

[300] I was first struck by the desire to include something about *Wuthering Heights* in the work when I visited the bedroom, where the bed was contained in a wooden panelled chamber, similar to the one Lockwood describes sleeping in when he first hears Cathy's ghost tapping at the window. But I think there is something deeper here also – something about class and the fluctuation of class in characters such as Hareton and Heathcliff, especially compared with the style of language used to differentiate the significantly lower class character, Joseph, whose dialect is understood to represent the 'harsh-ness' of the North. In a differing way, this working class voice is used in my own work, not mockingly – as is sometimes suggested in Brontë's work – but in a way that asserts it as deserving to be heard alongside more academic or authoritative voices. The play script, and later the diagram, is a way to deny the hierarchy of different kinds of language, presenting various voices as equal. The trope of the unreliable narrator is also present throughout *Wuthering Heights* – the story is relayed to us by Lockwood, a purposefully dislikeable character, who has heard it from the housekeeper Nelly Dean, whose tale is often second-hand, remembered, and presumably sensationalised for the benefit of telling Lockwood a 'good tale'. This layering of versions of the past and voice is present in the work made for Bishops' House.

I remember that when installing the work the representative from the more corporate museum umbrella[301] who came to unlock the cabinets that housed the original information boards intimated that if the proposal for my work had gone through the correct channels, it would have been denied, but at the point of installation it was too late to protest. This conversation indicates the protectiveness of museums over the version of the past that is presented to the public. As Robins writes: 'the interventionist work of art, even at its most didactic, does not have the weight of authority carried by the gallery or museum's legitimized label or text panel or catalogue'.[302] To have the opportunity to physically remove these panels and replace them in a way that champions a subjective reading of the past, subtly questioning, though never fully undermining, the authoritative voice of the museum, makes this work fundamental to this Ph. D.

I remember the work being largely successful, a view supported by emails sent to me by friends and colleagues who had visited the exhibition, and from comment cards from the general public, stating that my work had brought 'life' into the house, activating a connection to the site that had not been there on previous visits. Volunteers of the museum commented that the work gave them an opportunity to consider their own feelings about the building in a more personal way. The coordinator of Bishops' House asked for a booklet to be made from my information boards that could be used as part of the tour of the house when the original signage boards were restored, though given the events that followed this never came to fruition. This level of support is unsurprising; as Robins writes: 'Museums [...] invite artists to intervene in full recognition that their work sits within a continuum of critical and even disruptive practices targeted at the museum's own values'.[303] And this was

p. 49., fig. 205, 206.

[301] Bishops' House is part of the Museums Sheffield organisation, and is therefore part of the museum group, but it is not staffed or managed by Museums Sheffield staff, and is run solely on one co-ordinator and a host of volunteers. Any signage, artefacts and labelling shown, however, should be approved by Museums Sheffield first.
[302] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, p. 16.
[303] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, p. 1.

true; the museum welcomed the continued use of my artistic input, *once* the original information boards were back in place.

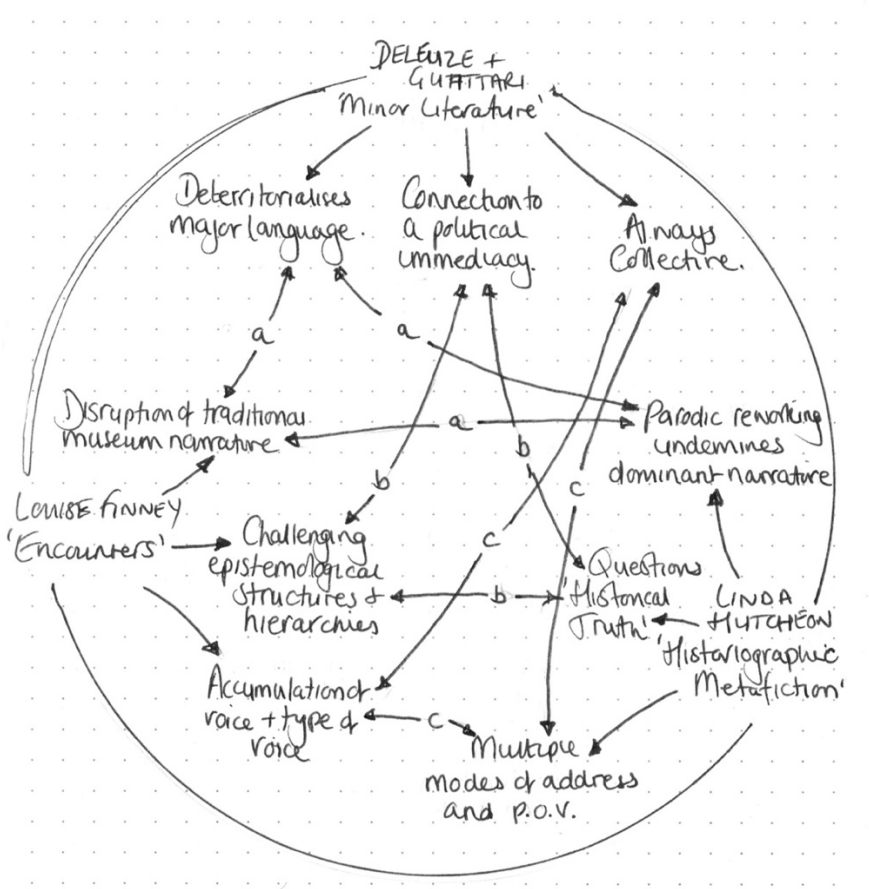
Though the recollection of this work has been at times difficult, it has also been fruitful in connecting the themes of this research. Laura Millar writes about the relation between memory and archive, citing both as being 'from the past',[304] referring to the acquired, preserved, and collected instances of archival information as 'touchstones' from which memory can be constructed, reconstructed, and even fabricated.[305] Akin to Didi-Huberman's archaeological way of looking, it has been impossible for me to jump from the present into the past, and remember the exhibition without also being influenced by all of the layers of dirt I must dig through to get there: what I have read, subsequent works I have made, works I have seen, conversations had, the way I have formatted this thesis, have all contributed to what I have chosen (and been able) to remember. But this is precisely the situated subjectivity I argue for in this research, and so, in fact, the dredging of this particular work from my memory to explain it here, now, is perhaps a more pertinent exercise than the original work itself.

History (the past)→
Archive (archival) →
Fiction(ing) →
(reconstruction and fabulation)

Mariana Castillo Deball
'This constructed disorder, allows geological surprises for the most abandoned memory'

[304] Laura Millar, 'Touchstones: Considering the Relationship Between Memory and Archive', p. 105.
Millar also comments on the way technology and the computer has effected both of these terms: 'technology does blur the lines between 'here and 'there' and 'then' and 'now'. I had not considered how I have relied on digital information storage as both an archive and memory aid to the piecing of *Encounters* back together until I read this text, but it has, of course, been both instrumental and disorientating.
[305] Laura Millar, 'Touchstones: Considering the Relationship Between memory and Archive', p. 126.

4.9. A 'Minor' Work.



p. 40., fig., 153.

I consider this work to meet Deleuze and Guattari's outline of the minor. I discuss *Encounters*, the genres of autotheory and historiographic metafiction, and parafictional and museum based interventions, in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's three conditions of the minor. Bringing the sections of this chapter together through this framework asserts the minor as the thread that runs through each influence and outcome.

O'Sullivan's 6th type of diagrammatic practice → **Meta-modelling** 'A repositioning of existing frameworks, and working out possible relations as well as divergences'

The first condition of the minor is that it should contain a 'deterritorialisation of [major] language'.[306]

- In *Encounters* the major language is that of the corporate museum. O'Sullivan writes that 'a minor art pushes up against the edges of representation',[307] manifest in how this work parodies the layout of the

[306] Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, p. 18.
[307] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice'.

official information boards, while the language used is fragmentary, humorous, vernacular, and contradictory, destabilising or calling into question the validity of that which it impersonates.

- In genres autotheory and historiographic metafiction a deterritorialisation occurs in the personal, subjective, and partly fictive accounts of theory and history. The denial of a smooth linear narrative, or to be considered either fictional or factual, is a denial of what is expected from the 'major' cannon of novelistic literature, memoir, or non-fiction book. To blur the boundaries of recognised forms or writing is to deterritorialise them, embodying what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as a 'stuttering' or 'stammering'.[308]
- This deterritorialisation can be seen in museological and parafictional art practices through use of parody, which, according to Robins, is a driving force that 'problematise[s] a traditional conception of learning'.[309] A parody or reworking of texts and images related to the epistemology of historiography is a minor tactic 'operating from within, using the same elements, as it were, but in a different manner'.[310]

The second condition of a minor literature is the 'connection of the individual to a political immediacy'.[311] O'Sullivan writes that this does not mean that the work is *about* politics, but that 'it works to connect the different aspects of life, be they individual or social, so as to produce new lines of causality and new pathways of experimentation'.[312]

- In *Encounters*, the disapproval of the corporate museum representatives renders the work political in unintentional ways. Choosing to acknowledge and write actively in my identity of a working-class woman is also a political action. Deleuze and Guattari write that the political act

[308] Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977 [Paris: Minuit, 1972], p. 109.
[309] Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, p. 95.
[310] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice', p. 3.
[311] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, p. 18.
[312] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice', p. 3.

is achieved when 'the individual concern becomes all the more necessary […] because a whole other story is vibrating within it'.[313] This can be seen as an autoethnographic metanarrative, through which individual experience can pass comment on wider concerns and issues, and which is present in *Encounters*.

- Fournier's assertion that autotheoretical practices are necessarily feminist practices serves this same purpose, and describes such works as a 'turn toward the self, and the use of one's positioning to generate politically efficacious work'.[314] O'Sullivan writes that 'both feminist and post-colonial art practices may be seen as minor'.[315] In historiographic metafiction, the use of narration to undermine traditional notions of historical truth, and conventional pedagogic systems renders such texts political.
- Lambert Beatty's definition of parafiction as a practice that impacts on the 'world as it is being lived' exemplifies the contemporary political statements of such methods,[316] and may be extended to Robins's overview of museological practices through the use of parody, humour, and contemporary contextualisation that such works provide. A key feature of such works is a look to the future, via the past, suggesting a new way of thinking or being that is to come this future building is necessarily political.

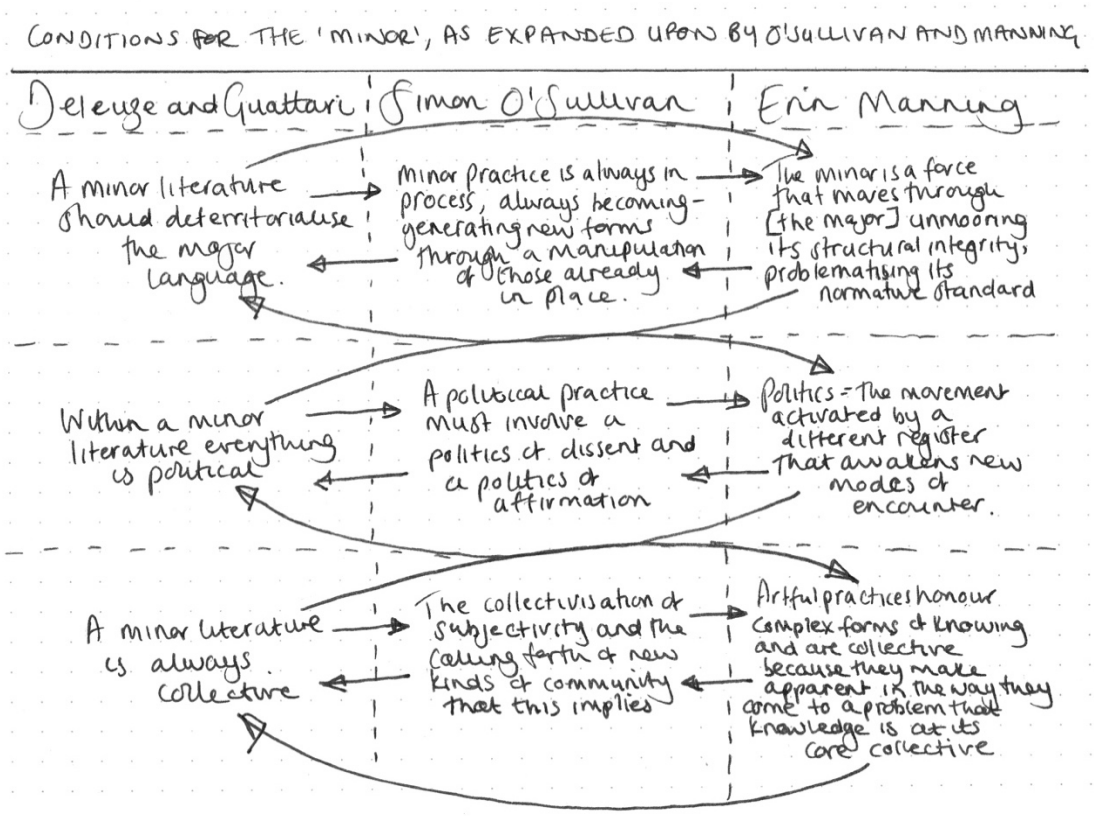
The third condition is that it contains a 'collective assemblage of enunciation'.[317] Though this might be understood to mean that more than one author is a part of the creation of a text,[318] it may also mean that more than one

[313] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, p. 17.
[314] Lauren Fournier, 'Sick Women, Sad Girls, and Selfie Theory, Autotheory as Contemporary Feminist Practice', p. 651.
[315] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice', p. 5.
[316] As discussed earlier in relation to Michael Blum and Walid Raad's works; to contest the way the history of a place is recorded and retold is a political action.
[317] Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, p. 18.
[318] Though Deleuze and Guattari's text is written as a direct study of the work of Kafka, and is therefore unlikely that the authors are proposing a need for multiple writers.

voice is present in the text. O'Sullivan uses the phrase 'collectivisation of subjectivity'.[319]

- In *Encounters* this is achieved through the multiplicity of voice in the playscript sections of each text. Bringing together disparate quotations and comments without hierarchy creates a work that is 'collective'. O'Sullivan writes that a minor practice contains both dissent and affirmation, and this is seen in the inclusion of the original museum information in my playscripts, meaning the work is not only collective and multiple in the voices used, but in its messages and interpretations.
- The fragmentary nature of historiographic metafiction works can be considered a collection of differing components, rather than one fluid, linear piece. In autotheoretical works, the author writes from a collective, or multiple, standpoint.[320] Fournier writes that they 'fuse seemingly disparate modes to fresh effects'.[321] Both of these traits can be seen to fall into O'Sullivan's ideas of 'collectivisations of subjectivity'.
- This multiplicity of voice is also often seen in parafiction and museological art practices, but in such circumstances the artist's voice or message is also proliferated by the institutional context in which it is shown. Museum-based art works speak directly with the site that surrounds them, and are in direct conversation with more conventional knowledge transferal methods, whether that is intentional or not.[322]

[319] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice'.
[320] For example, in *The Red Parts*, Nelson acknowledges her various standpoints as author/poet/niece/sister/daughter/witness/educator/writer, and more.
[321] Lauren Fournier, *Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art Writing in Art, Writing, and Criticism*, p. 3.
[322] On her exhibition *From the Freud Museum*, Susan Hiller writes of the layers and layers of interpretation that are created by adding an art work to house museum, that is also a kind of museum itself (because of Freud's antiquity collection), that was once a home. These layers, I argue, create the 'collectivisation of subjectivity' that O'Sullivan writes of. [Hiller, *Working Through Objects*, 1994]



p. 68., fig. 296.

This diagram once sat quite nicely, in a gap in the text that was almost made for it. Since then edit after edit has pushed it onto a page of its own, and no amount of reshuffling can bring it back into the fold.

ACCESSION REGISTER

Category: 912. MAPS, PLANS, DIAGRAMS

Author	*Title*	*Year*	*Place of publication*	*Publisher*	*Cat. No.*	*Notes*
Deleuze and Guattari	What is Philosophy?	1991	Paris, France	Les Editions de minuit	302.2 /194	See 'Philosophy'
Jakub Zdebik	Deleuze and the Diagram	2012	New York, USA	Continuum Publishing	194 – DC 23	See 'Deleuze and Guattari'
John Bender + Michael Marrinan	The Culture of the Diagram	2010	Stanford, CA, USA	Stanford University Press	121.35	
Jorge Luis Borges	On Exactitude in Science	1946	Buenes Aires, Argentina	Los anales de Buenes Aires		See 'Humour'
Umberto Eco	On the impossibility of drawing a map of the empire on a scale of 1:1	1992	London, UK	Vintage Books		In 'How to travel With Salmon' See 'Borges'
Simon O' Sullivan	On the Production of Subjectivity	2012	Hampshire, UK	Palgrave macmillan	126– DC 23	
Simon O'Sullivan	On the Diagram		New York, USA	Lévy Goring Publications		In 'Situational Diagram'
Simon O'Sullivan	Non-Philosophy and Art Practice	2017	Berlin, Germany	Sternberg Press		In 'fiction as method'
Kamini Vellodi	Diagrammatic Thought	2014	Online	Parrhesia, No. 19'	Pe. 194	
Kevin Hetherington	Foucault, the museum, and the diagram	2011	Oxford, UK	The Sociological Review	"	See 'Philosophy'
Jorge Luis Borges	Labyrinths	1962	New York, USA	New Directions	868	See 'The Library of Babel'
Frederik Stjernfelt	Diagrammatology	2010	Heidelberg, Germany	Springer	514	
Edward Tufte	Visual Explanations	1997	Conneticut, USA	Graphics Press	743	See 'graphs' 'graphesis'
"	The visual display of Quantitative Info.	2001	"	"	"	"
Helen Clarke + Sharon Kivland	The Lost Diagrams of Walter Benjamin	2018	London, UK	ma Bibliotheque		
Edward Brooke Hitching	The Phantom Atlas	2016	New York, USA	Simon and Schuster	912. 002	See 'Cartography'
J.R. Carpenter	An ocean of Static	2018	London, UK	Penned in the margins	828	See 'Poetry' 'digital writing'
Elizybeth Reeder	Freemont	2012	Glasgow, UK	Kohl Publishing	808.1	See 'creative writing'
Johanna Drucker	Graphesis: Visual forms of knowledge Production	2014	Cambridge, MA, USA	Harvard University Press	514	
Denis Diderot	Encyclopédie	1751– 1776	Paris, France	André Francois de Bretton	030	See' encyclopaedia'
Vladimir Nabokov	The original of Laura	1977 unfinished	London, UK	Penguin Classics (2012)	891. 73	Published Posthumously.
Deleuze and Guattari	A Thousand Plateaus	1980	Paris, France	Les editions de minuit	302	
Amy Silliman	Notes on the Diagram	2020	Online	The Paris Review		
Simon Critchley	memory Theatre	2014	London, UK	Fitzcarraldo Editions	153.12	See 'memory'
David Joselit	Dada's Diagrams	2005	Washington DC, USA	National Gallery of Art		In 'The Dada Seminars'
Travis Elborough	Atlas of Improbable Places	2021	London, UK	Aurum		
Sally J Morgan	A Life in Diagrams: A Photo Essay	2019	online	Memory Connection Vol 3.		See 'Artists Books', 'Performance'

4.10. Diagram as Fiction(ing) Method

It may have been intimated thus far that the term fiction(ing) refers exclusively to the use of text, and, indeed, reading and writing text is prominent in this chapter, however, the use of diagram, or non-linear structure, is also a part of my fiction(ing) method. Both of these elements are considered 'language'. O'Sullivan and Burrows explore fictioning and 'mythopoiesis' pertaining to myth-making, and more broadly 'world-building' as 'practices that proceed through overlaying different narratives on a given landscape'.[323] This conjures a space where different voices and viewpoints co-exist, as tested by the play script structure used in *Encounters*. Rather than considering the diagram a kind of landscape on which to plot narrative, I consider it another form of fiction(ing) language and practice.

Felix Guattari
The diagram is conceived as an autopoietic machine

Diagrams have an inherent language embedded in their structure; a language of science, objectivity, instruction. Further, my diagrams are most often hand drawn. As Serge Tisseron argues that 'all writing is drawing',[324] I argue that this drawing is also a kind of writing the resulting diagrams and lines of flight carry signifiers as much as the written word. O'Sullivan differentiates between hand drawn and computer produced diagrams, terming the former Patheme, and the latter Matheme. Mathemes, for O'Sullivan, are abstract diagrams which represent objectivity and observance of human nature from above, beyond, or outside of it. Pathemes, on the other hand, are still an abstraction, but one that 'foregrounds the potentiality of the body in the world', and 'provides a cartography of lived life'.[325] This is the function of my diagrams.

Matheme =
Of mathematics. See psychoanalytic diagrams of Freud and Lacan, or philosophical diagrams of Badiou

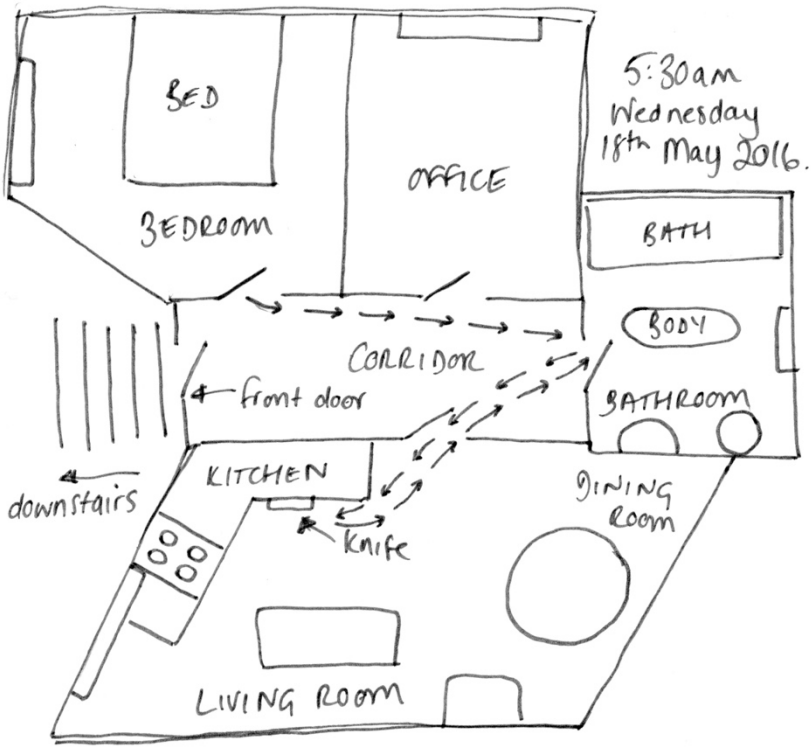
Patheme =
From Greek pathē, of emotion, passion, the human condition

To discuss the diagram as I think of it now, I must retrace my steps again and consider how its use has evolved in this project. For as long as I can remember I have used diagrams as a way to map my thoughts, to make connections, and

[323] David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan, *Fictioning*, p. 125.
[324] Serge Tisseron, 'All Writing is Drawing: The Spatial Development of the Manuscript', *Yale French Studies*, no. 84 'Boundaries: Writing and Drawing', 1994, pp. 29 42.
[325] Simon O'Sullivan, 'On the Diagram (and a Practice of Diagrammatics)', p. 13, 16.

to try and understand something. When my partner died the police questioned me just hours after I had found him Where was the body? Where is the bathroom in relation to the bedroom? From where did I fetch the knife with which I unlocked the bathroom door from the wrong side? Where is the bathroom in relation to the bedroom in relation to the kitchen in relation to the front door? I sat in silence and drew them a map, onto which I traced my routes. The diagram stood in for my failure to produce words.

Guattari
The diagram patrols the border between the linguistic and the pragmatic



p. 64., fig. 277.

Though I now consider the catalogue cards used in early works to be diagrammatic, at the time I was thinking through issues of taxonomy and index. The first diagram I remember presenting to my peers was after I had finished my 'official' placement in the museum stores, and was trying to find a way to communicate my experience there.[326] I drew a large complex exploded

[326] My 'official' placement, as I call it, ran for three months, and was a necessary part of the course I was on; however, I continued to volunteer for a further three years, by choice.

Thinking through…

view diagram of a camera, labelling each component with the accession number and descriptor for every ephemera artefact relating to World War One in the collection. Though it had taken me hours, I did not consider this a 'work', and it was never shown it simply helped me to explain how I *felt* working with this collection. The diagram, I explained, was analogous of the archive all the pieces seemed to be there, but my brain could not compute a way to put them together to produce something tangible, something I actually understood. Contemplating each individual ephemeral item did not mean I understood the war, knowing that all of these components come together to make a camera did not mean I understood how cameras work.[327]

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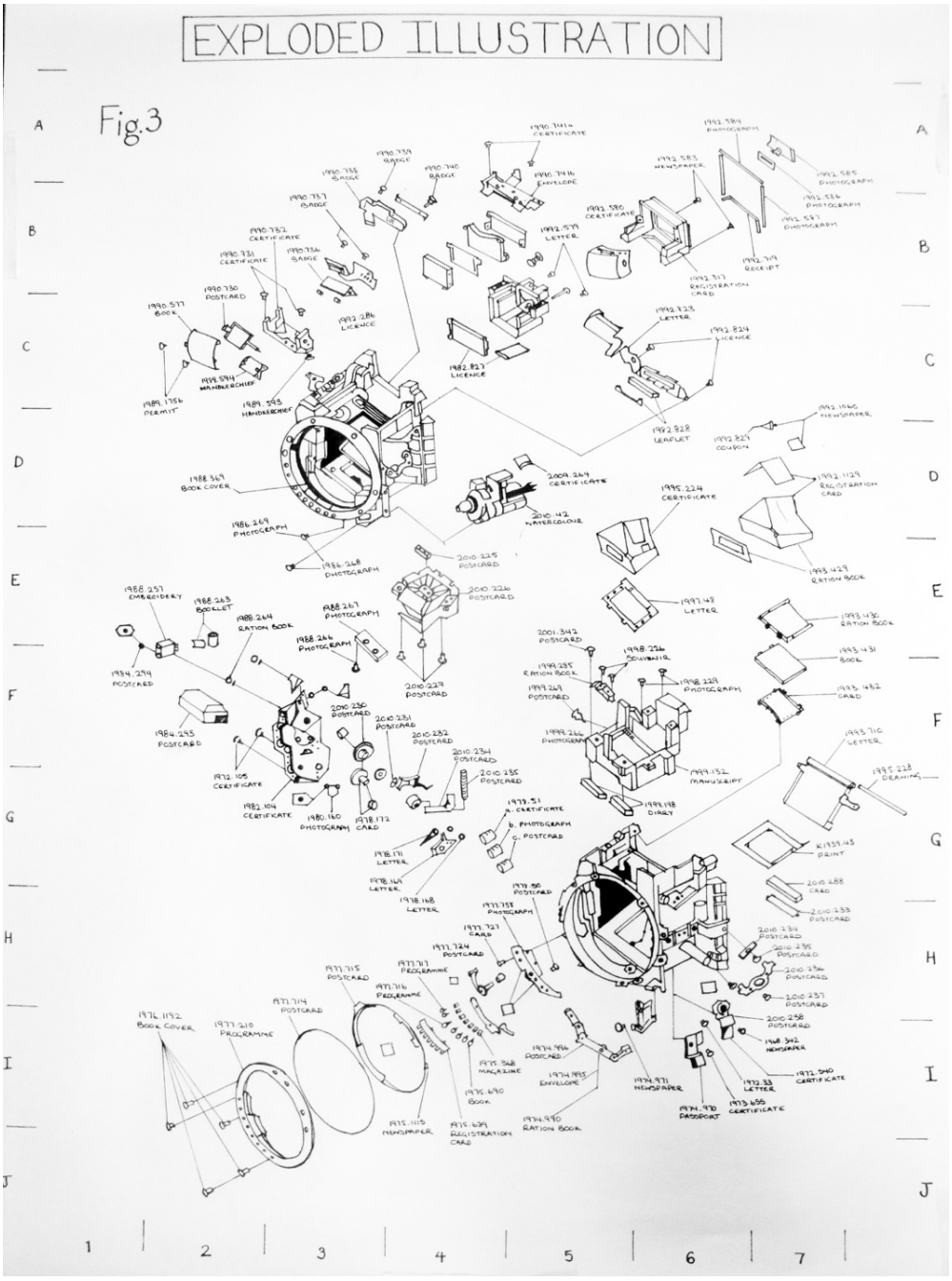
[327] The last two sections of text, alongside another anecdote not included in this thesis, appear published in a different form in the online journal *The Diagram*. Entitled 'Planes of Memory', the three short texts are written in first person present tense, spanning eight years across the three stories, though not linearly. Each section outlines a different way the diagram has functioned for me, personally. At the end of the essay is a hyperlink to Borges's short story *On Exactitude in Science*.
Louise Finney, 'Planes of Memory', *Diagram*, 22:3, 2022.
https://thediagram.com/22_3/finney.html [last accessed 5 August 2023]

See Appendix Three for full text



p. 21., fig. 59

I remember claiming at the time that I chose the camera because of its contentious role in the 'truth telling' of the past, but, in reality, I needed a diagram with a *lot* of components, and that had the most. This retrofitted argument seems synonymous to the retrofitted reading I have done about the diagram. This reading has, of course, been enlightening and elucidating, and has conceptually furthered the work immeasurably, but my practical use of the diagram came first. I can honestly only say *it just felt like the right thing to do*; the system that made the most sense. I might call it an 'instinctive' method,

but it is also habitual, and a product of my upbringing. But I never thought it was my practice, merely the way I formed thoughts.

The multiple diagrams that run through this thesis function in the same way; they are insights into 'thinking things through'. What has changed is my attitude towards them. In 2018 each of my Ph.D. cohort produced an academic poster to feature in the university's degree show. An academic poster strives to reduce a research process or outcome to a simple, accessible layout, often with a diagrammatic appearance, and text contained in boxes that show a move from hypothesis, to process, to outcome, in bold colours and friendly fonts. I chose to take a distinctly tongue-in-cheek approach to this opportunity, and produced a poster that displayed clearly delineated boxes, all connected to the others, and contextualised by the words 'The most effective academic posters provide a discernible reading order and a clear sequence of events'. Framed neatly by each square is an attempt to outline the chapters of this thesis in an unruly, hand-scrawled mind-map.

p. 6., fig. 1.
p. 19., fig. 53.
p. 30., fig. 96.
p. 98., fig. 425.
p. 100., fig. 434.

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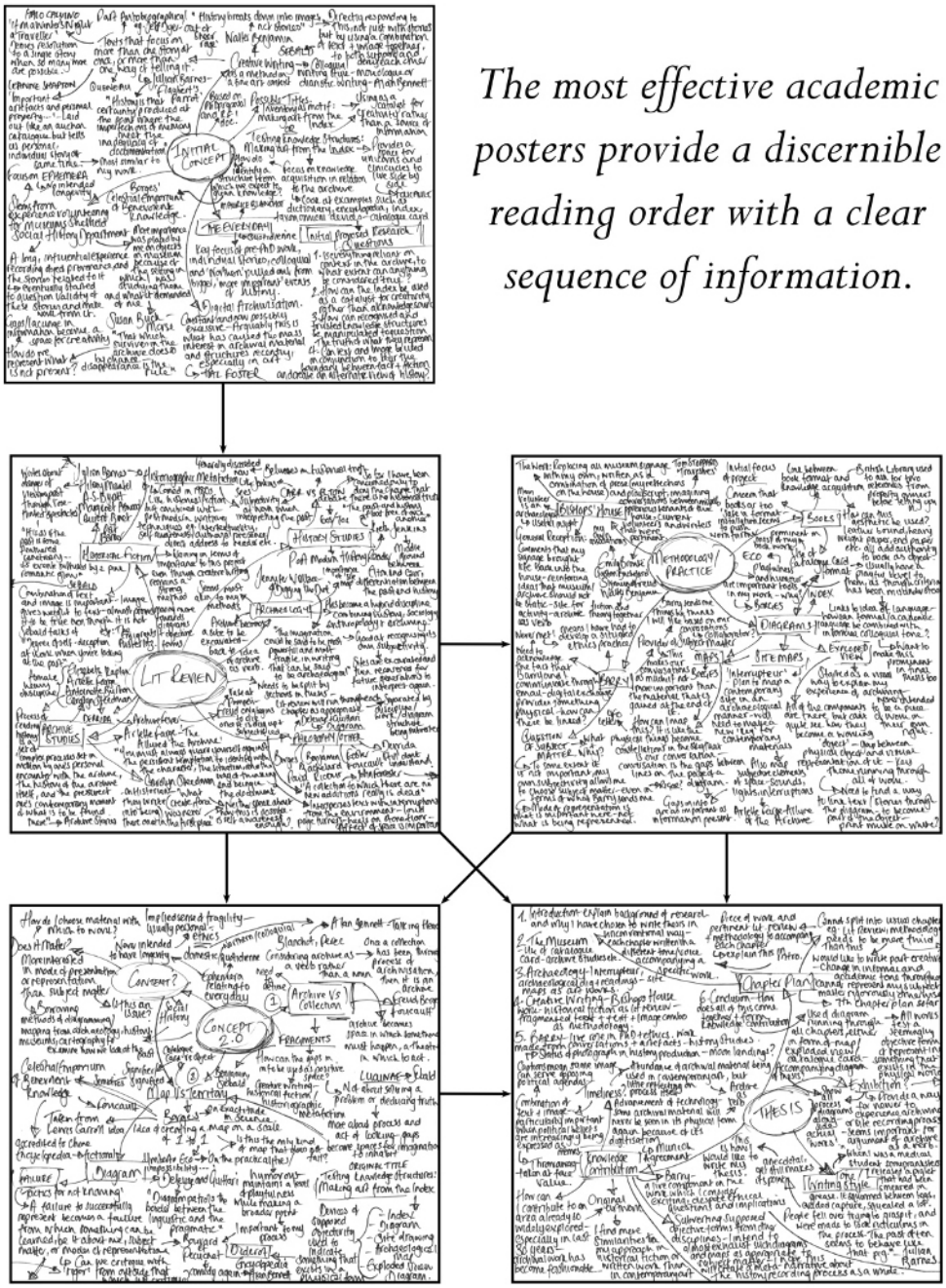
My aim was to create a visual representation of the way that forms such as the academic poster and in a way the thesis attempt to force something large, tangential, and unwieldy into a neat, condensed structure. In many ways this work demonstrates a minor gesture; it turns the 'major' language of the academic poster back on itself, deterritorialising it, and operating from within the institution. This was the first overtly diagrammatic work I displayed publicly, and through its creation I became aware of the diagrammatic thought that ran through all of my work. I eventually realised that the diagrams I was using to try and understand what my practice was, were, in fact, the practice itself.



p. 57., fig. 250.

4.11. Becoming Between

One of the defining characteristics of this practice, as I now understand it, is found in Deleuze and Guattari's idea of the *between*. In 'Rhizome', the introductory chapter to *A Thousand Plateaus*, they write:

Rhizome = another diagrammatic structure

> *Between* things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a

> transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle.[328]

Zdebik asserts Deleuze's idea that the diagram is *between* image and language; it 'lies between the visible and the articulable, and therefore traits are not exactly pictures or written language'.[329] I consider these instances of betweenness a culmination of O'Sullivan's 'world building', Deleuze and Guattari's 'minor', and Manning's extension of this to the 'metamodel'. For Deleuze and Guattari to be 'between' is, simply, not to be this *or* that, but to be this *and* that.

Deleuze and Guattari
'The tree imposes the verb 'to be', but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction 'and...and...and'

Erin Manning uses the term 'research-creation' to define practices that are in in a process of 'becoming', to constantly flit *between* study and finalised artwork:

Much like autotheory provides a space for theory *and* autobiography, it is not both, or neither, but *between*

> By focussing on process instead of form, it becomes possible not only to raise the issue of the object to ask how a focus on the object is similar in many way to situating the subject as initiator of experience but to explore how time is engaged in the artistic process.[330]

Similarly the archive sits *between* history and the present, it cannot be untethered from either point in time

Though I advocate, here, for a diagrammatic form in the works I produce, and final works are exhibited, there was a reluctance or inability, on my part, to see these diagrams as works in their own right for some time. I considered them instead a visualisation of a process of thinking through, and they can thus be considered what Manning refers to as research-creation, an action that operates in the *between* space.

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[328] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, p. 25.
[329] Jakub Zdebik, *Delezue and the Diagram*, p. 1.
[330] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 14.

4.12. Moving into the Centre

In summary, fiction(ing) refers to a generative method that uses, but is not limited to, the reading and writing of creative texts that could be considered metafiction, autobiography, autotheory, or simply fiction, *and* the diagram and diagrammatic assembling of such texts. Fiction(ing) is how I make work, and has similarly been my method for compiling this thesis a piece of work in its own right. It is a method that looks both inwards *and* outwards, is reflective *and* reflexive, looks backwards *and* forwards, and invites my viewer to do the same.

'And… and… and…'

Through the last three chapters I have explained the *what*, the *where*, and the *how*, of 'Negotiating Fragments'. The exploration of history and historiography studies has explored processes that my work questions, and 'thinks through'. The reading of archive studies, consideration of the archive as both institutional and non-institutional site, and the way time plays out in such environments, has provided material with which to make work. And finally the act of fiction(ing), of reading, writing, and diagramming in a generative, multiple, and syncretic way, brings my 'thinking through' into being, and allows ideas to be formed and tested.

This tripartite way of working may be considered a methodology, but following Manning's assertion that methods and methodology are aligned to the major and do not account for unknowability,[331] I will, in the next chapter, term it a 'metamodel'. Manning writes that a metamodel differs from a methodology because it can never be repeated with the same results. By making work that includes considerations of site, encounters, readings, experiences, memories, and other subjectivities, my approach will perpetually generate new material, and further, no other person could follow my Borromean structure and make the same work. Yet someone else, following this model of *what, where,* and

[331] 'Despite its best intentions, method works as the safeguard against the ineffable: if something cannot be categorized, it cannot be made to account for itself and cast aside as irrelevant.'
Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 32.

how, may produce equally valid subjective interactions with archival fragments. Manning writes that the metamodel is 'an engaged encounter with the very constitutive nature of knowledge be it at the level of new forms of subjectivity, or in the reorientation of how thinking and doing coexist'.[332]

[332] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 43.

The proper order of things of things is
often a mystery to me.
You, too?
You, too?

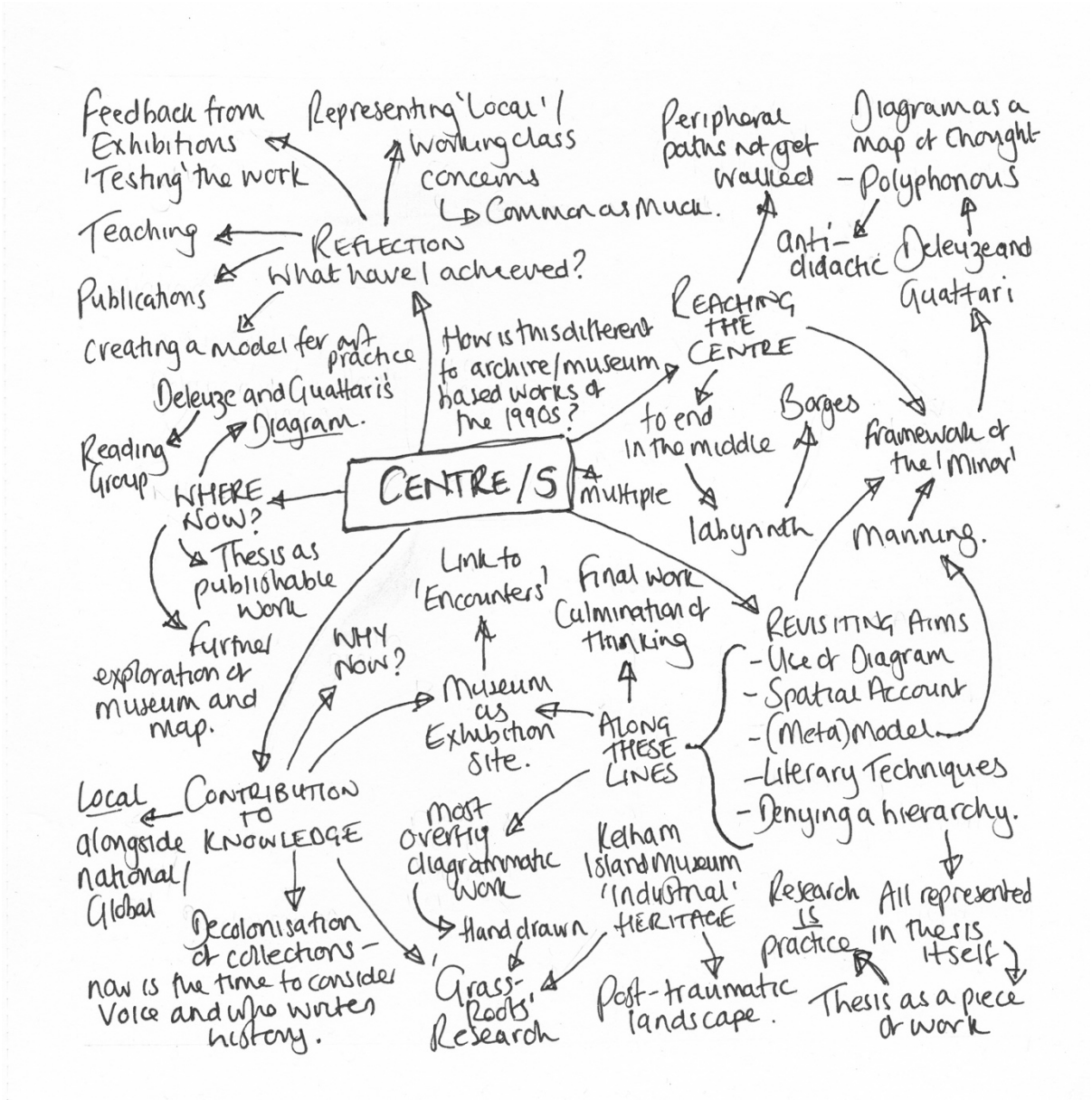
Cheshire Cat

The middle is by no means an average,
on the contrary, it is where things
start to pick up speed.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari

Chapter Five

Centre/s



5.1 Reaching the Centre

A looking backwards and forwards simultaneously

This final chapter is both a conclusion and a reflection. Thinking of the Borromean Ring structure that forms this thesis, now that I have examined each of the rings in individual detail, I step back and look at the form as a whole. As with an archiving process, once an item has been recorded, transcribed, and catalogued, it must be considered in relation to a wider social and cultural context. If the rings were to represent a three-way Venn diagram, this chapter is the point at which the three circles overlap — the centre — the final 'intersection'.[333]

Centre/s = History∩Archive∩ Fiction(ing)

The title, 'Centre/s', suggests not only that there may be more than one centre, given the multiple narratives and formats that run through this thesis, but also considers the 'subject' in Lacanian terms — which is represented by lower-case 's'. Though psychoanalysis has not played a large role in this research, Sharon Kivland drew my attention to Jacques Lacan's use of the Borromean Rings, or 'knot', as he terms it. For Lacan, the rings represent the 'real', the 'symbolic', and the 'imaginary' — concepts not unrelated to this research, and terms which might represent the different types of voice and address used. The three rings (RSI) combine to produce the subject — (s).[334] The loss of any one ring would be the loss of the subject, and it is the subject that prescribes any version of the past with which we might be presented. To lose the subject would be to lose any hope of interpretation.

Philosopher and political theorist Achille Mbembe writes:

> Through archived documents we are presented with pieces to be assembled, fragments of life to be placed in order, one after the other, in

[333] In mathematics the overlapping sections of a Venn diagram are referred to as 'intersections' (∩), while the whole thing — the areas that overlap and those that do not — are called a 'union' (∪).

[334] Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire XXII, R.S.I.*, 17 December 1974, trans. by Cormac Gallagher, unpublished. See https://nosubject.com/Borromean_knot [last accessed 10 June 2020]

> an attempt to formulate a story that acquires its coherence through the ability to craft links between the beginning and the end.[335]

NB. Mbembe is not wholly in approval of this idea, also writing: The archive's status 'is also an imaginary one'.

As in BBC Drama ***Shooting the Past***

Suggesting that this journey ends at the centre denies such a straightforward, chronological linearity. Mbembe implies that a complete picture may be put together with a clearly defined start and finish and a specific order in-between, as though the fixity of archival material is predetermined; a puzzle to which there is one correct, linear answer. The centre returns us, instead, to the labyrinthine image presented in the introduction, in turn reminding me, again, of Jorge Luis Borges, who has played only a cameo role in this particular telling of my journey, but is nonetheless ever present in my thinking.[336] As in the labyrinth, to move forwards I must go back, retrace my steps, and consider the final work that will be discussed here — one that pulls together the different readings and theories of the previous chapters to exemplify how they can be used to examine the communication of the past through the diagram.

I have been warned that it is not 'proper' to introduce new works or ideas in a thesis conclusion…

5.2. *Along These Lines*[337]

In 2019 I was invited to make a work for the exhibition *From Brooklyn Works to Brooklynism*, which would be shown in Kelham Island Museum during the summer of that year. I had been a part of meetings surrounding this project for much longer, initially contacted to discuss ideas of how to approach

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[335] Achille Mbembe, 'The Power of the Archive and its Limits', in *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. by Caroline Hamilton, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2002, pp. 19–26, p. 21.

[336] 'I imagined a labyrinth of labyrinths, a maze of mazes, a twisting, turning, ever-widening labyrinth that contained both past and future and somehow implied the stars […] I felt myself to be, for an unknown period of time, an abstract perceiver of the world.' Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Garden of Forking Paths', in *Fictions*, trans. by Andrew Hurley, London: Penguin, 1998, [*Ficciones*, Buenes Aires: Emecé Editores, 1944] p. 79.

[337] Louise Finney, 'Along These Lines', as part of the *From Brooklyn Works to Brooklynism* exhibition, Kelham Island Museum, 18 June – 24 July 2019.

difficult sites or 'post-traumatic landscapes',[338] particularly through art practice, in a way that was not clichéd, condescending, or merely commemorative. Emma Bolland writes, on such a use of creative practice, 'The work of fictions, of creative practice, can attempt to uncover the multiplicity of 'truths' that constitute the material, conceptual and emotional narratives of individual and intertwined lives, and with which and of which we tell to and of our selves through the process of memory and forgetting'.[339] Though difficult to speculate on these concepts without a specific site in mind, these discussions enabled a consideration of a 'formula' that might be applicable to sites ranging from areas of lost industry, like Kelham Island in Sheffield, to Orgreave,[340] and other locations of similar conflict and trouble, and how such spaces might be approached sensitively, yet also critically.

I suggested early on in these conversations that a work containing a conflicting narrative was, to me, of most use here a work detailing countering opinion about the site(s), and also spanning a much wider timespan than the 'traumatic event' in question. Considering the past of a place or space before, and after or with the potential of an afterwards a difficult or troubled past flattens the narrative, disallowing trauma to take the fore. By raising the importance of ordinary or commonplace occasions alongside the more well-known 'trauma' of a site, a smaller and quieter, yet

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[338] The term 'post-traumatic landscape' is thought to have been first used by Dr Amanda Crawley Jackson in 2013, at the *Post-Traumatic Landscapes Symposium* at the University of Sheffield, and is written about by Emma Bolland in *The Truths of Fictions: Post-Traumatic Landscapes, Civic Erasure and the Projects of Artistic Resistance*, 2014.
See: https://emmabolland.com/2014/12/18/the-truths-of-fictions-post-traumatic-landscapes-civic-erasure-and-the-projects-of-artistic-resistance/ [last accessed 10 June 2020]
And: https://occursus.org/2013/05/17/programme-for-post-traumatic-landscapes-symposium-may-22nd/ [last accessed 9 June 2020]

[339] Bolland, *The Truths of Fictions: Post-Traumatic Landscapes, Civic Erasure and the Projects of Artistic Resistance*, 2014.

[340] The site of the violent confrontation between striking miners and the police in South Yorkshire, 1984. The site has now been renamed 'Waverley', in an attempt to distance the location with its troubled past. See Martha Mingay, 'Orgreave 30 Years On: An Uncontaminated Name?', *Failed Architecture*, 17 March 2015. https://failedarchitecture.com/orgreave-30-years-on-an-uncontaminated-name/ [last accessed 7 June 2020]

equally formative, minor heritage is brought into focus as well. As Manning writes, the minor is a 'continual variation on experience […] not controlled by a pre-existing structure'.[341] Much like the archaeological 'way of looking' that Didi Huberman suggests, attention must be paid the layers of ground that are excavated to reach the layer that is specifically sought.[342] The project was eventually funded, with Kelham Island as the site to be considered.[343]

The title of the exhibition, *From Brooklyn Works to Brooklynism*, reflects the change in the perception and purpose of this Sheffield neighbourhood. Brooklyn Works — one of the oldest metalwork sites in Kelham Island — is said to have produced the steel used to make the Brooklyn Bridge in New York. 'Brooklynism' is a term used to describe the type of gentrification that happens to a city, or a suburb of a city, such as Brooklyn, and is also known as the hipster stage of late capitalism.[344] The exhibition was shown in Kelham Island Museum, a site dedicated to documenting the area's industrial heritage. When initially I was shown around the site by the curator, Chris Keady, I was told that all works were to be shown in a new, empty room, with white walls and no current use.

p. 76., fig. 335.

Much is already lost due to an infamous flood in 2007

After showing interest in a mounted technical drawing on a wall during the tour, I was given full and unsupervised access to the archives of the museum. I knew instantly that I wanted to work with the technical drawings, of which there were dozens, stacked in drawers in the archive. My father tried to teach me technical drawing when I was a child, and those memories, along with the

[341] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 43.
[342] Didi Huberman, *Bark*.
[343] Kelham Island is one of Sheffield's oldest industrial districts, set on the banks of the River Don, and was once the centre of Sheffield's steel industry. By considering Kelham Island a 'post-traumatic' landscape, it is suggested that the 'trauma' the site has undergone has passed — we are now *post* trauma — and therefore the trauma is linked to the death of its industrial heritage, and subsequent decline, rather than its current gentrification and the pricing out of the people that have lived there for longer than five years. The work I made goes a little way to addressing this, and considers the fact that the remodelling and rebranding of the site of Kelham Island might perhaps be considered a trauma of sorts, as well. Perhaps this is one of the outcomes of allowing a working class voice contribute to this discussion.
[344] More information about the exhibition and the meaning behind its name can be found here: https://brooklynism.wordpress.com [last accessed 8 June 2020]

spatiality of the drawings, and a continued interest in diagram as means of information dissemination, made them ideal. The representation of the delicate, precise hand that informed the making of the enormous, stomping and clunking machines that are such a prominent part of Kelham Island's heritage created a juxtaposition, a sense of discordance that I found akin to the small voices of the past lost in the vast archives of history. I began use the diagrams as a space for fragmentary texts that explored the industrial heritage of the place, its recent 'gentrification', sections of site writing that I had been recording on each visit, and quotations from history studies about the unreliability of any singular account of the past. Rather than digitally doctor the drawings, I drew them by hand, mimicking the actions of the original draftsman, entering into a durational process that allowed time to think about the procedure, the space, and language of scientific accuracy and objectivity that these crisp, precise diagrams embody.[345] This drawing process has become part of a methodological strategy necessary to the formation of my work and my understanding of the archival material with which I am working.

p. 74., figs. 324 327.

p. 74., fig. 323.

Jenkins

pp. 75 76., figs. 328 334.

O'Sullivan
Patheme

p. 76., fig. 336.

Due to their size, the images were eventually shown not in the characterless, white room as was initially proposed, but in the River Don Engine Room of the museum, between two halves of the enormous boiler that was once used to power the engine, found in the same space. The work showed five wall-mounted, labelled drawings that had been enlarged to A1 size, a draughtsman's table with seven A3 sized diagrams taped to it, and a stool in front, as though works in progress. The emulation of a work space echoes the

The River Don Engine is the most powerful working steam engine in Europe. It is still fired up in the museum once a day (and twice on Sundays)

[345] Questions about my decision to often hand draw diagrams rather than digitally re-master them have been common, and until now I have often found them difficult to answer because it is, in part, simply due to a lack of ability in digital methods. However, with hindsight I have realised that drawing especially technical drawing for which one is required to be very precise and methodical, is both a considered and deliberately durational process. Thinking about the act of drawing these diagrams, I can liken it to the act of archiving and accessioning that I undertook while volunteering in the museum. I always work, write, and draw in complete silence, and this slow, quiet, consuming process of drawing becomes the slow, consuming process of transcribing or examining a document. Time is spent with the original diagram that would not have been had I scanned it into a computer. It is in this slow contemplation of the original that a new way of presenting it or communicating it may be processed.

Susan Yee
'How easy it was to trade the value of touch and physicality for the powers of digitisation'

p. 77., figs. 338, 342.

museum's frequent exhibits of workshops, work environments, and tool-making studios. I titled the work *Along These Lines*,[346] and the blurb reads:

> *Along These Lines* uses the slow, almost scientific process of technical drawing as a space to consider the past heritage of Kelham Island, its present state of regeneration, and what it means to try and piece together the history of a place. The diagrammatic images have been replicated from the archive in Kelham Island Museum, and provide a quiet and delicate contrast to the large, industrial machines they are used to produce. Postmodern history theory suggests that we should think of the past in a spatial, non-linear, and multifaceted way, and the diagrams and labels become structures that allow for this.

pp. 78 79., figs. 343 347.

Small texts labelled the diagrams, with quotations such as 'the present is not comprised of things belonging to the same age, but takes the form of a multi-temporal field in which the past has accumulated itself',[347] with figures such as, 'June 2019. One Bedroom Flat, Alma Street, Kelham Island, £129,995', and notes on the process of making the work itself: 'The archive is quiet, peaceful, here the movement and whirring of the machines I have been captivated by is silenced, distilled instead in the static, yet equally mesmerising technical drawings'. The layering of voice, as in *Encounters*, allows multiple narratives and views of the same space to co-exist. By recording my thought processes in the making of the work I acknowledge my active subjectivity in what I choose to present or represent, and how I choose to do so.[348]

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[346] It took me a very long time to give this work a title — in fact, I was over the deadline by quite a way. In lieu of my naming the piece, it was suggested that it be called *The Draughtsman's Desk*. I strongly opposed this idea, asserting that I was not a draughtsman — not a man of any kind, actually — and it was also not my desk. Reflecting on this now, I think I was so against this idea because it conjured a parafictional connotation to the work — it implied, to me, that some kind of ruse was afoot, a level of trickery that I was wary of putting across. I wanted the work to be seen as a valid and necessary way to look at the site, rather than pretend I was some kind of draughtswoman, which would place focus on the drawing above the text the drawn diagrams provided a space for.

[347] Bjørnar Olsen, *In Defense of Things: Archaeology and the Ontology of Objects*, Maryland: AltaMira Press, 2013, p. 108.

[348] This self-awareness can be likened to 'breaking the fourth wall' in film and theatre, and 'metafiction' in literature studies.

Form of content ≠ Form of expression

An anticipation was that the viewer would be first drawn in by the delicacy of the drawing, realising secondarily that the text provided a different narrative entirely; one that denies any linear or singular view of Kelham's heritage. The scientific language of the diagram and the speculative, contradictory language of the text destabilise one another. In a review of the exhibition, Anna Netri writes:

> At first sight these technical drawings, with all their attention to the details of mechanical components, seem to recall the inventiveness of the designers of industrial machines or of the architects who create the spaces we live in. But the handwritten notes on the drawings reveal further detail of the memories, stories, and associations within Kelham Island's surrounds and those of the residents and passers-by. Finney's work creates bridges between the present and the past (or memories); between the individual and the community.[349]

p. 80., figs. 349, 350.

Try to avoid 'mightier than the sword' cliché…

So that my presence was acknowledged in the main exhibition space, I was given the opportunity to use a glass vitrine in the centre of the room, in which I placed, very neatly, my pencils, pens, compass, set square, metal rulers, and sketchbook. This echoed the vast amount of tools displayed throughout the museum, and considered the pen as much a tool as the hammer or saw. This small 'aside' to my installation created an opportunity to see how museum visitors interacted with work presented in a format expected from such a site, alongside one less expected. I found visitors spent as much time with these 'tools' as they did with the drawings, despite the lack of any description or blurb. As Hiller notes, on the vitrine, 'when things are condensed or constrained like this, people will involve themselves in a more careful, slow, and intimate way than they do when they come into a space to see an art installation'.[350]

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[349] Anna Netri, *From Brooklyn Works to Brooklynism?*, Occursus Blog, August 1 2019. https://occursus.org/2019/08/01/from-brooklyn-works-to-brooklynism-by-anna-netri/ [last accessed 9 June 2020]

[350] Susan Hiller, 'Thinking Through Objects', p. 41.

Along These Lines combines what I consider the most successful elements of each previous work, bringing together historiography, archive, and diagrammatic, interwoven, contradictory, and non-linear language. To think of this work in relation to the Borromean ring structure of this thesis, it considers ways of representing the past (History the *what*), the images used are sourced from the museum's (Archive the *where*), and the text on the diagrams combine a combination of writing styles and literary methods (Fiction(ing) the *how*). Without any of these elements the project would not hold a form, demonstrating the way this triad functions as one model within this project.

5.3 To Revisit the Beginning, Again

Mapping Out

In the introduction five aims were outlined in relation to different tropes and methods used in the writing of this thesis. I reflect on whether the work produced (including this thesis) meets these aims, and how.

5.3.1 Using the Diagram

> Aim 1. To test how the diagram a form that sits between image and language can be used to convey a fragmentary experience of the archive.

Deleuze
Lines of Flight → Diagram, Deterritorialisation

Following Deleuze, O'Sullivan, and Zdebik, the diagram is considered as between image and language. Vellodi, in *Diagrammatic Thought*, writes that Deleuze 'conceives of the diagram as a map of new concepts/thought, whose function is not to summarize/reflect, but to act as a pilot'.[351] A refusal to summarise information in a linear way, steering a viewer through a potentially differing, multiple, and anti-didactic way of considering the past, is the function of the diagram here.

[351] Kamini Vellodi, 'Diagrammatic Thought: Two Forms of Constructivism in C. S. Pierce and Gilles Delezue', in *Parrhesia*, no. 19, 2014, pp. 79 95, p. 93. footnote 44.

pp. 16, 17., figs. 40 43.
pp. 24, 25., figs. 72, 73.

The catalogue card works made early in this study are the start of a diagrammatic thinking, but the use of the diagram to present plural modes of address and strands of information simultaneously is most explicit in *Along These Lines*. Unlike the theoretical diagrams of Deleuze, the diagrams here represent a physical thing, and are recognisable as 'technical drawings', even if the machinery they depict is unclear. These diagrams were used as an example of the quieter aspects of Kelham's industrial heritage, and the work brings to light artefacts hidden away in the archive. The diagrams produce not simply a space for text, but a language of their own, representing a particular heritage, and adding another voice to the polyphonous exploration of site. Following Deleuze's position that a diagram does not hold a specific visual, explanatory form, the information boards made for *Encounters* may also be considered a diagram a form to which discordant language and dissonant narrative may be attached, a conceptual space 'directed towards the production of new values "not inspired by truth"'.[352]

C. S. Peirce →
Diagram is a semiotic artefact of an existing truth or reality
≠ Deleuze →
Diagram creates a new reality, a new 'set of values'

The decision to represent my thinking processes with diagrams and mind-maps rather than images of 'finished works' throughout this thesis indicates the way this journey has been traversed. Rather than producing a text that can simply be read page after page, the sprawling, meandering diagrams elucidate a 'thinking through' that is present in the work, and, it seems now, *is* the work. These diagrammatic texts, and the use of the margin, demonstrate the way this research has come together in a tangential and divergent manner connections are made that cannot be elucidated in a coherent sentence or paragraph. Similarly, the accession registers spread throughout the three main chapters represent not only the breadth of reading that has formed the basis of this research, but also demonstrate the limitations of such taxonomic structures. Further to demonstrating the impossibility of delineating texts into clearly defined categories, I question the efficacy of such categorisational systems at all.

Borges
It is clear that there is no classification of the universe that is not arbitrary and full of conjectures

[352] Kamini Vellodi, 'Diagrammatic Thought: Two Forms of Constructivism in C. S. Peirce and Gilles Delezue', p. 79.

Though museums are quick to acknowledge the difficult pasts of items they hold, the systems of classification and categorisation used in displays and stores remain in place, and often reflect out-dated, colonialist ways of thinking. Tristram Hunt's recent proposal for restructuring of the Victoria and Albert Museum is a poignant example though it should be noted that these plans have been overturned due to the public backlash received.[353] Hunt planned to rearrange the museum not by material and theme, as was the design museum's original ethos, but to create a separate area for America and the West, which would be arranged chronologically, and another for Africa, and Asia respectively. Christina Farraday writes that this clear division of the West and anything 'other' is 'diametrically opposed to the intentions expressed in the museum's Race and Equality statement, released last year during the Black Lives Matter protests',[354] and shows how far from post-colonial thinking such institutions really are.

The multiple, anti-didactic voice/s used in my works shown in museum settings, facilitated by the diagram, problematise these outmoded systems of categorisation and delineation. Dan Hicks, in *The Brutish Museum*, quotes Hartwig Fischer, director of the British Museum: 'When you move cultural heritage into a museum, you move it out of context. However this is also a creative act'.[355] Hicks calls into question Fischer's masking of perpetual classicist and colonial decision making under the guise of 'creativity', writing that such throwaway statements and ideals have become distractions from the calls for the restitution of looted objects still held across the UK's many museums. He writes 'The only thing sure about the sustained popularity of object oriented life histories, and accompanying misplaced correctness, is that

Appadurai
The Social Life of Things

[353] Tanya Harrod, in *The Spectator*, labelled Hunt's proposition as 'baffling, disturbing, and wrong', while Christina Farraday in *The Telegraph* called the planned changes 'catastrophic'.
https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-v-a-s-radical-restructuring-plans-are-baffling-disturbing-and-wrong/ glast accessed 23 June 2023]
[354] Christina Farraday, 'The proposed changes to the V&A would be catastrophic', in *The Telegraph*, 26 February 2021
https://www.telegraph.co.uk/art/what-to-see/tristram-hunts-proposed-changes-va-will-catastrophic/ [last accessed 23 June 2023]
[355] Dan Hicks, *The Brutish Museum*, London: Pluto Press, 2020, p. 25.

Manning
What art can do is bypass the object and make felt instead the dissonance

Sonya Boyce → Conversation generated by *removal* of object

it has deepened persistent colonial inequalities repeated and exacerbated dehumanisations, reproduced and extended dispossessions.'[356] By using the diagram as the focus in my work, this unwavering object-ness of the museum artefact is deferred. In employing multiple and subjective forms of language to consider artefacts and collections, the object is secondary, in the same way that digital archives and collections represent an object without a need for its physicality. This use of creative method to circumnavigate the necessity of 'owning' an object refutes Fischer's claims that bringing artefacts into a museum is a 'creative' act, and the further implication that to be creative is not also to be political.[357]

5.3.2 Presenting a Spatial Account

> Aim 2. To present a spatial account of an investigation that denies a linear or chronological reading.

Reading from Jenkins's *Refiguring History* asserts the need for a non-linear presentation of the past, and this has been reinforced by Hartog's idea of Presentism. These concepts have strongly shaped the work made for this project, and quotations of such readings are included in the work itself. In *Along These Lines* and *Encounters* this aim was addressed in the non-linear layout of the work, as discussed in relation to the first aim. These diagrammatic texts do not have a prescribed reading order, but accumulatively build a response to a specific space outside of chronology. The dialogue on the boards in *Encounters* does not follow a coherent narrative structuring, and

[356] Ibid. p. 26.
[357] Something I have noticed over the course of this project is that to be an 'artist' in the museum or archive environment is to not be taken as a serious contributor to an institution's way of working. Aside from the instance of the curator being unhappy about my changing of the information boards at Bishops' House which is, I think, due to the nature of that specific piece of work: the removal of the museum's 'voice' to be an artist is not considered a 'threat' of any kind. To label something as a 'creative act' is to wash one's hands of responsibility for it and also suggest a whimsical approach that does not hold the same level of academic or epistemological rigour as the pursuit of the historian or curator.

the dissonance between the 'voices' represents the lacunae in fragmented archival material, and the multifaceted way the past is accessed or understood.

In relation to this thesis as a whole, this aim has been harder to address. A thesis *does* have a prescribed form, depending on one page being read after another, and a chronology is expected to be presented. Though the themes of non-linearity and spatiality have been discussed and advocated for throughout this thesis, via postmodern history theory, the diagram, and my work, I hope that they are also alluded to in the reading of this text. A re-treading of paths, and conscious decision to write in a way that is, at times, autoethnographic, non-academic, and non-chronological are methods to exemplify this aim, in both practice and thesis, and thesis *as* practice.

This is what I set out to do → This is how I have done it → This is what I have found out from doing it

As with the margins and diagrams used here, the accompanying book *Constellations* imposes a non-fluid reading process. Also acting as a diagram, of sorts, the black background of the page mimics the white space of possibility in the technical diagram, providing a space from which further readings, writings, drawings, and references might appear. Like the gaps in archival information, these voids offer a space in which a viewer's imagination, subjectivity, and fiction may enter. Switching from book to book, cross referencing points between the main body of the text, the margins, and the separate volumes creates a dislocated reading. Breaking the usual sequence from one page to the next exemplifies the way historical material is experienced as a fragmented and multi-stranded version of events in which there are many gaps and tangential paths to follow, and much that remains unrecorded.

Diderot

Achille Mbembe
The archive's status is also an imaginary one

5.3.3 Creating a (Meta)Model

> Aim 3. To read from and link together three areas of study, and consider this linking a metamodel for a historiographical art practice.

Model
An abstraction of a real world phenomena
Metamodel
An abstraction of this abstraction. A collection of 'concepts'

I have deliberated between the phrase 'metamodel' and the more recognised term 'methodology', or simply 'model', throughout this writing process, conscious that bringing in too much 'jargon' may detract from my aims and ideas. This oscillation about whether or not to employ the term has led to a deliberate inconsistency between the introduction and this conclusion. In the introduction, I use the term 'model', while now, here, I use the term 'metamodel', one I have found along the way, demonstrating a small part of the progression of thought along this journey. Manning writes that a metamodel 'upsets existing forms of power and knowledge', and 'makes felt lines of formation'.[358] She proposes that unlike a methodology, the metamodel provides a way of working that destabilises existing forms of knowledge transferal precisely by sitting within them, in the same way that the minor language must sit within and acknowledge the presence of the major language in order to deterritorialise it.[359]

Rather than choose one term or the other, I employ Deleuze's ethos of 'both/and' as opposed to an 'either/or' way of working

Manning
'Meta in the sense of mapping abstract formative conjunctions'

The specific metamodel employed here is the union of three areas of study archive, history, and fiction(ing). As demonstrated by the Borromean Ring format, if any one of these areas were removed, the project would collapse. Through the reading of history studies and archive studies information about the way the past is negotiated and presented has been elucidated, and become the focus of the work itself. Considering the archive, and the archival turn in art practices,[360] as well as experience working in museum stores and archives, has provided sites from which work can be made. The study (and creation) of literary techniques alongside the fiction(ing) language of the diagram has informed the way the work is made and presented. Dividing the main thesis chapters in this way has meant a non-chronological version of this research has been relayed, and ground has been retrodden. As shown in the accession registers that punctuate the thesis in trying to cleanly delineate readings and concepts into specific categories overlap will always occur, and yet I continue to try.

Borges
'The impossibility of penetrating the divine pattern of the universe cannot stop us from planning human patterns, even though we are conscious they are not definitive'

[358] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 43.
[359] Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, p. 16.
[360] See Hal Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', pp. 3 22.

Along These Lines epitomises these three core areas. 'History'[361] specifically the investigation of the heritage (both past and present) of the site of Kelham Island is examined in the work. 'Archive' has been used to source the technical drawings and diagrams that the work replicates, and the text that accompanies these diagrams draws from a variety of 'Fiction(ing)' practices to produce a varied, contradictory, and fluctuating narrative. In the gathering of these three elements, and in considering them as one singular model, lies my contribution to knowledge the union of this triad produces a metamodel for making work that is historiographical, critical, and creative. The multi-stranded approach mirrors how multiple modes of thinking/reading/making are always at play while working with remnants and narratives of the before-now. This process exemplifies my role as artist/writer/researcher. Manning writes, the metamodel is 'about balancing several books, or several passages, or several ideas, or several textures, at the edge of the desk, or on the floor of the studio and wondering how else they might come together'.[362]

Manning
'At times, the process may seem like a method, but repeating it will never bring the same process back'

To employ this metamodel directly to an archival or historical site would necessitate the understanding and acceptance that a metamodel is always changing, adapting to its time and situation, and, crucially, adopts an anti-didactic stance. As Hicks notes 'Museums are places where curators pretend they can keep things the same', and 'anthropological museums can be sites of conscience for the present as well as the past, not frozen end points but ongoing processes'.[363] It is here that a generative process, one that is inclusive to voices outside those of the 'authority' of the curator, the archivist, the historian, can be used to make a change to the way history has been, and still is, processed and presented to the public in museological settings. The diagram that underpins the metamodel I have used to create this body of work

[361] This seems a timely place for a reminder that history is considered a theoretical idea here, and not a physically accessible or reproducible thing: '[N]o matter how well formulated the *form* of history might be its method, shape, and structure we can *never* show a definitive example of it'.
Keith Jenkins, *Re-figuring History*, , p. 15.
[362] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 39.
[363] Dan Hicks, *The Brutish Museum*, pp. 228 229.

provides such a space, encouraging thoughtfulness via conversation and negotiation, rather than one-directional information transferral.

5.3.4 Considering Literary Techniques

> Aim 4. To consider literary techniques such as site writing, autotheory, and anecdote as essential methods in examining historiography and the archive.

Even later, **Annie Erneaux** *Exteriors* → ephemeral encounters on the periphery of lived environment

Later still… **Carmen maria Machado** *In the Dream House* → Holding events up to the light to examine them through different lenses

I have just finished reading – too late – Moyra Davey's book *Index Cards*;[364] a fragmentary, dislocated book that considers memory, nostalgia, Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, Mary Wollstonecraft, negatives, archive, autobiography, and more. Like index cards, the writing appears in short segments giving the sense that it might be reshuffled according to the will of the reader. Reflections on theory and philosophy are woven through autobiographical writing, the texts of others sparking Davey's thoughts, and informing experiences as they are encountered. The intertwining of voice and citation echoes the techniques I have used to replicate my experience of working with the before-now, techniques that are inevitably grounded in the subjective. As Davey writes:

> Dipping into the archive is always an interesting, if unsettling, proposition. It often begins with anxiety, with the fear that the thing that you want wont surface. But ultimately the process is a little like tapping into the unconscious, and can bring with it the ambivalent gratification of rediscovering forgotten selves.[365]

By using narrative techniques inspired by Maggie Nelson, W. G. Sebald, Tom Stoppard, and others, a more experiential encounter with the past is not only explored, but considered the most productive way of communicating any

[364] Moyra Davey, *Index Cards*, London: Fitzcarraldo Editions 2020.
[365] Moyra Davey, *Index Cards*, p. 51.

engagement with it. The use of hybrid writing and fictioning directly follows Jenkins's idea that 'History remains inevitably a personal construct, a manifestation of the historian's perspective as a 'narrator'',[366] and Zwartjes definition of autotheory as that which 'allows not only a multiplicity of form, of innovation, of medium, but also a multiplicity of experiences, of perspective and embodied subjectivity'.[367] In openly and actively recognising the role of these multifarious sources whose work has informed my own, I echo Sebald's explanation for his images – 'making obvious that you don't begin with a blank page'.[368]

5.3.5 Denying a Hierarchy

> Aim 5. To use a combination of authoritative and non-authoritative voice and language to destabilise hierarchical presentations of information, and create a minor work.

Carrie Lambert-Beatty 'Make-Believe: Parafiction and Plausability'

In a previous edit of this thesis I had named the artist Zoe Leonard as 'Fae Richards', the fictional persona Leonard's work brings into being. The fiction became, briefly, the reality

Although it may not seem distinct from the previous aim, this particular intention focusses on a multiplicity of voice and address, rather than narrative techniques used to emphasise viewer-imposed subjectivity in examining the past. Rather than works that may be considered parafictional, such as those by Zoe Leonard or Michael Blum, or those that directly subvert existing historical material, such as Fred Wilson's work, these two approaches are united. Archival information sits alongside theory, autobiography, found voice, and fiction, each informing the other and creating a broader conversation about how much can be 'known' about the past, and the different ways this information can be conveyed. In *Along These Lines*, and *Encounters*, quotations from theory that has been pertinent to each pursuit are found in conversation with my own voice and research, that of the people I meet along the way, the information offered by the museum. No

[366] Ibid. p.14.
[367] Arianne Zwartjes, 'Under the Skin: An Exploration of Autotheory'.
[368] Arthur Lubow, 'Crossing Boundaries' in *The Emergence of Memory; Conversations with W. G. Sebald*, pp. 159 – 173, p. 163.

Francois Laurelle
Non-philosophy
A consideration of Laurel's non-philosophy, as explained by O'Sullivan, featured in Chapter 4, however it has since been deleted, 'cut'. This margin notes remains as a remnant of things lost.

voice has authority over the others and no central narration runs throughout the works authoritative and non-authoritative voice are considered not only equal, but indistinguishable.

The techniques of works of hybridity, such as autotheoretical texts, are taken out of the linear book format and applied in a more spatial way. The diagram is used as a map onto which an amalgam of voice and address may be plotted, destabilising any linear account of the past, and denying any hierarchy of information conveyed. This multiplicity plays a crucial role in challenging how information is expected to be communicated in either a museum setting, or history text book, allowing the viewer's voice to enter the discussion. The intention of these works has never been to undermine or directly refute the information given by museum plaques and signage, but to add other layers to that particular narrative, generating a meta conversation about the nature of information dissemination and reception in such settings.

Manning
'It is the 'what if' instead of the 'not that''

The use of email excerpts to interrupt the main body of writing here represents the unofficial, 'local' voices that contribute to an understanding of the past. They also act as a kind of archival material in their own right, giving the reader a small insight into the life of another, without complete contextual information as is often the case in archival documents. That these snippets of digital conversation have been made physical through the inclusion in, and printing of, this thesis changes their status. Placing them alongside citations from varying other academic sources, again flattens hierarchy and represents a more 'grass-roots' type of knowledge acquisition. This valuing of local knowledge and voice is, again, a minor action.

Working outside the 'grand narratives' of history

Included in this notion of hierarchy are not just cultural or gender based concerns, but also concerns of class. That it should be a talking point that Sonia Boyce asked, specifically, 'the cleaners' of the Manchester Art Gallery their opinion on *Hylas and the Nymphs* and other museum displays while

planning her interventions,[369] speaks about the elitism still present in both the museum world and, to an extent, the art world as well. This is reinforced by a tweet by Hicks in April 2021: 'When I started working in "world culture" museums I was so shocked by how many UK curators (and directors) had close family connections to colonial administrators, as fathers or grandfathers my father and his father before him were Durham coalminers'.[370] Given that the de-accessioning of a museum object needs to be agreed upon by a board of trustees and in the case of repatriation or restitution, governmental input is required to bypass the British Museum Act of 1963, it is clear to see that power still lies in the hands of the elitist classes.

Common as Muck

Reflecting this concern for the lack of working class voice in museum institutions, learning facilitator Michelle McGrath founded the collective *Museum as Muck* in 2018. Committed to improving the socio-economic diversity of staff in museum culture,[371] in 2018 the collective staged an intervention at the Museums Association Conference in Belfast. The group created a supermarket shelf installation, where instead of food, handling objects from museums were stacked, each labelled not with a price, but with a statistic or explanation of the problems working class people in museum cultures encounter. The conference guests took their items to a till, and received a receipt detailing how the sector in which they worked could be more inclusive to working class employees.[372]

p. 98. figs. 426, 427.

McGrath lists:
Language
Stress
Accents
Imposter Syndrome
Volunteering
Unpaid Labour

McGrath
'We're museum people, we love an object'

McGrath used the language of the museum the handling objects, the museum type labels on artefacts, the setting of a museum conference to question the sector and its hiring policies from within. This intervention

[369] Ben Luke, '"At the heart of all of this is the question of power": Sonia Boyce on the notorious Hylas and the Nymphs takedown', *The Art Newspaper*, 29 March 2018 https://www.theartnewspaper.com/interview/sonia-boyce-hylas-and-the-nymphs [last accessed 29 March 2021]
[370] Dan Hicks, @profdanhicks, 28 April 2021, [Twitter] https://twitter.com/profdanhicks/status/1386588727598854144 [last accessed 28 July 2023]
[371] https://museumasmuck.co.uk/about [last accessed 02 August 2023]
[372] The intervention is detailed in: Michelle McGrath and Mark Taylor, 'Social Class in UK Museums: Mark Taylor interviews Michelle McGrath', *Journal of Museum Education*, 47:4, pp. 414–427.

shows how a creative act can be a political one, how the minor voice functions within the major, and how a creative practice can bring together a proliferation of voice and experience to challenge existing epistemes and hierarchies both in relation to class, and also, for the purpose of this project, a wider historical and museological narrative.

5.4. A 'Minor' Outcome

The aims of this project are not dissimilar to Deleuze and Guattari's outline of a minor literature to deterritorialise major language, to make work that may be considered political (even if not overtly),[373] and to make a work that is 'collective'. Comparing these respectively to my aims to merge authoritative and non-authoritative voice, to contest a linear presentation of the past in order to question current hierarchies of knowledge transferal, and to combine different style and voice to create collective, anti-didactic texts, I have met the conditions of Deleuze and Guattari, and created a work that is minor.[374]

Considering the advantages of a minor practice, O'Sullivan writes, 'it names a form of cultural production from within a dominant discourse',[375] in this case, the discourse of the historian, and the museum. He continues that a minor practice, through dissent, 'produce[s] new kinds of thought and new modes of subjectivity'.[376] This investigation exemplifies the need to recognise one's own bias in any form of research and, rather than bury it, claim it as something

Hartog

[373] 'A minor art practice is not political in the sense that Politics is. It does not involve itself necessarily with political or what we might call *molar* organizations, rather it works to connect the different aspects of life, be they individual or social (or indeed nonhuman) so as to produce new lines of causality and new pathways of experimentation.'
Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice'.
https://www.simonosullivan.net/articles/minor-literature.pdf [last accessed 10 December 2020]

[374] I am paraphrasing these aims, and perhaps drawing them out to think of them in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, however I hope it has been made clear through the previous chapters that all of these points have been considered, and carried out in the work itself.

[375] Simon O'Sullivan, 'Notes Towards a Minor Art Practice'.

[376] Ibid.

positive and necessary in the communication of an epistemological pursuit. The conditions of the minor are met in this practice through its metamodel; the simultaneous consideration of history, archive, and fictioning. Through this minor framework, the joining of three areas to create one model for working is where a contribution to knowledge is found.

5.5. The Unanswered Question/s

An important question is missing from my layout of this thesis; if the History chapter is the *what*, Archive is the *where,* and Fiction(ing) is the *how*, then I must discuss the *why*, and more specifically, the *why now?* In the work this enquiry is left open, allowing the viewer to draw their own conclusions. I prefer to produce a work that raises questions without answering, generating instead conversations about the past, rejecting the 'instructive' and didactic function of the typical museum display.[377] The thesis, however, faces a different set of demands. As discussed, archival or historical art practices have been increasingly prevalent for the past thirty years, which raises the question of why this research is valid or necessary, and why now.

Hal Foster
An Archival Impulse

Has the time for this type of work passed?

Though archival art was ubiquitous throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the terrain of what might be considered an archive, the mode of information consumption, and consideration of what might constitute history, has undergone and continues to undergo change. When I started this project, and in response to these changes, archival art was very much in *vogue*, and my initial focus on working directly with archival material was, it seemed at the

[377] This idea of generating conversation about historical objects is not new. I read recently that in the times of the *Wunderkammer*, or Cabinet of Curiosity, the more a collected object was explained, through supporting documentation or contextual information, the 'ruder' the host was considered to be. By explaining something of the object, the owner of the cabinet had denied his visitors the chance to suppose and speculate about the artefact; he had cut short their discussion. This is perhaps one of the features of the romantic period to which metamodernism claims we have returned, but the conversations we generate now must be considerate of the postmodern journey, the unknowability of the past, and the colonialist attitudes that often underpinned such displays.

time, in danger of becoming part of a 'trend'. Then as the years went by and archival art started to fade in prevalence again an even greater danger of becoming outmoded presented itself.

As this project developed, however, so did its focus moving away from specific, physical archives and archival material, and towards a more meta exploration of how historical knowledge was portrayed, and by whom. And the contemporary conditions in which I have been working have changed alongside, making the work particularly pertinent, both culturally and politically. The recent 'crisis of time' of the coronavirus pandemic, the questioning of how difficult histories might be addressed via the Black Lives Matter protests, current calls to de-colonise archives and collections, and questions about class and inclusivity in museum settings provide contemporary evidence that history and an experience of time is always being readdressed, re-accessed, and reconsidered.

Contemporary examples of how institutions have started rethinking their collections and taking ownership over what histories are presented, and how, are all over the news. In the national Welsh museum Amgueddfa Cymru, a portrait of Sir Thomas Picton the infamously violent Governor of Trinidad has been replaced with a painting of a Welsh worker by Dutch artist Albert Houthuesen. The museum state that the original portrait of Picton will be shown in an upcoming exhibition 'Reframing Picton', in which Trinidadian artists will be invited to make work to accompany the historic portrait and explore Picton's legacy from an alternative viewpoint.[378] At the same time, however, Welsh town Denbigh voted 'overwhelmingly' to keep their statue of Henry Morton Stanley who was instrumental in the colonisation of the Congo in situ.[379] In Italy, plans to open a museum of fascism amidst claims that the museum is funded by a 'prominent admirer of

p. 65., fig. 282.

p. 65., fig. 281.

p. 83., fig. 362.

[378] Rebecca Wilks, 'National Museum's Picton Portrait Removed', *The National*, 3 November 2021. https://www.thenational.wales/news/19692257.national-museums-picton-portrait-removed/?fbclid=IwAR03D91ijD9_fkrxYXT_93gRGFvGtBr6U9E_KT-TjVaM5wrJMQ4W3uOIzDk [last accessed 14 November 2021]

[379] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-59069612 [last accessed 14 November 2021]

p. 83., fig. 363.

Mussolini' and concerns that it will become a 'mecca for fascist nostalgists', are underway.[380] The National Trust's 2017 programme 'Prejudice and Pride', which highlighted LGBTQ+ heritage in the UK was intended to acknowledge previously overlooked or silenced histories, and move with the times, yet a backlash saw 'hundreds of members' cancel their subscriptions.[381] Following Hartwig Fischer's resignation as director of the British Museum [2023], the job is on the market with a salary of £215,841 per annum. The main task of the new director: to 'rebuild the battered reputation of the oldest national public museum in the world'.[382] These are small examples of many similar circumstances; changes and lack-of-changes that are happening all over the country currently, and demonstrate clearly that the time for works that address historicity and museum culture has not ended.

Considering post-colonial discussions and decisions, it must be noted that many of the issues with these cultural artefacts stem from the embedded language in the nature of the object itself to create a statue of someone, to paint their portrait often posed in the typically heroic stance of the time is to glorify them, to present them favourably. This is where the diagram, with the quasi-scientific, objective language it embodies, its capacity for a multiple, varying, contradictory, and anti-didactic presentation of language and narrative, as well as its abstract step of removal from the historical artefact and its inferences, is most useful. This may initially appear similar to the government's 'retain and explain' policy, which argues that instead of the restitution of looted artefacts, or the removal of colonial monuments, they should remain in situ, with more effort made to explain their controversial

[380] James Imam, 'Italy to open first Museum of Fascism', *The Art Newspaper*, 24 February 2023

[381] Lucy Pasha Robinson, 'Hundreds of National Trust Members quit in protest over gay pride campaign', *The Independent,* 5 August 2017

[382] Gareth Harris, 'Who wants to be the next British Museum Director?', in *The Art Newspaper*, 11 January 2024.
Fischer resigned following the scandal surrounding the discovery (in 2023) of the theft or damage of over two thousand museum pieces over a ten year period, and an ongoing negotiation with Greece regarding the return of the looted Parthenon Marbles.

status.[383] Again, however, this places authority with one voice – that of the institution, and consequently, often that of a certain class, culture, and education – to prescribe what the viewer is looking at and explain to them what it means.[384] As Hicks writes:

The museum collection speaks of nothing beyond the biography of the institution that has collected it

> What exactly is the Victoria and Albert Museum contesting when it describes the sacred objects looted violently from Maqdala in 1868 as 'contested heritage'? And what, precisely, is the British Museum finding difficult when it acknowledges the 'difficult histories' of military colonial royal booty from Benin City in 1897?[385]

In a time characterised by an excess of accessible information (and disinformation), new medias and technologies, and where any viewpoint can seemingly be backed up by 'evidence', this singular, instructive explanation of

[383] Katharina Massing, 'Statues: The UK's plan to 'explain and retain' monuments is a backwards step', *The Conversation*, 9 March 2021 https://theconversation.com/statues-the-uks-plan-to-retain-and-explain-problem-monuments-is-a-backwards-step-156430 [last accessed 14 November 2021]

[384] An example of this kind of simplified, overly explanatory text panel can be seen in the Tate's recent [2021] *Hogarth and Europe* exhibition, which seeks to simultaneously strengthen European ties post-Brexit and highlight the differences between eighteenth century British attitudes and today's. Informative panels accompanying Hogarth's works explain the 'concept of European superiority' and the 'horrors of transatlantic slavery', that Jackie Wullschläger in the *Financial Times* described as a 'censorious and often barely relevant', and 'mere sociology lesson', before concluding: 'Yes, it is essential to give postcolonial and feminist perspectives. But […] there are better, nuanced, show-not-tell ways'.
See: Jackie Wullschläger, 'William Hogarth at the Tate Britain: A Brake on Progress', *The Financial Times*, 3 November 2021.
https://www.ft.com/content/132e8970-e331-401d-8083-3210809fa7f5 [last accessed 16 November 2021]

[385] Dan Hicks, *The Brutish Museum*, p. 231.

such complex and troubled artefacts and histories seems inadequate.[386] In response to these issues, a multiple, generative, and polyvocal approach to making work has been tested in this study, resulting in a practice that addresses both means of information dissemination, and the historical artefact itself, via syncretic and minor methods.

Who is this work for? Who is my audience?

Following discussions of why this art practice is necessary, and why now, I briefly consider another question: for whom? It seems to simple and easy to say, 'this work is for everybody', but this is, of course, the ideal answer, and perhaps an advantage of working with a multiplicity of voice. Concerns have been voiced, over the course of this project, that the inclusion of philosophical and theoretical ideas and quotations in the work itself may alienate or exclude the working class, non-academic viewers I value, however this seems to me to be an elitist standpoint.

The nature of the modes of dissemination of these works means that the viewer will almost inevitably be 'an interested party' – a museum or gallery visitor, a book buyer, but this definitely does not discount viewers from lower-income households. Both Kelham Island Museum and Bishops' House Museum have strong links to their local community, and many of the visitors

[386] I would like to note that many museums are actively trying to address these issues, yet opposition remains strong. In 2019, members of ICOM – The International Council of Museums – proposed an official change to the definition of what a museum is. The newly proposed definition begins with the hopeful sentence: 'Museums are democratising, inclusive, and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about pasts and futures.' However, the suggestion has caused ongoing backlash and controversy, including criticism because there was no use of the word 'educational' in the new definition. ICOM France chair Juliette Raoul-Duval called it an 'ideological manifesto', while Brenda Salguero quotes a museum professional as saying 'We should tell the truth, as it is, without agenda. We deal in facts.' The vote to change the official definition took place in 2022, three years after the proposed change – the new definition: 'A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage'. It is interesting to note the disappearance of the key words in the originally proposed definition that resonate the most with this project – 'critical', 'polyphonic', and 'futures'.
See: Brenda Salguero, 'Defining the Museum: Struggling with a New Identity', *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 22 May 2020.
https://curatorjournal.org/virtual-issues/defining-the-museum/ [last accessed 16 November 2021]

Museums Association: Local museums (outside of the national museums) 'have experienced a significant increase in visitor numbers' **December 2023**

to my exhibitions were not there as frequent visitors of art exhibits, but as local people interested in the way their community might be accessed by someone new.[387] In proposing a different way of looking at narratives and histories in such settings, a new conversation is generated in artist, academic, and local communities alike.

5.6. Reflections on a Practice Led Project

During this process I have had the opportunity to test my practice through teaching opportunities including lectures at Sheffield Hallam University, resulting in lengthy and always fascinating question and answer sessions. I have written a course module for the Open College of the Arts, in which students across art, music, textiles, and art history were required to create their own archive, and show an awareness of how such a space exists in other creative practices, and how what might constitute an archive has developed over time. I have tested text based pieces through publication, and public readings and symposiums, both as sole author, and as part of collaborations, including work with The Roland Barthes Reading Group. I have recently written a chapter for *The International Handbook of Heritage and Creative Practice*, due to be published by Routledge in 2024, entitled 'Towards a Metamodern Concept of Heritage', which examines the links between metamodernism and intangible heritage, and outlines how a creative approach to exploring sites and artefacts of the past is exemplary.[388] I have recently exhibited a collaborative and generative installation and book work, entitled

Vermeulen and Van Der Acker Metamodernism 'seeks for a truth it never expects to find'

[387] This was especially the case at Bishops' House, which as mentioned in Chapter Four, is staffed solely by volunteers who I found to be individuals from many different walks of life with a shared common interest, their local area, the history of it, and the community there.

[388] I found metamodernism too late in this study for it to feature here as prominently as I would perhaps like, and relish this opportunity to address and research it more thoroughly in the future.

p. 95 97., figs. 418 423.

Borges
'For every sensible line of straightforward statement, the are leagues of senseless cacophonies, verbal jumbles and incoherencies'

800 libraries,[389] with artists Emma Bolland and Rachel Smith which tests individual and collective responses to Borges's short text *The Library of Babel*, framed by the increased number of library closures year on year.[390]

All of these experiences have evolved my thinking and practice immeasurably, but the richest feedback has come from the exhibiting of works, especially *Encounters* and *Along These Lines*. Showing these works in museums, rather than galleries, means that their epistemological value is directly contemplated, and the artist's voice is placed alongside that of the museum curator or historian, claiming that the two have equal worth in communicating the past. Robins writes that the artist's voice can never hold the authority of the museum signage or information board,[391] yet in *Encounters*, this is precisely what was done, bypassing Robins's assertion that 'the artist will only be given the licence that others determine appropriate'.[392] The information boards I installed completely replaced, rather than accompanied, the usual text panels in the museum, and the institution's distress that this had been allowed shows that this work has value in testing the reception by both the museum visitor and the institute of the museum.

p. 46., figs. 205, 206.

Susan Hiller
'The museum needs things to be fixed and changeless'

Viewer comments on the works *Encounters* and *Along These Lines* suggest that there is a sense of 'life' in these works that is missing from the usual museum display. I think that this comes from the multiplicity of voice. Rather than a one-way interaction, in which the museum visitor is told at what they are looking, and its relevance, my works configure a conversation, or negotiation, between myself as viewer and researcher, external voices involved in my

[389] The piece takes its title from an article in the Guardian: 'Britain has closed almost 800 libraries since 2010', and combines our individual responses to this statement, alongside text found and written in Sheffield City Library, alone and together. https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/dec/06/britain-has-closed-almost-800-libraries-since-2010-figures-show [last accessed 12 January 2024]
[390] *Babble: An Exhibition of Contemporary Arts*, curated by Bryan Eccleshall, Ilkeston Contemporary Arts, 10 Nov 2 Dec 2023.
[391] 'The interventionist work of art, even at its most didactic, does not have the weight of authority carried by the gallery or museum's legitimized label or text panel or catalogue.'
Claire Robins, *Curious Lessons in the Museum*, p. 16.
[392] Ibid., p. 209.

understanding, the voice of the museum, and fictionalised voices. The staging of a conversation creates a space the viewer may join, a space in which their voice and questions are considered as valid.

This is facilitated by the spatiality of the diagram – a device that has evolved from 'thinking about practice' to 'practice itself', and finally, 'thesis'. Often in works I admit uncertainty, asking questions without providing an answer, indicating that not-knowing is a viable part of cultivating understanding, and that seeing more than one side of a situation is not a failing. Manning writes that the minor gesture 'make[s] apparent the cleft in the very question of what constitutes knowledge, making felt the share of unknowability in knowing'.[393]

A diagrammatic way of working, tested through practice, has formed the basis of this thesis itself, exemplifying the co-dependency of both practice and research, bringing together three strands – history, archive, fiction(ing) – to create one model for examining and communicating the past. This approach proposes a way of thinking about and presenting the fragmented and partial nature of the post-colonial archive, acknowledging non-linearity, subjectivity, memory, and cultural and class bias, leaving space for imagination, uncertainty, and fictionalisation to come into play. Further, I claim that this way of working is needed to critically reflect the contemporary situation of knowledge encounter and recovery in our present moment. By using the diagram as a site for mapping text, differing voices and viewpoints are accessible by the viewer at once, directly challenging the edifying and authoritative voice of the museological institution. The aim of these works is not to explain the past to a viewer, but to raise questions about traditional means of communication, and suggest how it might be explored moving forwards, via art practice. Robins writes:

> Encounters with art works can leave lasting impressions that remain with us long after we leave a museum or gallery, imprints that punctuate our thinking or puncture our understanding. As such, these are moments

[393] Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 44.

> where learning occurs, not as a didactic process through which one might acquire empirical knowledge but one which enables an understanding of something not directly being "taught".[394]

5.7. To Walk a Different Route

Archive and museum are 'mausoleums'

In *Index Cards*, Davey refers to the finished, bound piece of writing as a 'tombstone': 'The thing is only alive (and, by extension, I am only alive), while it is in process'.[395] It is perhaps for this reason that I cannot see this research as being 'finished' once the thesis has been submitted. On completion, some of the things I would like to do are quite simple, and may be considered 'journeys' rather than research enquiries. I would like to go to Istanbul and read Orhan Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence* between visits to the museum itself, I would like to visit Pompeii and think about archaeology and anachronism,[396] and I would like, finally, to meet Barry. I plan to write about these excursions, and their connections to this thesis, in one sprawling, meandering, contemplative text unbefitting of a thesis.[397]

There are numerous threads this research led me to pull on that never made the cut in this particular version of events. In the language of the maze, these threads might be considered wrong turns, or dead ends something was

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[394] Claire Robins, 'After-Image: The Museum Seen Through Fiction's Lens', in *Photographies*, 7:2, pp. 149 162, p. 162. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17540763.2014.930921 [last accessed 9 January 2021]

[395] Moyra Davey, *Index Cards*, p. 114.

[396] Though it has not been mentioned in this particular version of this thesis, Jennifer Wallace's text *Digging the Dirt: The Archaeological Imagination* was extremely influential in the early stages of this research. In fact, after reading it I went on an archaeological dig in Castleton, Derbyshire, and excavated a skeleton. The slow and delicate acts of brushing and scraping reminded me of drawing, and in turn, archiving. There is something about the physicality of such a process that is important to the understanding of artefacts and the past, and I would like to explore this more thoroughly.

[397] Only a few days ago, reading *Index Cards*, I had the sudden realisation that it is entirely possible to write a text that discusses the writing of others without rigorously referencing every quote and citation. It seems that, in the way I had to learn *how* to write for a Ph. D, I shall have to learn *how not to*.

learned from each diversion, but they did not need to be fully divulged in the mapping of the path that finally brought us to the centre. Going forwards, by moving backwards, I will walk a different route.

The sites and histories addressed in the work created in this project have been those to which I feel close, both geographically and socio-culturally local, and working class. There have been concerns throughout this project that the work produced might be considered parochial, and so there is perhaps a necessity to apply the metamodel I have created to a different kind of site; one where I do not feel so at home. Though I have argued throughout this process that regardless of the site, the researcher will explore material through the lens of their own experience, opening up a space for others to do the same, there are access points outside of class and geography that have been opened up by this enquiry, not yet fully explored.

O'Sullivan
At its most extreme non-philosophy might be considered a kind of 'radical parochialism'

The diagram has been an indispensable tool in the presentation of a method in this practice, and following Deleuze's assertion that the 'diagram is a map, or rather several superimposed maps. And from one diagram to the next, new maps are drawn',[398] I will explore in more detail the map and how it might cartographically convey a multiple and multitemporal terrain. Following Deleuze, Vellodi refers to the diagram as a conceptual space, without visual representation. In the many texts that explore Deleuze and the diagram, there is a conflict between contrasting interpretations as Vellodi writes, 'There has been little sustained critical work, and to my mind, much misinterpretation of Deleuze's concept of the diagram'.[399] I intend to spend more time with Deleuze's work to explore these tensions, especially regarding the distinctions between the 'conceptual space' of the diagram, and the visual form it might take. Following my participation in The Roland Barthes Reading Group, I am involved in the organisation of a Deleuze Reading Group aiming to undergo an in-depth interrogation of *Difference and*

See: **Umar Rashid, Sandy Rodriguez**
Contemporary works using cartographical mapping to blur geographical and historical pasts, and propose alternate presents and possible futures

Gap between map and terrain, gap between catalogue card and artefact

[398] Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 36.
[399] Kamini Vellodi, 'Diagrammatic Thought: Two Forms of Constructivism in C. S. Pierce and Gilles Deleuze', p. 93. footnote 44.

Repetition. I anticipate that the group will – like the Barthes group – produce collaborative works, going one step further to meeting Deleuze's final condition of the minor.

The museum as collection, and the psychology of the collector, was explored briefly in chapter two, and there is a crossover to be found, in museums that house or centre around the artefacts of a private collector, such as the Pitt Rivers and Ashmolean museums in Oxford, or Sir John Soane's Museum in London. An extension of the original museum, the at-home *Wunderkammer* – cabinets of wonders – of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these collections have an air of mania about them, and a more palpable archaeological feel than the house museum, or social history museums on which I have previously focussed.[400] Future work will test how my non-hierarchical, diagramming practices may be implemented in response to such sites – sites, it is also worth mentioning, whose collections are rooted in imperialist and colonialist practices and methods of collection, and who are having to rethink their displays and stances. I intend to push a practice that bypasses the cultural artefact itself, seeking a more nuanced and multiple way of examining it, exploring an approach to the post-colonial archive that acknowledges the complexity of such a collection and raises questions about the authority of the institution in the contemporary age.

Agamben

pp. 90–91., figs. 390–401.

In the face of the bureaucracy faced by museums in regards to handling their post-colonial collections, the arts, and specifically art practice, has the

[400] Giorgio Agamben writes: 'Only seemingly does chaos reign in the Wunderkammer, however: to the mind of the medieval scholar, it was a sort of microcosm that reproduced, in its harmonious confusion, the animal, vegetable, and mineral macrocosm. This is why the individual objects seem to find their meaning only side by side with others, between the walls of a room in which the scholar could measure at every moment the boundaries of the universe.'
Giorgio Agamben, 'The Cabinet of Wonder', in *The Man Without Content*, California: Stamford University Press, 1999 [*L'uomo Senza Contenuto*, Italy: Quodlibet, 1994], pp. 18 – 24, p. 20.
Again to consider the question of class, such at-home museums were created by the wealthy, for the wealthy, and this extends to the collector museums built across the seventieth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. This is a concern I would like to directly address in future work.

advantage of being able to side-step the red tape outlined previously, and work with museums to show that changes in the way the public are addressed and artefacts are presented are both possible and viable as an epistemological endeavour. The work made here has never been about erasing the often expert voice of the curator or museum institution, but reframing it and placing it alongside other voices and experiences ones differing in understanding, outlook, culture, and class, to highlight the subjective nature of encountering and experiencing the past, and creating a polyphonous, anti-didactic experience in which the viewer's voice and concerns may also play a part and have a space.

3rd June 2020

Hello Louise,

I wanted to check your address because I thought that you might be staying with family or friends during the bar shutdown. I will post [the maps] out to you tomorrow A.M. You have given me information about maps that I had never heard of. The 'Traps' in maps. What clever idea to protect a map maker's work from being copied.

I'll send a more full reply soon, but I just want to tell you about a drama I had in the Co-op last week […]

Take care,
Best Regards
Barry

7th June 2020

Hi Barry,

Just wanted to let you know that the maps arrived I don't know what I'm going to do with them yet but I'm excited about figuring it out. I have been using the diagram a lot, as you know, and I'm really interested in looking at the map in a similar way, as something that can be used to convey subjectivities rather than absolutes.

Thank so much for sending them to me, are you sure you don't want anything for them?

Hope you and Brenda are well,
L x

8th June 2020

Hello Louise,

Thanks for confirming that you have received the maps. I'm sure that they will prove of use at some time. They arrived when they should have done, so that's a step in the right direction towards normality (whatever that is).

I hope that you and your family are all well. We are doing OK, so far so good.

Keep safe

Barry x

Appendices

Appendix One:
Louise Finney, 'Museums, Museums, Museums. A Story in Three Parts', *Litro Magazine*, 26 September 2020. https://www.litromagazine.com/every-saturday-litro-magazine-publishes-essays-that-reach-far-beneath-the-surface/museums-museums-museums/

> Museums, museums, museums, object lessons rigged to illustrate the theories of archaeologists, crazy attempts to co-ordinate and get into a fixed order that which has no fixed order and will not be co-ordinated.[1]
>
> D. H. Lawrence

*

When she was young a museum visit was a treat. Rows upon rows of things she didn't understand, things she had never seen before, and things she had but they looked different there. Combs and scissors and pots and tools, proud and protected by cases of glass, and hoisted up onto miniature plinths, exuding importance. The small labels inside the cases told her what things were, how old they were, and what they were made from. She recited facts to her father as they wandered through walls of white, text jumping out from every angle, information to be taken in, consumed. Her brother liked to visit the science museums, where they were encouraged to interact with things, but she didn't like to interact. She liked to look, nose pressed up to glass vitrines, fogging the surface with hot, contemplative breath. Besides, things that could be interacted with weren't real museum things you weren't allowed to touch those. That was a rule.

Now less young looking back on herself, she sees an enthusiastic child with blonde, shoulder length hair, pink shorts, jelly sandals, a yellow t-shirt, and red sun hat. This might be an image from a photograph that she has seen of herself, or perhaps a mental image patched together from her love of bright clothes, and her mother's inability to colour co-ordinate anything. Precocious. That was a word she first learned in relation to herself. Aloof was another. She learned how to spell them in case anyone asked. According to her mother, at the age of four she particularly enjoyed impressing people with her ability to spell 'Mississippi'. 'Em, ai, double ess, ai, double ess, ai, double pee, ai.'

The museum was a prime place to learn the facts and figures with which to impress people, reciting information to make herself look smart. And, she supposes, now, that's all education was, then, really. She had no idea, sat at her wooden desk in school *how* 'eight-times-eight-

[1] D. H. Lawrence, *D. H. Lawrence and Italy: Sketches from Etruscan Palaces, Sea and Sardinia, Twilight in Italy*, ed. by Simonetta De Filippis, Paul Eggert, and Mara Kalnins, London: Penguin Classics, 2007, p. 435.

equals-sixty-four', but she knew that it did because they had chanted it over and over on Tuesday and Friday mornings. This flair for recital, for repetition, got her far; exams calling for the remembering of dates, facts, figures, and formulas — and who knows, those early visits to the museum might have helped as well.

*

In 1954 police raided the London home of John Nevin, a backroom assistant of the Victoria and Albert Museum. John had been an employee of the museum for twenty-four years, was well liked, and generally cheerful, despite the peculiarity of his gait and posture due to injuries sustained during the war. He was part of a team that retrieved artefacts from storage once the war was over, and returned them to their rightful place in the museum store rooms.

A museum stock-take in the summer of 1954 revealed the loss of hundreds of artefacts, and quickly the search was narrowed down to Nevin. Police were informed, and a raid was issued on his three-bedroom Chiswick council house. The officers could not have been prepared for what they found there, and discovered, upon entering the property, that almost every inch was decorated and adorned with priceless items that Nevin had stolen. Reports of the raid, which were finally released from embargo in 2009, tell of ornaments and trinkets hidden in the toilet cistern, underneath floorboards, and in the chimney breast, eaves, and vacuum cleaner bag. Nevin's wife is reported to have used an Italian leather and tortoise-shell handbag for her shopping, and a three-hundred-year-old tapestry hung on the living room wall. In all, over two-thousand stolen items were recovered from the couple's home.

Nevin, it transpired, had been systematically taking things from the museum since 1944. His general *modus operandi* was to put items down his trouser leg on his way out of work, and had successfully taken, among other things, twenty Japanese sword guards in this manner, and had even managed to dismantle a small table and smuggle it out in parts. Though there is no evidence, it seems reasonable to suggest that Nevin did not sustain injury during the war, and that his unusual gait was, in fact, due to the artefacts he had posited in his trouser legs. On his arrest, his wife expressed her relief that whole thing was over, whereas John's only defence was that he couldn't help himself — 'I was attracted by the beauty'.[2]

*

[2] Chris Hastings, 'How a modest council house was furnished with thousands of Items from the V&A', in *The Telegraph,* 3 January 2009.

I started volunteering in the social history stores of a museum in 2011, when I was twenty-four years old. Though I was interested in the objects there, the ephemera collection quickly became the area in which I invested my time. Paper documents, letters, and diaries fascinated me; a small transient piece of someone else, someone long gone that I could never meet, never know. Yet for a while I felt like I did know them, a little bit I had been given a glimpse into their life. Museums and archives are full of these traces, not just in the object itself but in the information that surrounds them. Often a statement is taken from the person that donates something to a museum about the providence of the item; where it has come from, a little about the person to whom it belonged, and their relation to the person donating it. Stories are as important to social history as objects people are as important as things.

On the run up to the centenary of the outbreak of World War One I pored over letters home from soldiers, ration books, and diary entries, transcribing each with the care and the attention I supposed that they deserved. I dug out the catalogue card that accompanied each item from the type of old archival drawers that one imagines when thinking of old archival drawers, and cross referenced it, making sure it had been filled out correctly by a previous volunteer. Another small snippet of someone's life contained in the filling out of a device used to denote a small snippet of someone's life. And the exhibition came and went, and my name was printed on an information board in the museum, my work recognised and thanked, and I went back to diligently transcribing letters from different time periods.

A few weeks later, while walking through my local flea market, I saw a bundle of letters and postcards that I recognised as from World War One. The rain was dripping steadily from the tarpaulin covering the stall onto the postcards, distorting the fragile pencil in which they were written. I moved them to safety, and asked the market stall holder about them, did he perhaps know of their provenance? For a moment he looked as though he may have something interesting to tell me, and replied; 'Not a clue, they're ten a penny, love. The lot's yours for a quid'.

Appendix Two:
Louise Finney, 'Stops and Starts', in *Sheffield*, ed. by Emma Bolland, England: Dostoyevsky Wannabe Cities, 2019, pp. 87 101.

Writing stops and starts.

Words come and go.

In 1976, Georges Perec wrote an essay describing his writing desk, the objects on it, and their relevance to him. This has become an exercise that I undertake when writing what I set out to write becomes impossible. When writing stops more than it starts, when pen fails to meet paper. The Perec exercise, as I call it, breaks this; forcing pen to re-meet paper in a mundane way, at first, but eventually the words flow back to the thing that was intended from the start. The thing one *wants* to write.

The result is a hybrid text of the thing I imagined when I sat down to write, and the exercise that forces me to write, when it does not come so easily.

*

It was by some Russian bloke this time. The Book. It's my own fault for pushing her to get out more; meet new people. That's why she joined the book club to meet people. So why I'm being dragged into it is slightly beyond me, but here we are.

'It's *Lolita* this month. The book.' Laura is hovering next to my chair.

'Mmm', I don't look up from the paper.

'It'd be nice if you'd read it with me this time?'

Internally I roll my eyes without rolling my eyes. Externally, I keep my non-rolling eyes fixed to the paper hoping it will end there.

'I mean; don't you think it would be nice if we did something together?'

She's not going to let it end there. I raise my eyes from the paper to meet hers. Blue and expectant.

'Why does it have to be reading though? We could go and watch a band together or something? That might be fun.'

Her face confirms that this is not a viable option.

'Is there a film I can watch?'

Also not a viable option. I can sense a speech coming on, I've developed a certain expertise in anticipating them.

'Liam, when we moved here you told me I wouldn't be lonely. That I wouldn't feel isolated. You told me we'd do things together. You said you'd make the effort.'

I knew that was going to come back to haunt me. I audibly sigh. Unwise.

'Liam.'

‘I just don’t understand how reading constitutes doing something together. I meant, like, going on a walk every now and then when the weather’s nice, meals out, trips to the cinema. Even the theatre if you want. That kind of thing.’

In truth, I’m saving face at this point. I am fully aware that I am backed into a corner, that her argument is a strong one, and that I will be reading this damned book. It seems that this succumbing had also been pre-empted by Laura.

‘I bought you a copy from the charity shop on the way home. Sorry it’s got no dust cover. It was only a quid.’ She places the book on the chair arm next to me. ‘I’m going to start reading it tomorrow. You might need a head start, I’m a quicker reader that you.’

She flashes me a smile, taps the top of the book twice, and sashays away upstairs. I look at the book on the chair arm, sigh, and pick it up.

*

Firstly, I must speak about the desk itself. It is, perhaps, the most beautiful piece of furniture I own. A gift from my brother, who was appalled by the flat pack, Argos monstrosity I wrote at before. I remember being led, one very cold Christmas morning to the large shed at the bottom of my parents’ garden where he had wrapped it up for me, badly. The whole family stood around and watched me tear paper from polished wood until it stood bare of garish Christmas print, and wonderful. It is perhaps the fondest memory of a Christmas morning that I have.

Our father is a woodworker, of sorts, and instilled in us from a young age an appreciation of good quality, well-constructed furniture. The desk is oak, with a green leather inlaid top, and gold filigree patterns around the edge of the leather. There are four drawers on either side, the bottom one deeper than the upper three, and one wide drawer at the top, over the space where your legs are to go. All of the drawers are individually lockable by the same key, though I do not lock them, and each drawer is made from quality wood, with dovetail joints and solid bottoms. The desk is most often littered with varying papers and books.

*

The Book is a plain black hardback. On the front in grey lettering are the words ‘BANNED BOOKS’. The back cover is plain; no blurb. The spine reads ‘Vladimir Nabokov LOLITA’. Not a lot to go on then.

‘Why was it banned?’ I ask the ceiling.

‘You’ll have to read it to find out.’ I can sense her smugness.

‘I could just Google it, you know,’ but my words lack conviction; she knows I won’t.

I open the book, flip past the introduction, and start reading. Part One.

‘Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins…’

‘Laura!’ I’m still addressing the ceiling. ‘It says ‘fire of my loins’; I refuse to read anything that says ‘fire of my loins’.’

'You refuse to read anything that isn't the sports page of the newspaper or the instructions on a microwave meal. Indulge in a bit of culture will you?'

'…fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo-Lee-Ta.'

I speak the three syllables silently, feeling my tongue touch the roof of my mouth. The action makes me feel self-conscious, and I'm glad no one was around to witness it.

*

The books I have been using for references most recently sit at the right hand side of the desk. They are stacked on top of one another, open, with their spine facing upwards in precisely the way one is taught not to store books. A crime tantamount to folding the corners of the pages to mark one's place. They resemble a multi-roofed temple with small flags of post-it note colours hanging from their eaves; shrines to the Gods of page numbers, publication dates, and translator's names.

Atop the pile is *Lolita*. A book that follows me from project to project, bearing little relevance to anything I am working on, but always there, on the pile, in my mind.

My copy of *Lolita* is missing a dust cover. It is well read; this much can be surmised from its exterior. This copy seems slightly taller and narrower that the average book, but then I have not inspected many books in much detail, outside of what is on the inside, of course. In isolation it seems ominous in its appearance, as though it might be a Holy book, or one containing material of a dark or mysterious nature, and I suppose in some respects it is.

In truth it is not *Lolita,* as such, that accompanies me, but Vladimir Nabokov. The exquisiteness of *Lolita*'s prose is, of course, merely a testament to its author. Nabokov appears in the W.G. Sebald novel, *The Emmigrants*; a silent character, seen fleetingly by a lake with a butterfly net. It is not an overt reference; he appears as though an apparition, a silhouette in the distance, glancing from the margins of Sebald's text. You would not know it was him if you did not *know* it was him. I read somewhere once that Nabokov's favourite word was 'mauve'.

*

Laura leaned on the kitchen side waiting for the kettle to boil. She had decided last month that whatever the next reading group book was she was going to get Liam to read it with her. *Lolita* possibly wasn't the right book for this, but infinitely better than *Pride and Prejudice*, which they'd read last month. She knew of Nabokov, of course, and had been led to understand that his writing was subtle and thoughtful, though she'd never read any herself. In a way though, the controversy surrounding the book might appeal to Liam. Either way, he owed her this, and she knew that he knew it.

She had fought the temptation to start reading the book straight away, knowing he would need a head start. His competitive nature meant that if she got too far ahead he'd give up.

She was confident that he'd read a few pages tonight. Despite his faults, he liked to make her happy.

She made a mug of green tea and took it up the bedroom with her. Her copy of *Lolita* sat on the bedside table. It was the Penguin Modern Classics version, picturing a young, blond haired girl lying on a lawn, her bare feet suspended, child-like, in the air behind her. She found the familiar silver spine and lettering of the cover comforting, like an old friend. A signifier of a 'good read'. She'd lied a little to Liam about his copy of the book. She had bought it for a pound in a charity shop, but she'd removed its dust cover herself to stop him getting any preconceived notions of what it was about.

*

Perec lists pebbles, stones, boxes, and vases in his account of the objects on his desk. I have none of these, but I do have a small silver hedgehog made of an unidentified, but weighty, metal. I like to think that this hedgehog holds sentimental value, but actually I have rewritten and fictionalised its life on my desk so many times, I do not know what is true any more. It was my grandparents'; I know that much. I have written before that my grandfather used to hide it around the living room in his bungalow and I would have to find it following his clues of 'hotter' and 'colder'. I am certain this is a game we used to play, but whether it was the hedgehog that I hunted, I am not sure. I cannot remember where fiction has superseded fact in my mind, any more. But I cherish it nonetheless.

The hedgehog sits next to a photograph of the same grandparents walking down the street in Skegness, just after the war. In the photograph my grandmother is reaching over and grabbing what I assume to be a sweet from a paper bag my grandfather is holding. During my youth, my grandfather had a seemingly bottomless paper bag of sweets next to the arm chair to which he was largely confined due to bone cancer. More often than not they were coconut mushrooms. Almost every day he would offer you the bag and say, 'They're all the same size, pick a big 'un,' and laugh with a twinkle in his eye. I imagine he is saying this to my grandmother in the photograph.

*

'What do you mean you kind of feel sorry for him?' I'm trying not to look at her too incredulously, but it's not working too well.

'I mean, y'know, you can kind of believe that she's leading him on a bit, don't you think?'

'Leading him on? She's a fucking child for Christ's sake. The guy's a pervert.'

'I'm just saying I can see both sides. Like, even though you know he's wrong, you're kind of subconsciously rooting for him. I think it's written like that. Does that make sense?'

'That makes no sense whatsoever. Even the way he talks is creepy. I can't believe you'd have any sympathy for this weirdo, Laura.

'I'm not saying I sympathise, as such, I can't really explain what I mean. Just, I think you're supposed to sort of connect with him in some way.'

‘Jesus. There’s no wonder the bloody book got banned if it makes usually sane people like you feel sorry for perverts like Humbert fucking Humbert.’

‘Can you stop swearing at me, please?’

*

Like Perec, I tidy my desk frequently. It is a procrastination effort, but I like to fancy that it is the same for him; that he and I might be akin in our deferment of writing. As deadlines loom, my desk becomes more and more sparse, as the postponement of putting words on the page intensifies. I organise my pens into varying cups and jars, reminding myself that I must one day buy a pen holder. Right now I have a beetroot jar on my desk holding my ‘best’ pens; rotring pens, calligraphy pens, and fine liners used for technical drawing. Then a mug holding ‘normal’ pens; biros and the suchlike. I have discovered a love of purple ink for annotating texts and have bought in bulk twelve retractable ball point purple ink pens with a rubber grip. Another jar, once containing Branston Pickle, holds mechanical pencils, and a final mug, featuring an image of a typewriter on the front alongside the words ‘You’re my type’, holds other useful items: rubbers, paintbrushes, a bone folder for book making, scissors, and glue sticks. Hooked onto the brim of the mug is a staple-less stapler that cuts and folds pages in a way that holds them together without actually using a staple. I am particularly enamoured with this item. I move each receptacle to wipe underneath when I clean the desk, and place them back in the order that they have just been described.

*

Laura is fiercely wielding the hoover around my feet while I try and catch her eye to ask what the hell is going on. It’s been a few days since we had an argument about that godforsaken book and she’s barely spoken to me since. I’m struggling to make any sense of this whatsoever, because the main thing I thought she wanted from forcing me to read the fucking thing was to have something to talk about. I mean, fair enough, I didn’t agree with her, but that’s kind of the point of these things, isn’t it? To generate a conversation or something, whether you agree or not?

‘Laura?’

She persists in thrusting the hoover to and fro, ignoring me with impressive determination. I have an urge to start singing *I Want to Break Free* by Queen, but experience has taught me that there are some times when humour is not an appropriate ice-breaker, and this seems like one of them.

‘Laura, you can’t seriously still be mad at me about this bloody book. You were the one that asked me to read it in the first place. I can’t help it if I’m not some sort of pervert sympathiser.’

The hoover turns off. The silence that follows causes me to realise how much noise the hoover actually makes.

‘And I am?’

*

When at my desk I work in silence. I have tried to listen to music while I work, but the words of the songs interrupt my own words, making me forget what I am writing, forget words. I sit sometimes struggling for a word, the right word, *the* word, making small hand gestures that emulate the sense or tone or action of the term I so desperately seek. The elation felt when that one word finally comes to the fore of my brain feels unique, I think, but I dislike the process, and envy those that are eloquent from the off.

I say that I work in silence; my office looks out onto the busiest street of a town centre and the noise of cars and buses, people, and the traffic lights below my window is relentless. The sounds from the outside do not deter me, like music does. I enjoy watching the people come and go in the street, the chance meetings of friends or acquaintances, the adjustment of shopping bags to more evenly distribute the weight, the subconscious pause in motion when lighting a cigarette. If Perec did not write at his desk, he wrote in cafés, surrounded by the chatter of the establishment's customers. I imagine him undeterred.

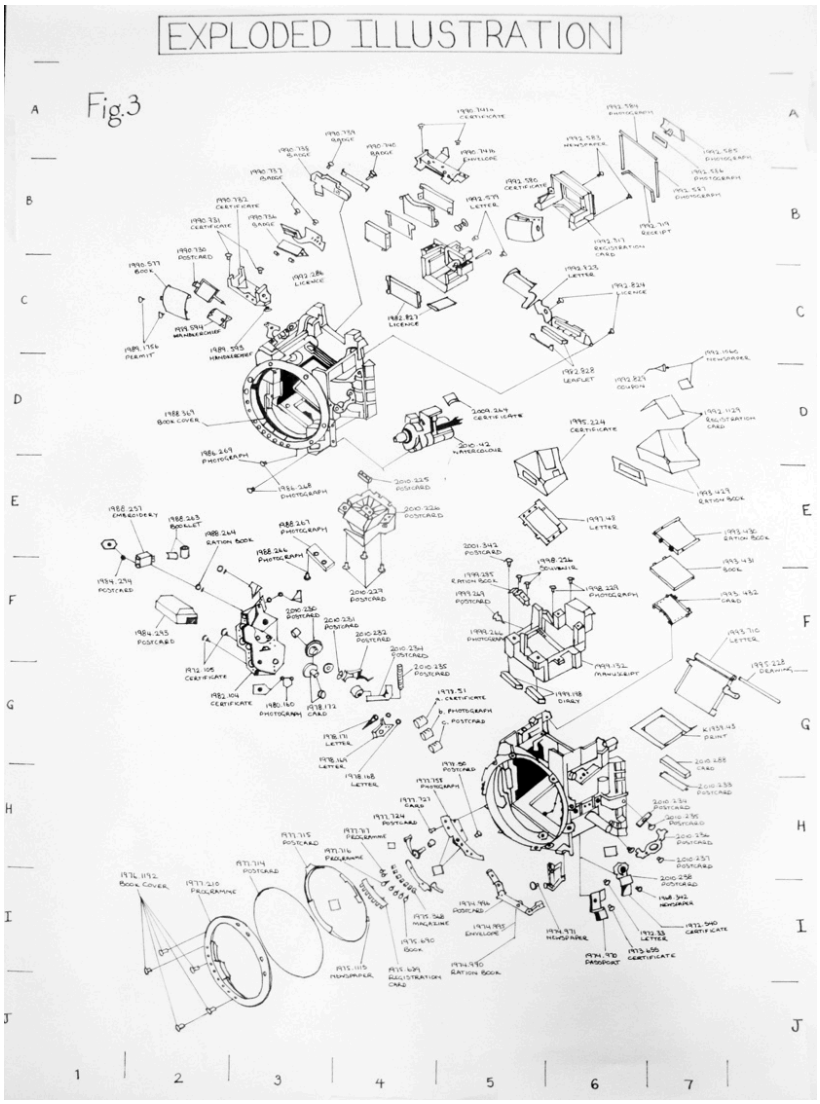
Yesterday, an elderly man collapsed in the street just opposite my window. I watched as some passers by rushed to his aid, while others stared at the floor and walked past, relieved that someone else was dealing with it. The ones that stopped to help nominated the phoner of the ambulance, spoke to the man and made reassuring gestures, and used their umbrellas to shield him from the rain, any concern for their own dryness forgotten. I thought I might go and offer them all a cup of tea, as the ambulance seemed to be taking an age to arrive, but a neighbour got there first. It troubles me that I cannot know what happened to that man.

*

'Look. We read a book. We disagreed about the book. I'm sure this is all very normal in the world of people who read books. Can we just go out for dinner and forget about it?'

'No. I don't think we can.'

Appendix Three:
Louise Finney, 'Planes of Memory', *Diagram*, 22:3, 2022.
https://thediagram.com/22_3/finney.html



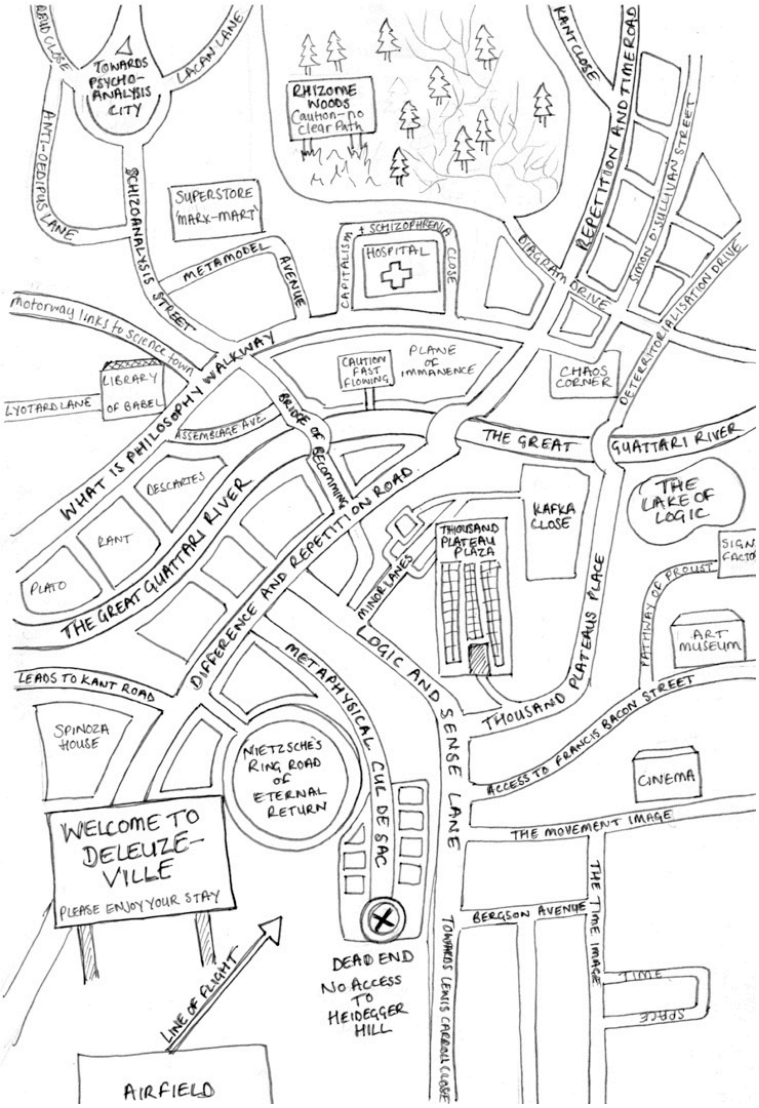
It is 2014 and I am volunteering for a museum, working in the stores and helping to re-catalogue the artefacts held there; the ones that aren't on display. It is the run up to the centenary of the outbreak of World War One, and I am tasked with organizing and recording all of the ephemeral items relating to the war. To create an archive, if you will. Papers, letters, postcards, rations books, diaries, recipes, official government notices, and more fall within my domain, and I am enraptured. A long standing fascination with 'the everyday' means this is right up my street, and I throw myself into the task with gusto.

I feel privileged to have access to so much information, so many individual accounts, so much life. But my brain can't work out how to put it all together to form a complete picture. The whole, it transpires, *is* bigger than the sum of its parts. To find a way to relay this feeling, I turn to the diagram. I draw a large exploded view diagram of a camera, and label each of its parts with the accession number and descriptor for every World War One ephemera item. The diagram is analogous of the archive, I explain to people all of the pieces seem to be

there, but I can't mentally assemble it to produce something tangible, something I can experience. Understanding each individual museum item does not mean I understand the war. Knowing that all of these pieces come together to make a camera does not mean I know how cameras work.

♣

It is late one Thursday night and I'm chatting to B. by email. I'm telling her about what I've been reading and I type, 'I'm not gonna lie, all roads lead to Deleuze'. B. replies and quotes my words back to me, she writes that this needs to be a title for something. I start to think about what the terrain might be like on these roads to Deleuze, and whether Guattari lives in the same imagined city, or just nearby. Perhaps they are two sides of a great river. Buda and Pest. Deleuze and Guattari. Perhaps Guattari *is* the river. And what will this Deleuze-Ville look like when I get there? I start to sketch.



It takes a while to get going. I remember terms such as *lines of flight* and *rhizome*, and place them on my map. The *Thousand Plateau Plaza* pops up, and *minor* lanes lead to Kafka Close. Psychoanalysis City is close by, but not in sight, only accessible by Schizoanalysis Street, beyond the Great Guattari River. I remember that Deleuze rejected Heidegger's notion of 'the end of metaphysics', and my Metaphysical Road becomes the Metaphysical Cul-de-Sac

Dead End, No Access to Heidegger Hill. I look at the clock and realise it is 3am and I am drawing small trees in the Rhizome Woods. I take myself to bed.

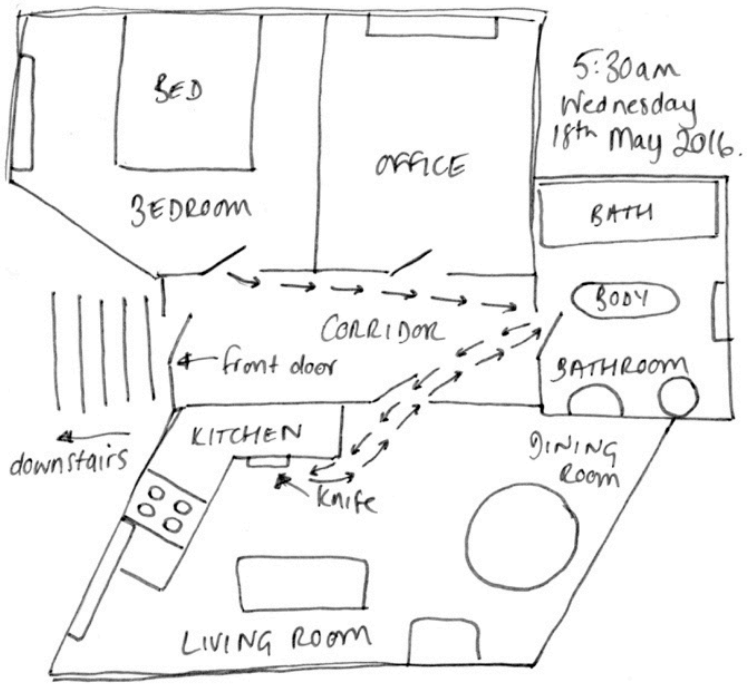
♣

It is 2016, and two hours ago I found my partner dead on our bathroom floor. The police have driven me to his mother's house, and the rest of the family are on their way. I have taken my cat in a carry-box, and a bag with a jumper, some paracetamol, and a two litre bottle of Pepsi Max in it. I am insatiably thirsty. I forget the cat's medication, my phone charger, and anything else that might actually be useful. I have emailed my Ph.D. supervisors, apologising for the fact that I will not be able to attend my supervision meeting that morning. I am in shock, but do not forget my manners.

The police want to ask me some questions about what happened. The family queries whether this needs to be done so soon, but apparently it does, before my mind starts to recreate the events that have happened, block things out, make it a bit easier for me. I don't know why they need to ask me so many things, but I am polite, I do not feel in a position to question their methods. The female police officer is looking at me with the sad, pitiful eyes I will be on the receiving end of for years to come.

They want me to run through what has happened. What time was it when I woke up? Where did I find the body? Where is the bathroom in relation to the bedroom? Was the bathroom door locked? How did I unlock it from the other side? Where did I get the knife from to do this? Where is the kitchen in relation to the bathroom in relation to the body in relation to the bedroom in relation to the front door I let the paramedics in through?

I am tired, thirsty so thirsty and cold. I do not have the energy to answer all of these questions. I ask them for a pen and paper and I sit in silence and draw a map.


BED
OFFICE
BEDROOM
5:30am
Wednesday
18th May 2016.
BATH
BODY
CORRIDOR
front door
BATHROOM
KITCHEN
downstairs
knife
DINING
ROOM
LIVING ROOM

Appendix Four:
Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form (Personal Information Redacted)

Participant Information Sheet

Participant: Barry Campbell
Researcher: Louise Finney

Title of Project
Negotiating Fragments: History, Archive, Fiction(ing)

What is this Research About?
This research is conducted as part of an art practice-based Ph.D. undertaken at Sheffield Hallam University. This means that the thesis and the art work produced by myself as part of this project are both considered to be a way of 'researching'.
The research explores the way that archival documents and artefacts, and, more broadly, the past (history), may be communicated from a creative and non-linear perspective. One of the aims of the research is to explore the multiple narratives that surround any moment of the past, and also to highlight the effects the present moment has on the way one views the past. Another aim is to consider the types of voice that are usually involved in communicating the past, and the art work produced presents a combination of authoritative and non-authoritative voice, considered equal, with the aim of destabilising hierarchical models of information dissemination.
I would like to include small transcripts of emails between me and yourself as a part of my final thesis. The reason for this is to aid the argument that local, more domestic conversations had during the course of a research project are just as important to the outcome as the reading of published history, philosophy, and theory. I think of this as a 'grass-roots' approach to conducting research.

Do you have to take part?
You are under no obligation to take part in this research, and have the right to withdraw at any time until the date of thesis submission (January 2024). It is up to you whether you decide to participate or not. A copy of this information sheet and consent form is for you to keep.
Any information about you or any words that are yours will be sent to you to give your approval on before the thesis is published. You do not need to do anything beyond the communication we have already undergone, I am asking only for your permission to publish some of our existing communications in my thesis.
You can decline this invitation at any time, or if you would like to be anonymised by name in the study that is also perfectly fine.

What happens when the thesis is published?
The thesis, once published, is my intellectual property, though you will be credited for your participation unless you would like to be anonymised. The thesis will become part of the Sheffield Hallam University online library. There are no current plans to publish the thesis through any other publishers, though if this changes you will be informed and again you will have the right to withdraw your inclusion.

If you have any questions about this study of your inclusion in it, or require clarification please get in contact.
Research information:
Louise Finney
Email: [redacted]

Research Team
Penny McCarthy

Email: P.McCarthy@shu.ac.uk

Legal basis for research for studies.
The University undertakes research as part of its function for the community under its legal status. Data protection allows us to use personal data for research with appropriate safeguards in place under the legal basis of **public tasks that are in the public interest.** A full statement of your rights can be found at: www.shu.ac.uk/about-this-website/privacy-policy/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-research. However, all University research is reviewed to ensure that participants are treated appropriately and their rights respected. This study was approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee in 2016. Further information at: www.shu.ac.uk/research/excellence/ethics-and-integrity

Sheffield Hallam University

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY: Negotiating Fragments: History, Archive, Fiction(ing)

Please answer the following questions by ticking the response that applies

	YES	NO
1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.	☑	☐
2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.	☑	☐
3. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences to my future treatment by the researcher.	☑	☐
4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.	☑	☐
5. I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.	☑	☐
6. I consent to the information collected for the purposes of this research study, once anonymised (so that I cannot be identified), to be used for any other research purposes.	☑	☐

Participant's Signature: [redacted] **Date:** 3/[redacted]/2024

Participant's Name (Printed): BARRY CAMPBELL

Contact details: [redacted]

Researcher's Name (Printed): LOUISE FINNEY

Researcher's Signature: [redacted]

Researcher's contact details:
(Name, address, contact number of investigator)

[redacted]

Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.

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