DIFFRACTING SOCIALLY JUST PEDAGOGIES THROUGH STAINED GLASS

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ABSTRACT

This article emerges from our relationship with Theo Combrinck, a colleague, a passionate social and academic activist, a recovering addict and a PhD student, who left our living space during 2014 – a death that was unexpected yet a consequence of an iterative desire to end a troubled/ing life. The intensity of Theo's physical absence retains a vibrant presence and continues to intra-act with us as we consider socially just pedagogies. Theo's work lives on through memories, audio recordings and different forms of texts written by him, all representing his views of socially just pedagogy. Our entanglements with Braidotti's posthuman and Barad's diffractive methodologies shape our understandings of the past and present intra-actions with Theo in time and space. The

generative process of our individual and collective becomings through Theo illustrate how the collaborative energy of co-constituted relationships contribute an affective response towards developing socially just pedagogies.

Keywords: socially just pedagogy, social justice, posthumanism, diffraction, stained glass

INTRODUCTION

Texts from Theo Combrinck inspired us, a group of higher education practitioners interested in socially just pedagogies, to write this article. Some of us were part of a group who met regularly to discuss readings regarding social justice in education and how this was affecting our pedagogical practice – Theo, Viv, Abdullah, Veronica and Daniela. Siddique joined the group later as a PhD student and as a member of another reading group of which we were also all part, which focused on posthumanism and socially just pedagogies. All of us are part of a larger research project funded by the National Research Fund (NRF)[1] collaboratively considering the contribution that posthumanism and the affective turn might provide for socially just pedagogies.

This article was generated through our in/determinate relationships with Theo, a fellow colleague, a social and academic activist, a recovering addict and a PhD student, who left our living space during 2014 – an untimely and unexpected death, yet a consequence of an iterative desire to end a troubled/ing life. Theo was passionate about social justice. His absence/presence continues to connect us all. We wrote this article collaboratively to consider how our inter-relationships with Theo and each other affected our notions of socially just pedagogies. In considering what socially just pedagogies mean from a posthuman perspective, this process has been beneficial in developing a better understanding of each other's' experiences, power relations, and material realities, helping us develop a more 'compassionate and enlarged view of the world' (Bozalek 2011, 481).

The intensities arising from our connections with Theo continue to affect and move us all. While different relationships were formed as we socially interacted with him, we were and continue to be part of the intra-actions generated through the inter-relationships and 'mutual intelligibility' of ourselves with/in space, time, and matter – what Barad (2007, 182) refers to as 'spacetimematterings'. To understand the impact of Theo's intensities on us and what this may mean for our practices as higher educators who are keenly interested in socially just pedagogies, we use a diffractive methodology. Through diffraction it is possible 'for entangled relationalities to make connections between entities that do not appear to be proximate in space and time' (Barad 2007, 74). Thus intra-actions with Theo continue in ways that matter across space and time although he is no longer physically present with us.

In attempting to follow a socially just yet posthuman way of writing together/apart, organizing the text and the text organizing us in unexpected ways, but also being written by the language and words, what has emerged is a mosaic array of placing, mingling and entangling the various pieces of text, in a similar vein to the writings of Allegranti and Wyatt (2014), Baldev, Choi, Mahmood, Oslinker, Sumrein, Waqar and White (2013), Holmes and Jones (2013), Reinertsen, Otterstad, and Ben-Horin (2014), Springgay and Zaliwska (2015), Sturm (2015) and Taylor (2014). Like these authors, a traditional layout format has become a mangle of the theory and discussion paragraphs and texts in various sections. Written as such, this article is a becoming for both text and bodies; it is an open assemblage continuously unfolding through each reading, each re/writing and through our regular early morning writing together/apart sessions using the online collaboration application Google docs.

We use a diffractive methodology (Barad 2007, 243) in which we are 'reading texts intra-actively through one another, enacting new patterns of engagement' through our individual and collective experiences. In thinking through and with differences that matter, to understand how we are entangled with Theo and in each others' becoming as academics who are committed to socially just pedagogies, we move beyond dichotomies and binaries such as living and dead. As Barad (2014, 168) notes; 'diffraction troubles the very notion of dicho-tomy – cutting into two – as a singular act of absolute differentiation, fracturing this from that, now from then'. Diffraction involves a cutting together apart – which means that things stay together at the same time as being separated – thus the concept of in/determinate means both determinate and indeterminate at the same time. Thus the effects of our prior, present and future connections with Theo impact on our past, present and future practices related to socially just pedagogies. We revisit encounters with Theo, folding time back upon itself and observe how discourse, practice and matter mutually unfold.

Thus the purpose of this article is to examine how our entangled relationships with Theo mattered and continue to matter in relation to our becomings as academics from various higher education institutions who are committed to practicing socially just pedagogies. Texts from Theo that arise through our memories of him, including his published work (Combrinck 2013), his recorded and transcribed interviews, personal discussions with him, emails, cell phone communications, and discussions within the regular reading group, provide the forces that generate this text. Thus the focus of this article is an engagement with the entanglements produced and provoked by Theo's passion for socially just practices, as an activist using his own vulnerabilities such as his addiction as a political tool in his writings and interviews, and what this may mean for higher education pedagogies.

OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP

> The house where I grew up was connected to other houses in a long row. Semi-detached houses with paper-thin walls. The energies leaked through from next door. Ours leaked to theirs. They fed on our pain, the screaming and emotional violence. Sharp as broken glass (Combrinck 2013, 111).[2]
>
> Boundaries don't hold; times, places, beings bleed through one another (Barad 2014, 179).

As a group of educators interested in socially just pedagogies from different higher education institutions, we came together in various built environments and virtually through the internet. We met at the universities, in each other's homes and inside restaurants, engaging with texts of common interest and recording ourselves with mobile devices and digital recorders, and on Google documents, writing together across space and place. As our pasts leaked between the present and the future, we connected and continue to intra-connect with each other. What entangles us are our desires to engage with/through social justice in our teaching. By recognising and working with/through each other's pain and vulnerability and treading across the broken glass, we are able to collaboratively benefit from the 'leakage' of energies in an affirmative manner. This openness and fragility can contribute to developing socially just pedagogies.

South Africa's deep levels of inequality manifested through poverty and discrimination impact on student engagement. The recent university disruptions across campuses in South Africa fuelled by the #feesmustfall student-led movement have foregrounded student hunger, lack of access to material resources illuminating their different positionality and entangled suffering. At the time that this article was written, particularly at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT),[3] the materiality of the #feesmustfall struggle intra-acts with Theo's writings – bricks and sticks smashing glass in myriads of windows across multiple buildings, shards of glass, intensities of screams, bullets, burning tyres and dustbins, the smell of burning, bins stacked with bricks, balaclavaed students and workers running, security personnel escaping, with fear leaking out of locked offices and examination halls. Ironically, these intensities disrupted the colloquium on socially just pedagogies due to take place at the UWC. The intensities of confusion and the mangled nature of communication was visible through social media such as Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook texts, in photographs and videos, and in emails, igniting underlying rage and sparking violent protests. The power and force of these protests continue to impact on concepts of socially just pedagogies in higher education.

THINKING DIFFRACTIVELY

We now briefly discuss Barad's concepts of intra-actions, agency, apparatus, agential cut, phenomenon and diffraction, which are all referred to in this article.

Intra-action, a neologism, assumes a relational ontology, in that entities are not seen as pre-existing the relationships that enact them, but rather as emerging through their relationship (Barad 2007). *Intra-action* is regarded as different from the normative concept of 'interaction' which assumes separate entities that precede their interaction. *Agency* is what happens in intra-action – agency is an iterative practice or enactment rather than something which is the property of someone or something. Thus agencies are relational, are mutually entangled and do not exist as separate elements. *Apparatuses*, according to Barad (2007, 148) are 'material conditions of possibility and impossibility of mattering; they enact what matters and what is excluded from mattering', and thus, for our article, the apparatus focuses on what matters for us in delineating what we are examining. Apparatuses also constitute phenomena through agential cuts, where *phenomena* are 'the ontological inseparability of agentially intra-acting components' (Barad 2007, 148). Apparatuses thus constitute phenomena which are material-conceptual configurations. In this article, the apparatus (what matters for us) is our intra-actions with Theo in the past/present/future, the theories that we are using, the questions we are asking, the materials such as texts and quotes that appeal to us through their interpolating force and intensity as well as memories from Theo and the tools that enable collaborative writing of this article. The *agential cut* is the limits that an apparatus enacts in creating boundaries within the phenomenon. The agential cut for this article is the boundaries of our chosen topic – socially just pedagogies from a posthumanist perspective, together with our intra-actions with the memories and artefacts arising from our relations and interconnections with Theo and his work.

With regard to *phenomena*, which she regards as relational, Barad proposes that space and time are created through phenomena, rather than pre-existing them. She queers space and time and does not see phenomena as occurring 'at some particular moment in time'; rather that 'phenomena are specific ongoing reconfigurings of spacetimemattering' (Juelskjaer and Schwennesen 2012, 12). Another way of thinking about this is that time and space 'are produced through iterative intra-actions that materialise specific phenomena, where phenomena are not 'things' but relations' (Juelskjaer 2013). Through diffraction, Barad shows how 'new temporalities' or 'spacetimematterings' (2014, 168) can be made. Rhizomatic connections (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) are made across space and time to show new diffraction patterns, enriching the analysis. It helps us to understand that '[t]here is no smooth temporal (or spatial)

topology connecting beginning and end' (Barad 2010, 244). We are intra-acting with Theo in this process, revisiting encounters with him, folding time back upon itself to observe how discourse, practice and matter mutually unfold. The rhizomatic connections between us are constituted beyond dichotomies of dead/alive and now/then.

Braidotti makes an important contribution in the understanding of time by introducing the concepts of *chronos* and *aion* (Braidotti 2006; 2013). Chronos is linear, recorded time – it is how traditional history is written, and is the timeline of the hegemonic political order. Aion, on the other hand, is the dynamic, discontinuous, cyclical time of becoming. It is molecular and related to the feminine, whereas chronos is related to being / the molar / the masculine (Braidotti 2006, 151). In the process of writing this article, we were focusing on aion, and not allowing chronos to dictate our understandings of temporality. It allowed us to intra-act with and through the materialities that connected and continue to connect us to Theo, thereby facilitating our becomings as socially just educators.

Diffraction and a diffractive methodology are central to Barad's (2007) work on agential realism. Diffraction, a concept first referred to by Donna Haraway (1992) means 'to break apart in different directions' (Barad 2007, 168), which happens where sound, water or light waves interfere with each other and create diffraction patterns. As noted above, Barad (2007; 2014) often refers to diffraction as *cutting together-apart* which is one move rather than two, by which she means that difference is relational rather than being an essence – difference exists within a phenomenon rather than exterior to it. It is important to note that diffractions map the effects of difference – differences that matter – rather than where differences appear (Haraway 1992; Schneider 2014). Diffraction is an ethical and care-full practice of reading texts in their fine details, recognising the value of past, present and future knowledge contributions. Diffraction eschews the dismissive pitting of one view or discipline against another, which Barad considers to be epistemologically damaging. Diffraction is thus a useful feminist methodological tool for us as in moving away from 'reflective, disinterested judgment to mattering, embedded involvement' (Kaiser and Thiele 2014).

A diffractive methodology is non-representationalist (MacLure 2013a) in that it does not reflect the world from the outside but assumes that we are all part of the world, entangled in it and implicated in everything – thus it is not possible to extricate oneself from the world. Barad and others like van der Tuin (2011) have used a diffractive methodology to attentively and care-fully read oeuvres, disciplines and texts through one another, looking for the fine details of differences that matter in order to create new insights into a phenomenon. Barad notes that '[d]iffractive readings bring inventive provocations; they are good to think with. They are

respectful, detailed, ethical engagements.' (Dolphijn and Van der Tuin 2012, 50). We would like to believe that this is the manner with which we engaged with Theo's texts, transcriptions and communications.

Theo's intra-active liveliness and his affect on us is unsettling and troubling in its dis/continuity, as he is both here and not here. Barad in her interview with Juelskjaer and Schwennesen (2012, 11), asks 'what material forces were contributing to the reiterative materialization of this "I"?' when asked about her autobiography. We could ask a similar question about the entanglement of ourselves and more particularly, ourselves with Theo in relation to socially just pedagogies. The texts for the socially just pedagogies group that we have read together with Theo, his writings, his interviews, his emails, our evocative discussions about him, the current political forces in South African higher education, are all the material forces which constitute and reconstitute our entanglements, which make up the phenomenon we are writing about or which is writing us in this article.

As Barad notes in her interview with Juelskjaer and Schwennesen (2012, 11) 'an autobiography is not a telling of a past that is present, but the ongoing openness of the narrative to future retellings'. In writing this article then, we are engaging with all these material forces of the past and the present, as well as remaining open to future tellings and retellings.

STAINED GLASS

The cathedral was filled with the sweet smell of incense. There were white people, Portuguese. ... The high-sculpted ceilings opened a space filled with stained-glass-filtered light. I sat transfixed under the stained glass windows in St Mary's. A boy of five in a trance. In a world of pure light. You can leave the church but you can't leave the images of the stained glass windows. Like the colour in the glass, these images are indelible in the mind. (Combrinck 2013, 115).

When I was young I needed a hobby. ... I looked at the craft section in the library. I took out a book on stained glass. How to paint onto glass. (Combrinck 2013, 115).

The materiality of glass played an important force in Theo's life. The seemingly mundane beginnings of his relationship with glass belied its later affective and material intensities. Church-going experiences during Theo's formative years in apartheid South Africa filled him with awe. In St Mary's church situated in the centre of Cape Town, differences mattered and influenced a sense of otherness for Theo and his family through their skin colour and meager financial resources.

In time, years later, Theo started up a stained glass business:

The kitchen in my flat at C6 Elfin Court was my first glass studio. I start a revolutionary business.

> The working glass partnership and a collective. Nazeem, Kenny and me. Kenny, my teaching colleague's garage is transformed into a textbook glass studio. (Combrinck 2013, 117).

Like glass segments create patterns through their placings and colour combinations, our learning in becoming socially just educators constitute individual and collective efforts that have pulled us apart and together. The cutting of glass resembles a disruption, with a potential for change. Springgay and Zaliwska (2015, 137) contend that '[c]utting does not merely separate data into parts that comprise a whole, rather cutting is a practice of interference'.

The dynamic patterns emerging through our intra-actions reflect our own vulnerabilities through Theo and the fragility of glass. We were pulled together through the social justice group and our enthusiasm to change teaching practices. Simultaneously we were pulled apart by our different contexts that seemed far away from each other. Yet with persistence, group members' facilitation and leadership we have found intersecting intra-actions, which have left marks on our bodies – stained us. Furthermore, the material forces affecting us continue the entanglement felt individually and as an assemblage of educators enmeshed in socially just pedagogies. The stains from Theo affect us all in different ways since the marks left on bodies come from the dynamic processes of intra-activity and materialisation that constitute the world (Barad 2007).

The past/present/future all intra-act in and through our socially just pedagogies. Viv suggests, '[t]he exclusions for me are what is not socially just pedagogies – that is the agential cut. What we have chosen to focus on is our entanglements with each other and Theo and socially just pedagogies.' The text generating this article and Theo's texts are entangled and are iteratively changing our conceptions of socially just pedagogies and our practices. This text is a dynamic reconfiguration that moves and changes through different colours (in the suggested changes and comments) on Google Docs while some of us write and others sleep (Benveniste, Bordeleau, Hornblow, Manning, Massumi, Morales, Kolozsvari, Plumb, Rose-Antoinette and Szymanski 2015).

ADDICTION AS A POLITICAL PROJECT AND THE MARK OF DEATH

> A 'ghostly ghastly scene ... a time to die / out of time / short on time / experimental time ... threaded through one another, knotted, spliced, fractured'. (Barad 2010, 243).

Before and after Theo's death, he was entangled across many places, spaces and people – constituted and reconstituted there. His effervescence constituted and reconstituted with those he intra-actioned with. There are many assemblages through which he was instantiated. His childhood, youth, his involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle, his addictions, his workshop

where stained glass creations emerged, his life as an educator in Lavender Hill,[4] as a mentor in the fellowship,[5] his family life, as a lecturer, and finally through his death.

Theo spoke openly about his addictions, even to his undergraduate students. His students had an assignment related to addiction-recovery centers. His PhD thesis was an autoethnography referring to the intensity of the forces from drugs and alcohol that pulled and pushed him through his addiction in his personal life, and in the workplace as a teacher and lecturer.

> There wasn't a party that had no alcohol. Alcohol was always at these parties, a necessary evil, an old family friend. Alcohol meant many things. Good times and trouble. Shattered glass. Stains. Cigar smoke and liquorice sweets, brightly coloured, coated with tiny little balls. (Combrinck 2013, 114).

Theo's life is emblematic of an entanglement of the personal and political, played out through the narratives of his addiction. In his work he used his own body and the materialities affecting his body such as his addiction as a pedagogical device to unpack the political aspects of this addiction. He explored the historico-political origins of addiction in the coloured community in the Western Cape which is deeply rooted in long-term oppressive mechanisms such as the 'dop' or tot system, where employers paid their workers with cheap wine or 'dop' and which led to dependence on alcohol in the Western Cape on a large scale (London 1999). Theo brought his experiences onto the university campus by informally providing support for students and staff who were dealing with addictions like himself. This was an extension of the fellowship model of mentoring or sponsoring fellow recovering addicts that he was part of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). He was sponsored by someone within the group, and mentored others – a two-way process, a chain of connections. Theo used his experiences as a pedagogic device. Theo left marks on our bodies, in everyday life and in the way we practice our pedagogies in his example of affirmative transformation, aptly expressed by Elizabeth Grosz:

> given that oppressions, harms, injustice have occurred and cannot be undone, the political task is not simply to mourn or lament them, but to use them, their memory, precisely as a spur to transformation, to difference. It is this violence, this memory of injustice and pain, that is the ballast that may serve to produce a different future. (Grosz 2008, 49).

The following were some responses to the marks of Theo's affirmative transformation by members of our group:

> Viv: 'Theo's overt political leadership role in the education struggle spilled over into his teaching in higher education. I admire the attentiveness he showed to students regarding their learning and life circumstances and the critical vibrancy he brought into the classroom through challenging students with critical issues in the economy.'

Abdullah: 'I learnt from Theo to make myself vulnerable to students (and fellow lecturers) as a basis for engendering social justice. Theo showed a lack of fear in "exposing" himself in order to connect to the other but in order to allow the other to connect to him.'

Siddique: 'Theo's honesty and openness about his addiction was surprising. Like Theo, I experienced close friends and family who were addicts.'

Veronica: 'After interacting with Theo, I was inspired to step out of my comfort zone. This meant taking steps to connect with others and speak openly about my own thoughts and experiences.'

Daniela: 'Theo taught me to be brave and to not care too much about norms and normativities. He demonstrated how a richer teaching experience can be obtained and appreciated if we step out of our comfort zones.'

Truthfulness appears to create a powerful force in sharing our differences that are generally kept private. Theo's battle with addiction affirmatively influenced his teaching through his openness, pride and honesty in sharing his shifting subjectivity. Openness to alterity in self and other through activism expressed as acts of love between differences, is an ethic of a posthuman pedagogy (MacCormack 2012). Also important to a posthuman pedagogy is openness to an emergent situation not knowing what may happen – the affects and intensities that circulate can create the potential for something new. This can be related to one of Braidotti's rules of a critical posthuman methodology: 'the powers of memory and the imagination and the strategy of de-familiarization' (Braidotti 2013, 163). This de-familiarization is an important part of Braidotti's nomadic ethics, and can be seen as a process of disidentification. This process requires subjects to dissociate themselves from discourses or practices with which that they have come to identify. Disidentification does not mean a wholesale rejection of parts of one's subjectivity, but is more subtle, requiring a situating of oneself both within and against certain discourses. Judith Butler points out that disidentification is an important part of democratic practice, but is not easy: 'this experience of misrecognition, this uneasy sense of standing under a sign to which one does not belong' (Butler 1993, 219). Disidentification can be used as a strategy for resistance, to challenge entrenched binaries such as black/white, citizen/foreigner and atheist/believer.

OPENING SOCIALLY JUST PEDAGOGIES TO NEW WAYS OF ENGAGING ...

In 1988 I started my first teaching job at Lavender Hill High School in this working class suburb. I struggled as an English second language teacher even as I relished interaction with activist teachers. This was the cauldron of politics and action. I drank from it as copiously as I drank. Joining the emergent teachers' union WECTU.[6] One of the founder members of SADTU.[7] I rose up the ranks and took on leadership roles. In 1993, I coordinated the first-ever national teachers' strike in the Western Cape. Heady stuff. (Combrinck 2013, 116).

Theo's immersion in politics, combining teaching and political activism, moves us affectively

and alerts us to the imbrication of politics and teacher/lecturer subjectivity. We write from this entanglement and about other aspects of Theo that shape our current but ever shifting assemblage. We dwell on the practice of socially just pedagogies and what this means within the framework of posthumanism. Rather than positioning ourselves from our various standpoints we locate ourselves in the in-between spaces or interstices, where we share our sensitivities to the forces and intensities that emanate from different material-discursive practices. We explore our 'becomings in action' (Sauvagnargues 2013, 43), the haecceity or 'thisness' which Deleuze and Guattari explain as the 'mode of individuation' that 'consist[s] entirely of relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected' (1987, 261).

Socially just posthuman pedagogies might be seen as a form of radical pedagogies, as Massumi and Manning have referred to it in the special issue of their journal *Inflexions no 8*. Drawing on Benveniste et al.'s (2015) explanation of a radical pedagogy, socially just pedagogy can be considered as

> a politics of us, indeterminate, a politics as unwieldy as it is precarious. Unwieldy because it confounds individual agency. Precarious because its operations cannot be accredited. What a radical pedagogy needs is not decided upon at arm's length from the event. It is pulled out from the experience of what's under way in the material consistencies and affective tonalities, inflected with multiplicity.

In an interview with Viv, Theo said 'I think that the pedagogical approaches and how we teach social justice is an ongoing thing. There isn't a package answer to this. There isn't an on-the-shelf thing that we can go take off. It's a terrain of struggle' (Combrink Interview 2014). This contestation is acknowledged through Ednie-Brown's (2015) suggestion that radical pedagogies are 'forms of learning that are engaged with an on-going and passionate protest against inert ideas. It is education of and for vitality'. We recognize that a posthuman socially just pedagogy is unpredictable and cannot be decided upon in advance. The process is more important than the product or the outcome, as Theo reflects

> I, for example, taught during a period when the farm worker strike in the Western Cape was happening. Now that is an issue about business and that's business owners against workers. It's not portrayed like that in the dominant discourse, forget about it. During that same period there was the Marikana massacre: the first sign that this government is going to stop at nothing that's got anything to do with social justice. It's my duty to bring that into the classroom. (Combrink Interview 2014).

As South Africans living amongst the continuing affects and effects of a colonial and apartheid past, we find resonance with Rose-Antoinette's (2015) notion of radical pedagogy as not being circumscribed within a postcolonial theoretical framework. As she says '[s]tates of colonialism

are real and ongoing. There is no 'post' that resists the truth of occupied lands, bodies and memories.'

Theo saw his job of lecturing as a way to creatively engage with social justice, drawing extensively on the writings of Paulo Freire. Resisting oppression was close to Theo's heart as he felt the oppression of others as the same oppression he experienced – this is an affirmative political approach to pedagogy where difference is regarded as productive. Referring to Freire's book, the Pedagogy of Solidarity, Theo wrote to Abdullah:

> I will buy this publication and maybe you too and it can serve as an exemplar/social theory around which we can co-construct a piece that is related to SBF [School of Business and Finance] and the faculty (Combrinck email correspondence 15.03.2014).

This book was recognized as a tool that could wield power for Theo's students. Freire was one of the founders of critical pedagogy upon which posthuman socially just pedagogies are built, and had a strong influence on Theo's pedagogical practice. In another email (Combrinck 27.05.2013) sent to the Teaching and Learning specialist in his faculty, Theo highlighted the power held in assessment practices saying, 'assessment gets to the heart of power and knowledge. Whoever controls this controls the future of the country.'

Enacting a posthuman pedagogy means opening up one's subjectivity to be de/re/-entangled with the material and the bodies that mingle and are a part of us. It means understanding that what is traditionally considered a pedagogic event is more of a pedagogic entanglement that provides for modes of becoming that can foster or facilitate greater entanglement that is 'attuned to basic principles of social justice' (Braidotti 2013, 11). Rather than using a judgemental approach to dealing with students, a posthuman socially just pedagogy asks rather what is like to be something/someone and how something works (Davies 2014). Theo shows us this in the following quote:

> Greetings, this student's situation needs to be reviewed very, very carefully. We under no circumstances want this stress the student refers to, to lead to a breakdown in his/her life. Please let's hold back a judgement till we can speak. many times the answers to personal situations do not lie in the policies and rule books. (Combrinck email 10.10.2014).[8]

Braidotti suggests that the aim of posthuman pedagogy is to create a community of learning

> that is attuned to basic principles of social justice, the respect for human decency and diversity, the rejection of false universalisms; the affirmation of the positivity of difference; the principles of academic freedom, anti-racism, openness to others and conviviality. (Braidotti 2013, 11).

Theo exhibited his intimate entanglement within the education assemblage, and his critique of the hegemony contained therein was attuned to the affects and intensities of individual students.

He worked towards transforming the negative, oppressive and controlling power (potestas) of the institution into positive, productive power (potentia) by pursuing his own ethical imperatives (Braidotti 2013).

The sentiment expressed in Theo's interview above is reiterated in Barad's (2007) notion of living justly in the world:

> Justice, which entails acknowledgment, recognition, and loving attention, is not a state that can be achieved once and for all. There are no solutions; there is only the ongoing practice of being open and alive to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly. The world and its possibilities for becoming are remade in each meeting. (Barad 2007, x).

As we look at social justice through our posthumanist lens we realise that justice extends to all, not just to the human category but to the non-human and the more-than-human since we are all entangled. It does not mean that a posthuman social justice approach ignores maldistribution, misrecognition and misrepresentation (Fraser 2013) but rather reframes it by moving beyond the individualistic anthropocentric gaze. Braidotti points out that posthumanist values are based on bio-centred egalitarianism, which 'critiques individualism and attempts to think the interconnection of human and non-human agents. ... My position aims at rethinking the ethical and political implications of a non-unitary subject. This involves negotiating the tension between complexities on the one hand and a sustained commitment to social justice and emancipatory politics on the other. This balancing act takes us to another dimension of this epistemological but also ethical shift away from anthropocentrism' (Braidotti 2006, 111)

THIS ARTICLE AS A TRANSFORMATIVE AGENT

The generative and productive process of this article, with diffractive contributions, from texts, recorded interviews, co-writing, talking together, has moved us and dislodged our habits of thinking and working. Quotes from Theo made themselves intelligible for selection as we considered and reconsidered what constitutes a posthuman socially just pedagogy.

The compilation of this article has been an event or performance. In a similar vein our relationships with students through a posthuman socially just pedagogy can be considered as encounters, filled with moments of possibility and respect through the unfolding materiality. As academics, and socially just actors, it is important to be attentive to the unfolding of the pedagogic event, and facilitate openness, through an opening of ourselves to the encounters. In the becoming-lecturer the entanglement means moving beyond established fixed and structured boundaries and other constraints, in a process of de-familiarization. A posthumanist pedagogy is transdisciplinary by nature, opening up broader, rhizomatic practices. In order for an adequate

analysis to take place, multiple viewpoints from previously separated disciplines are necessary (Barad 2007; Braidotti 2013). This approach to teaching, learning and research is aimed at boundary transgression, celebrating difference and fostering transversal connections.

CHALLENGES

What lies beneath your words move me emotionally. (Combrinck email 11.4.2013).

This article was written over several months, a time when university life moved from a peaceful organized and structured space to disruption and chaos, where material matters evoked and illuminated pain. Our pain began with a 'ghostly/ghastly matter', a loss that evoked a discontinuity, a brokenness that has now been purposefully reconstituted through our coming together/apart.

Recalling our own memories and those with Theo were at times emotionally disturbing. We acknowledge the marks left on us; the stains from Theo that remain with us individually and collectively as a group of educators seeking to improve our socially just pedagogies and moving into seeing from a posthuman perspective.

As we re-examined our connections through a posthumanist lens, there were shifting perspectives. The agential cuts that were enacted in writing this article and the article writing us revealed how each cut excluded other options. For instance, the quotes that glowed and glimmered for us as 'hotspots' (MacLure 2013a, b), from the voluminous material collected from Theo in his writings and recordings, could have come across as less significant to other persons or ourselves at other times and spaces. Different angles to Theo's stained glass life would reveal alternative perspectives.

In writing this article we aimed to move away from the traditional writing conventions, a challenging intra-action. The intersecting forces from Theo, from university disruptions and personal circumstances contributed to the ever-changing entanglements that shifted our text in unexpected ways. Our assemblage in the co-production of this article was uneven and staggered in time and in space. While coming together was facilitated by the affordances of cloud computing, weekly readings in a shared space and workshop times together, other forces pulled us apart such as the intensity of pain and disruption associated with the university chaos and the imminent arrival of a new life, a baby boy for Siddique and his wife.

'The appetite for this way {of writing and remembering} does not leave thin skins unmarked. It's hard to see your words, your ideas, your traces disappear, or reappear in a different form. Except when you realize that they were never quite yours to begin with'

(Benveniste et al. 2015 online).

CONCLUSION

> Love and Light. This is how I end my e-mails and smses. One of many therapists seen over the years gave me this gift. I am currently reading for a PhD on Addiction in the Workplace. Like the Babushka doll, this story is part of that bigger story. At a life story workshop leading to this publication I arrive to see a stained glass door at X's home. This was an epiphany, a spiritual awakening. The skills I learnt during this course are etched indelibly like work on fine glass. (Combrinck 2013, 110).

This article was inspired by artefacts and memories from Theo Combrinck, an educator who shone light and love onto and through us, a group of educators connected to him in different ways. Yet there was also a sense of brokenness, like the glass he had patterned through different shapes and colour combinations as he worked through his addictions. In generating this article, the assemblage of text-Theo-group moved through a period of several months to diffractively explore our intra-actions from the past that remain with us and will continue into the future towards developing socially just pedagogies in different fields of education. We have plugged theory into data (Jackson and Mazzei 2012) and allowed the data to transform us through in/determinate enactments (Barad 2007). As Bozalek (in press) points out 'what happens in a posthuman socially just pedagogy is often unexpected and acts as a catalyst for something new emerging'.

The shattered glass and other broken material at our educational institutions, reminds us of the unexpected intensities that acted as provocations for shifting engagements between each other similarly to the way we were provoked by Theo's death and his texts. In considering the mutual agencies of time, space and matter, agential cuts were made to interrogate the interference patterns through a diffractive methodology, in which we plugged our experiences and insights into each other through the text and recordings available of Theo.

The co-constitution of this text should be seen as a dynamic product with relational agency that can entangle readers to give them ideas for 'other' ways of becoming in developing socially just pedagogies.

NOTES

1. Grant No: 87731.
2. This quote is taken from a chapter that Theo wrote on his life. This chapter is an outcome of a guided writing workshop which resulted in a published edition of collective narratives by the workshop participants. It was part of Theo's PhD journey using an autoethnograhic approach (Ellis 2004).

3.   Both of these institutions, in contrast to the more historically advantaged institutions, were profoundly affected by the materiality of the #feesmustfall movement. This is also because the social injustices experienced by students at UWC and CPUT are more severe due to race/class injustice (Cooper 2015).

4.   A suburb in the Cape Flats, Cape Town, where people designated 'coloured' were forcibly removed to from central urban areas. Lavender Hill is known for its poverty, violence and gang-related activities.

5.   Theo was part of an Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) fellowship in Cape Town. The AA fellowship is where two or more alcoholics gather to share their experiences and motivate one another. An important dimension of this group is the one-to-one support provided in the form of the sponsor-sponsee relationship. The sponsor is there to offer guidance and support to a sponsee.

6.   Western Cape Teachers Union.

7.   South African Democratic Teachers Union.

8.   The context of this email is that a lecturer working with Theo contacted him concerning a student who approached her about a test query. Theo recommended that she appreciate the student's context when making a decision.

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