Nicole Y. S. Lee Marzieh Mosavarzadeh Joanne M. Ursino Rita L. Irwin *Editors*

Material and Digital A/r/tographic Explorations

Walking Matters



Studies in Arts-Based Educational Research

Volume 9

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Arts-Based Educational Research continues to garner increased interest and debate among artists, arts writers, researchers, scholars and educators internationally. Further, the methodologies and theoretical articulations associated with Arts-Based Educational Research are increasingly employed across the disciplines of social science, education, humanities, health, media, communication, the creative arts, design, and transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

This book series offers edited collections and monographs that survey and exemplify Arts-Based Educational Research. The series will take up questions relevant to the diverse range of Arts-Based Educational Research. These questions might include: What can Arts-Based methodologies (such as Arts-Based Research, Arts-Informed Research, a/r/tography, Poetic Inquiry, Performative Inquiry, Arts Practice-Based Research etc.) do as a form of critical qualitative inquiry? How do the Arts (such as literary, visual and performing arts) enable research? What is the purpose of Arts-Based Educational Research? What counts as Arts-Based? What counts as Educational? What counts as Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research be responsibly performed in communities and institutions, individually or collaboratively? Must Arts-Based Educational Research be public? What ways of knowing and being can be explored with Arts-Based Educational Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research build upon diverse philosophical, theoretical, historical, political, aesthetic and spiritual approaches to living? What is not Arts-Based Educational Research?

The hinge connecting the arts and research in this Arts-Based Educational Research book series is education. Education is understood in its broadest sense as learning/transformation/change that takes place in diverse formal and informal spaces, places and moments. As such, books in this series might take up questions such as: How do perspectives on education, curriculum and pedagogy (such as critical, participatory, liberatory, intercultural and historical) inform Arts-Based inquiries? How do teachers become artists, and how do artists become teachers? How can one be both? What does this look like, in and beyond school environments?

The book series also addresses critical questions at the intersections across the arts and education. The possible expressions of this intersection is broadly defined with particular interest in works that attend to and otherwise center constructions of Indigeneity, race, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, nationality, movement and migration, neurodiversity, and the like. The volumes in the series takes on topics, in multiple ways, including: pushing at false boundaries between disciplinary silos; theoretical foundations from questions including those regarding might be considered arts and education; and modes of expression and method/ologies that press at current constructions. In keeping with these commitments, the series continues to explicitly broaden the diversity of its editorial board in both identity and focus of research.

Arts-Based Educational Research will be deeply and broadly explored, represented, questioned and developed in this vital and digitally augmented international publication series. The aesthetic reach of this series will be expanded by a digital online repository where all media pertaining to publications will be held. Queries can be sent via email to Mindy Carter editor.aber.springer@gmail.com.

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vi Acknowledgements

May the walking ideas in this book inspire and move your own a/r/tographical practices,

Nicole Y. S. Lee Marzieh Mosavarzadeh Joanne M. Ursino Rita L. Irwin



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada



Series Editor's Foreword

We find ourselves in a curious moment.

By 'we' I mean all sentient beings on our spinning planet—the human, the non-human and the posthuman, alike. And, in truth, every 'moment' that has ever come before might also be described as 'curious,' for one reason or another. So, I do not make this proclamation to suggest that our current historical time and place is any more or less curious than those that have gone before us. Rather, it is what makes our moment curious that is decidedly distinct. And, it is these distinctions, in our historically curious moment, that create the palette in *Material and Digital A/r/tographic Explorations: Walking Matters*.

The book overflows with curious narratives exploring what it means to *inhabit* our curious moment. The authors: artists, educators, scholars (and wanderers) invite the reader to walk with them through the a/r/tographic landscape of this curious moment—a moment heavy with (post)-pandemic global perspectives, fears and hopes about the emerging balance between technology and nature, and the prospects for possible digital and material futures. The authors do not merely speculate on these curious phenomena. Instead, each scholar-artist creates a written and/or visual map of a landscape that invokes a vision for wandering. The authors take our hand (the readers) and bring us along on a walk *in and through* the spaces and places where curiosity leads to transformation. As Marín-Viadel (citing Wittgenstein, 1953) says in the book's Foreword, we share a 'family resemblance' with each author and their a/r/tographic processes.

What threads the chapters together is a shared devotion to imaginative and artful ways of divining our relationships, to the places and beings within our curious moment. The various narratives are situated with prefixes like 'post' (as in posthuman), 'trans' (as in transnational), and 're' (as in re-cognizing). These prefixes modify our critical relationships with the interior and exterior geographies that navigate the readers into new situations, and forge tracings of emergent possibilities.

The four interludes crafted by the editors of this volume serve as artful musings in-between each phase of the polyphonous journey. However, the book does not read as a linear trajectory from beginning to end. The book sections are layered across one

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another: a layer of relationships to space, place, and community; a layer of entanglements within which we decenter (rather than locate) understanding; a layer of walking toward, or away from, this decentering; and a layer of poetic re-imagining. The images by themselves, even if they were stripped of their respective narratives, linger with memories, and provoke invitation to enter the spaces and wander. A/r/tographic wandering, in digital and material spaces, becomes more than another methodology; the relational and dialogic elements embodied in these chapters create cracks and fissures in the fixed landscape of inquiry. The path moves simultaneously behind us and ahead of us, yet embodied knowing through walking demands we remain in the *now* ... in this moment (which is eternal).

The authors collectively demonstrate the entanglements of 'beingness' with conscious representations of with-ness and witnessing— the latter two contingent upon geography. These renderings of a/r/tographic walking remind us that movement is both a time and a place. The book serves as a powerful (and often joyous) reminder that each of us too, is on a walking journey. And, just as the editors explain how they, "grew curious about the approaches (the authors) are taking up in relation to a/r/tography and arts-based educational research," the reader will leave off from reading this book with a curiosity about what lies ahead in their own a/r/tographic journeys. We conclude with fewer resolutions and with more questions. What encounters with digital and material entanglements (or encumbrances) might we face? What does it mean to become lost? Or, found? How do we walk within, and through, our material and immaterial landscapes?

I do not have answers to these questions, but I contend that the divergent/convergent/re-emergent paths before us will be illuminated by the artful manifestations conjured in the visual narratives presented here. It is not the destination that matters, it is the journey... right? If I had to discern one message from the collective composition of this edited book, it would be this: Stay curious.

Morna McDermott McNulty College of Education Towson University Towson, USA

Foreword by Ricardo Marín-Viadel

A/r/tography and Walking are two methodologies of enquiry that have been entwined in the human and social sciences. Both have sought to situate themselves on the risky frontier between art making and scientific research. Both have the 'family resemblance' (Wittgenstein, 1953) of Arts-Based Research methodologies. This edited book illuminates the relations, connections, and juxtapositions of a/r/tography and walking, as well as the braiding of the digital and material.

Each generation and each individual have the connotative meanings of each word associated with their living experiences when they learned to use the word; just like the songs and melodies that a person experienced in their adolescence will inevitably become the songs of their lifetime. For this reason, I would like to begin with some verses by the poet Antonio Machado, whose central theme is walking. These verses are a key part of the personal and collective memory of my generation in Spain because they were sung on a very successful record in 1968. They are usually translated into English as follows: "Traveler, your footprints // Are the path and nothing more; // Traveler, there is no path, // The path is made by walking" (Machado, 1968/2003, Lines 20-24). In my view of seeing, the English term 'traveler' today does not adequately account for the original meaning of the Spanish term in 1917, which might be closer to 'walker' or 'walking person.' Walking, at the beginning of the twentieth century in Spain, was the usual way for people to move and to travel, in cities and in the countryside, both for work and for leisure purposes. For this reason, it was not strange to assimilate walking on foot with a person's life trajectory. The surprising thing about the poem is that it denies a common assumption when we speak of walking, that is, one walks along a path; but the poet affirms that there is no path but that it is the action of walking that constructs the path; it is the walker who builds the path.

There is nothing, neither methodologically nor epistemologically, neither in a/r/tography nor in walking, that would force these two methodologies to converge. They are two logically independent research approaches and there was no previously traced path forcing them to meet, except for a strictly biographical argument. It should be noted that Rita L. Irwin's first article to mention a/r/tography (2003) was focused

on a walking experience that inspired the development of new insights into particular concepts and her art practices. Since then, other works have brought these two methodologies together. Indeed, the virtue of this book is that the different authors have walked very steadily from one methodology to another until they encounter the other. Remembering the poet, this book has created the path (in)between a/r/tography and walking.

The contiguity between a/r/tography and walking are explored in a number of ways: (a) a simple and straightforward juxtaposition of the two terms, such as 'a/r/tographic walking' or 'walking a/r/tography'; (b) those that underline their artistic dimension, 'a/r/tographic walking art practice,' or their investigative character, 'a/r/tographic walking inquiry'; (c) and (d), two other proposals take the fusion of both methodologies to highlight some special quality, 'multi-dimensional a/r/tographical walking' or 'multi-sensory a/r/tographical walking'; (e) a proposal adds a third methodological approach, 'a/r/tographic action research walking methodology.' Each of these proposes a differentiated artistic-conceptual strategy that can serve as a proposition in coming to know a/r/tographically. The braiding of divergent approaches, in addition to the advantages of interdisciplinarity, has the following benefits: in fostering the complexity of the analysis, the reader gains a deeper understanding of the phenomenon we are studying; and in troubling issues and problems, the reader is invited to engage in matters that were previously marginal to each of the methodological approaches separately.

This book is provocative because the authors take risks in trying out new creative and engaging visual tools in their research. The use of images is critical to their interplay with text in meaning-making. Nine different types of images are mentioned in the captions. Digital photographs are the most frequent type of images. A few film photographs also appear because they are archival documents. The other seven are screenshot, video frames, maps, QR-code, GPS tracking collage, sketches, and visual journals.

Most photographs are sophisticated digital elaborations, such as 'manipulated (multi-layered) photography' or 'digital photographic manipulation'; or groups of photographs, from diptychs to combinations of more than seven, sometimes with a clear visual separation between each of them, sometimes mixed together, for which terms such as 'photo combination,' 'photo-collage,' or 'random collage of photographs' are used. In naming how multimodal and hyper-modal data is understood, represented, and displayed, the authors enrich the conceptual parameters of form.

The images in this book stand out, not so much for the discovery of new types of visual images, but for the articulated gathering of a wide variety of images. It is rare to find an art book or a book on education in which such a plurality of

visual documentations is so powerful and evocative, whether as data, arguments, or conclusions, and whether to present a problem or to argue an idea.

Ricardo Marín-Viadel University of Granada Granada, Spain

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Introduction: Material and Digital Conversations: Walking Matters in A/r/tography



1

Nicole Y. S. Lee, Marzieh Mosavarzadeh, Joanne M. Ursino, and Rita L. Irwin

Context

The volume is beholden to Rita Irwin's graduate course on Arts-Based Educational Research: A/r/tography at The University of British Columbia, with which Nicole Lee, Marzieh Mosavarzadeh, and Joanne Ursino have become intensely involved. It was a space where each developed their own a/r/tographic projects as students, then supported others while serving as research assistants, teaching assistants, and/ or co-instructors. Focusing on the theme of walking from 2018 to the present, this course formed one part of a significant cluster of artistic, research, and pedagogical activities, which included a federally-funded project titled 'Mapping A/r/tography: Transnational Storytelling Across Historical and Cultural Routes of Significance' (2018–2021)¹ and a study group in Vancouver, British Columbia committed to a/r/tographic explorations (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019; Springgay et al., 2008; Triggs & Irwin, 2019) and walking as a form of inquiry. While Lee et al. (2019) have articulated how "walking serves as an apt metaphor for a/r/tography" (p. 682) and traced its connections to the "six renderings of a/r/tography: contiguity, living inquiry, metaphor/metonymy, openings, reverberations, and excess" (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, p. xxviii), new renderings and concepts are continuously being developed as one's practice grows (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019, p. 3).

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¹ See https://artography.edcp.educ.ubc.ca/?page_id=1627 for archives of this project.

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The 'Mapping A/r/tography' project brought together scholars from seven international sites: Southern Cross University (Gold Coast, Australia); Hangzhou Normal University (Hangzhou, China); Tokyo Gakugei University (Tokyo, Japan); University of Granada (Granada, Spain), Concordia University (Montréal, Canada); University of Regina (Regina, Canada), and The University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada) where the editors are situated. There were also affiliated sites in Brazil, England, the United States, and Uruguay. This partnership sought to investigate how a/r/tography is being taken up around the world and how the methodology acquires socio-cultural particularities of specific geographic locations. The study group was formed initially as a research hub that led this project, though it grew beyond its function into a dynamic space of friendship, mentorship, and scholarship. This energy mobilized the creation of numerous book projects (Baldus et al., 2024; Irwin et al., 2024; Kasahara et al., 2021; Lasczik et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2024; Rallis et al., 2024; Roldan et al., 2024) and an exhibition catalogue (Lee, 2020).

From the 'A/r/tography' course, many emerging a/r/tographers engage in material and digital processes in tandem to investigate subjects and concepts of interest. In documenting explorations of their material surroundings, students undertake practices including but not limited to photography, videography, sound recordings, and digital manipulation. In the 'Mapping A/r/tography' project, while our international partners had the opportunity to meet in person over the course of the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) World Congress in Vancouver, Canada from July 9-13, 2019, the foundation for and subsequent unfolding of the work was only made possible because of the digital technologies like videoconferencing, cloud sharing, and website forums that enable a connection with each other despite the physical distance between our geographic locations. Moreover, when COVID-19 arrived in Canada, our study group began to meet online in March 2020, and juxtapositions and intersections between the material and digital became increasingly evident. At the personal level, individuals were finding community through online platforms and games, where the educative potentiality of walking in virtual worlds can be investigated (Lee & Morimoto, 2021).

From these events, encounters, and experiences, it became evident to us, the editors, that this community of artist practitioners, scholar researchers, and teacher educators walk personal material and digital a/r/tographic paths with distinctive energetic fervor. As such, we grew curious about the approaches they are taking up in relation to a/r/tography and arts-based educational research (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Butler-Kisber, 2018; Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2017; Knight & Lasczik Cutcher, 2017; Leavy, 2014, 2018; Rolling Haywood, 2013; Walsh et al., 2014). While curating and editing this body of work, we asked the following questions:

- How does a/r/tographic walking manifest in the material and digital?
- How are a/r/tographic walking practices entangled with spaces and places?
- What artworks, knowledges, and conversations are created through an engagement with material and digital a/r/tographic walking practices?
- How does the materiality of bodies-in-motion and the immateriality of characters-in-motion/ideas-in-motion shape understandings of selves-in-relation?

 How do issues and particularities come to matter through one's (in)corporeal movement?

The essays in this text, while situated in the field of art education, respond to these questions in ways that resonate with the authors' artistic practices, ways of being/becoming and knowing, geo-sociocultural specificities, and disciplinary/theoretical lineages.

They explore the materiality of practice—manifestations, manipulations, residues, and traces of both real and imagined experiences and events. Drawing from affects within individual walking practices and lingering with "complex and uncertain objects that fascinate because they literally hit us or exert a pull on us" (Stewart, 2007, p. 4), authors present artistic representations, renderings, artifacts, and documentations that allow for various forms of return and re-visitation of places/spaces and temporal moments. They investigate the digital and virtual, including video, images, media work, and emergent technologies that allow one to literally, metaphorically, affectively, and conceptually go somewhere that might be previously impossible to reach. Authors consider curricular and pedagogical implications of digital and virtual walking in relation to desire, agency, autonomy, freedom, and other issues. This book is about encountering the material and digital world in movement, while embodying artistic, research, and pedagogical frames of understanding. In compiling this text, authors from each section were offered the opportunity to gather online to present their work, discuss ideas, receive feedback, and strengthen the threads between and among contributions. We remain grateful for their generous sharing, which has informed the shaping of this book as well as these introductory words. We also acknowledge and are inspired by the early writing in this field, in particular Alex de Cosson (2003), and echo his invitation in an underscoring of text, that "on your reading, weaving a feathered journey, a pedagogy of walking softly" (p. xvi) unfolds.

A/r/tography and Walking

Since 'a/r/tography' and 'walking' are situated in relation to each contributor's inquiries, readers may find iterations of literature on these subjects in every chapter. John McCumber (2011), in arguing how continental philosophy is a "set of multigenerational traditions" (p. 2), asserts that "human creativity is really never more than a *reshaping* of one's conceptual heritage" (p. 3). Likewise, we see this volume as a reshaping of the authors' conceptual heritage regarding a/r/tography and walking. The repetition of citational chains marks emergent patterns in genealogies of study. Here, we participate in this ongoing discourse by sharing how we understand the layering of a/r/tography and walking.

The intersection of a/r/tography and walking is a fertile and fluid in-between space that can activate distinctive forms of interdisciplinary inquiry for scholars in the field of arts-based educational research. A/r/tography, as a methodology that combines