

Can the researcher learn? Relatedness and the ethics of writing

In this Introduction, I will explore the oeuvres of Alphonso Lingis, Kathleen Stewart and Mathieu Brossseau, in regards to the (self-) reflexivity of the researcher. None of these writers is a research methodologist and none of them has explicitly written about research methodology. Thus, my explorations are coming from afar - in fact, from what I believe to be three of the most challenging contemporary voices on the self-reflexivity of the (research) author. Kathleen Stewart is an anthropologist who has done exemplary work as an ethnographer. Thus, her work is actually the closest of the three to organizational studies, where ethnography (often in the form of case studies) is a central form of research practice. In the articles to be found in this number in *Society and Business Review (SBR)*, focused attention is paid to Lingis and Brossseau; for Stewart I have to refer the reader to [Linstead's \(2017\)](#) "Feeling the reel" where he engages with Stewart's concept of co-performance leading to the "jump or surge of affect."

Why the theme? Why do I believe that researcher reflexivity in our times demands more attention? In an industrialized society that is increasingly in panic and defined by political conflict, the ethics of relatedness are not just epistemologically an issue but also ethically one. Relatedness and responsibility – and especially, as motivated by the heritage of Levinas – remain a crucial impulse for an ethical society and within that society, ethical research. Research that denies relatedness only strengthens the political – economic – organizational crises of our times. Researching organization ought to understand relatedness, and it needs to explore and perform relatedness. Relatedness implies alternative forms of inquiry and writing, based on exposure and exploration, radical openness, affect and sensitivity, in evocative and reflexive writing. Has it not become epistemologically and ethically desirable to describe organization poetically? What can we learn without sincerely relating to the people, organizations and societies we endeavor to understand?

Upon epistemological and ethical grounds, relatedness is methodically stripped out of our research. As organizational researchers, we usually write ourselves out of our research; research processes are disconnected to their manifold contexts. And the absence of relatedness prevents engagement, care and deep learning. Separation and distance preclude the challenging of one's presuppositions and thought. More generally, organizational research has long been identified with a reductionist, analytic form of investigation. For instance, the "empirical analytical" tradition sees no role for the researcher's affect in research. But the repression of affect makes access to motivation, creativity and the sources of innovation nearly impossible. As [Harman \(2006\)](#) expresses it, "undermining" (i.e. the reduction of the organization into its elements and the mapping of the relations between those elements) and "overmining" (i.e. identifying the organization with transcendental truths, first principles and metaphysical principles) both fundamentally hinder researcher/researched interaction. Research hereby strengthens and worsens the lack of relatedness in our societies.

Research habitus are not easy to move. It is not that we need to change from malpractice to some sort of one best way. We do need to explore and learn collectively, and several interesting routes have already been tried in stimulating directions. However to reintegrate research back into society and to understand business activities as part of society, it is necessary to reflect on the of-relational epistemologies and research practices needed to do justice to human interaction in creating and maintaining sustainable organizations: How can



one include affect, relatedness and care in our work? How do you write texts that preserve relation, presence and responsibility? What ethics of organizational research and writing embody practical responsibility for a more just and cohesive society?

Research as learning

This text is about learning. Can the researcher learn in and from her or his research? By learning, we mean not just acquiring information or confirmation, statistics or modality. Can researchers discover what they do not even suspect, can they venture into places, situations or context that they cannot know otherwise than through experience, can they explore unexpected thoughts, or even better learn to reflect on the adventures they live, in a will to understand, to know, to learn? In research, are we ready to put at risk or to knock down what we thought we knew? If a research project cannot fail or cannot lead to unexpected places and insights, is it anything more than just the repetition of some accepted doxa? Yet do we dare to come into contact with the unknown? Are we ready to not try to find an answer to our research questions, but to hear questions posed or addressed by the other, the foreign, the alien? Are we ready and are we willing to encounter new continents of life and thought? How often do we start research with admitting that perhaps we still do not know (even after an exhaustive and exhausting literature review), and that we before all need to learn?

In our research habits, we must admit that nearly everything is done not to learn, or so very little as possible. Research is about knowing, not about learning. [Devereux \(1967\)](#) described our need for, and our practice of method as a defense against anxiety. Method helps us, even it commands us, to perform as little relatedness as possible. Often, methods require that we are in control of almost everything, leaving very little room for surprise, for the confusing, the sidetracking. Method far too often acts as a defense system to avoid exposure. You have to have almost everything fixed right from the start: literature review of established knowledge, method as a set of paths to be scrupulously followed, theoretical framework as imprisonment of the investigation within its assumptions. Such research is not about exposing oneself, about rambling on in unexpected ways. This research is not providing opportunities to reflect on our ways of relating to people, society and writing. It is not a question of letting oneself be affected, of being transformed by experience, of knowing by experimenting, by trying, by seeing what it is like to approach, to live or think from within the universe one is studying. It is about thinking first, and then checking that (or if) you were right.

On the contrary, research as learning can lead the researcher to un-expectable paths. For example, in his research on the streets of Bahia, Veissière thought he was taking the side of the most vulnerable. But then he realized that he was making his living and his fame out of the prostitutes' precariousness, in a way taking advantage of their condition, making him into a kind of "pimp" (2010). And he also had to question his work within a NGO helping street-kids to return to their homes. Re-situating his action in its bigger political and social context, made him realize that he might be exposing the kids to even greater hazards, for many had left the *favella* to save their lives (2009). The academic habit of distancing and separating the researcher from the field was impeding broader understanding, and this could lead to detrimental effects for those he was "caring" for. Deeper connections, more authentic relatedness, made him to revise his descriptions and theories, which set his path toward acknowledging the flows of power, desire and violence of the streets of Salvador da Bahia, like so many ghosts of the colonial empire (2011).

Wouldn't we be better off by distinguishing research from attending to doing research by distinguishing investigating, from experimenting and thinking? Need we distinguish being-

open from evaluating and judging? Learning often requires starting with an idea that we do not know as much as those we will encounter, not as much as we will know by openly approaching this situation or form of life. Ultimately, we may not end up with knowledge, but rather with some progress in our learning.

Affect and texts of performance

In order to learn we need to abandon the dissymmetry between the researcher and the researched, and to acknowledge that we are not of different kinds. We also are vulnerable, culturally bound, have opaque identities and are exposed to compelling contexts and traditions. We share the same will to live, with our vices and virtues. These cracks, exposures and desires of researchers grant them the possibility to connect, to care, to write (self-)critically and (self-)clinically. Auto-ethnography, for example, has accustomed us to see the black sides and multiplicities behind hegemonic narratives (Spry, 2011).

In order to learn, before rushing on to theory, there is the need to expose oneself, to let oneself be affected, to be imprinted and to experiment with the situation. Learning comes precisely from this exposure to the other, to the foreigner and to the foreign. These encounters, exposures and openings can be dangerous; they take us into difficult situations, but also into thoughts, effects and discoveries about ourselves and about the world, which were not what we expected or wanted (Letiche and Lightfoot, 2014). Heartbreak can help scholars to analytically and emotionally connect with the field, to relate with the people they study and to shape the purpose of their work and life (Whiteman, 2010). Such exposure, places ethics before and above reflection and knowledge production (i.e. epistemology) in the learning encounter. It places ethics as first philosophy (Levinas, 1969, a book translated by Lingis).

The recent research tradition of the turn-to-affect has shown how learning comes via affect (Clough, 2007; Gregg and Seigworth, 2010). Affects differ from emotions in their rooting in the unfamiliar, in the disquieting and in their ability to move, or to set into motion (Gherardi, 2017; Moriceau, 2016). Affects connect the present moment with wider contexts, memories and cultural elements (Massumi, 2015; Letiche and Lightfoot, 2014). Affects are through and through relational; main components and drivers of relatedness. Affects lead to inescapable moments of contact, highlighting with connection with, response to and responsibility for the experience of the other (Linstead, 2017). Affects also connect us with specific arrangements inside nature, cities, materiality, machines; they trigger becomings and mutual contagions (Deleuze and Gattari, 1987).

Texts relying on affects are relational; they connect the affects lived in the field with concepts in the literature and with the reader's experiences. Trying to avoid freezing the affects, the texts try to convey directly to the reader. In fact they aspire to be co-created with the reader. These texts try not to represent but to present and repeat the experience: they perform their content and want to be performative (Thrift, 2007; Denzin, 2003). The aim is not to provide a data set, but to make the reader move affectively, intellectually and practically (Linstead, 2017). What is looked for is a performance-sensitive way of knowing (Conquergood, 1998), and of learning (Moriceau and Paes, 2016).

Writing (and presenting in an academic conference) is akin to a performance. Texts and presentations try not only to convince with arguments but also to engage the whole person to an aesthetic and thoughtful experience. Sought effects are critical, clinical and creative (Moriceau, 2018). These texts intend to trigger relatedness and transformations: "Critically affective performative texts stimulate a poiesis of creativity, affect and critique that opens up and non-prescriptively provokes change and innovation at personal, organizational and social levels." (Linstead, 2017, p. 337). Such texts testify and influence. They participate in

the production of organization. They make the reader more aware of organizational power and discipline, their effects and subjectivities, but also encourage us to realize our capacities, alternatives and projections.

Such texts are often less analytical, in that they do not try to reduce their subject matter into smaller components or a limited set of causes. They rather aim to connect lived, embodied and emplaced experiences, to wider evolution, memories and mysteries. They connect the aesthetic to the ethical and the political; they connect the experiences of others to ours. They make various universes relate and communicate, rather than separating, differentiating or opposing. The move is rather toward the complex, the unfamiliar, the enmeshed, than to adding one specific brick onto the wall of established knowledge.

Let's follow in the footsteps of a few such learners and relatedness makers, and try to learn by their sides, each guiding us in their own way, with their own sensitivity and style.

Alphonso Lingis: writing affective encounters

Lingis' texts are nearly always learning narratives. Yet, the kind of learning he invites us to does not begin with books or the frequenting of a master. Learning starts from an encounter. An encounter with another, with the stranger and with strangeness. The encounter commands a response and will lead to adventure, thought and transformation. At the end of the text, Lingis is always different to who he was at the beginning, and it is this experience that the text presents.

Lingis studied continental philosophy and translated several books of Merleau-Ponty and of Levinas. From Merleau-Ponty he gained an eye for:

- corporeally describing the prose of the world;
- a sense of precise sensorial perceptions; and
- the conception of art as an incomparable contact to the lived experience.

From Levinas, he has taken the others' face as an event, an ethical imperative, a possible life changer and a source of affect.

Lingis' texts are testimonies. An experience is lived and told in the *first person singular*, and the experience is an encounter. His first person is not the autonomously self-directing "I" of liberalism, but rather the crossroad of multiple layers of stories, processes and chances (Lingis, 2007). The other is the occasion of constant care, concern, surprise and life's lessons. The other can be an animal, a thing, nature; ethics comes from the encounter; ethics comes before religion (Wheeler, 2017). We are often provided with a photo of this singular other, who somehow triggered the text. The experience told challenges our worldview or being-in-the-world. Lingis draws our attention to unexpected characteristics, mishaps, behaviors, beliefs and invites us to take part in his reflection. Lingis' philosophy does not start by judging or categorizing, it starts with an open "yes" to the world, to experience, to the other, and it invites us to understand what is philosophically at stake in the event.

Lingis is not the unfortunate person to whom many unwanted adventures happen. He seems to live his life as a call for the other. He calls to the other because the encounter will bring him to live more intensively, more reflectively, more erotically [. . .] The encounter has the savor of life: a never-ending apprenticeship to life. Such an openness to encounters is a *Bildung*.

Yet, Lingis' encounters are dangerous. They are adventures. If he placed special emphasis on affects long before what is now termed as the "turn to affect," it is because he is sincerely affected by what presents itself. He gets transformed, enlightened or wounded; emotionally, conceptually and sometimes corporeally. The other can be the Nicaraguan Nora

Astorga who will kill El Perro the torturer (Lingis, 2000); Augusto, the *contra* who will be killed (Lingis 1994a); the young child from the *favela* who robbed his wallet a knife at his throat on the Avenida Atlantica (2016); or the former Khmer Rouge during the trials. Dangerous emotions, lived in Brazil, Easter Islands, Java, the Andean mountain range (Lingis, 2000), reveal astonishing and disquieting sides of humanity. When your life is at threat, or at stake, thoughts occur that would not have emerged otherwise; the real reveals itself, defeating all your previous theorizations. Your thought has to rebuild itself to incorporate the unthinkable; your philosophy needs fixing. You cannot be the distant observer having become the first-person witness. Lingis' texts are not just texts about other texts, but rather are what Deleuze cherished as a dance between life and thought.

Lingis' encounters are always erotic. His five senses are always wide open. His eyes see the bees, the trees, the sweetness of a sunset, the paint on the African torso and face. The place and the atmosphere are part of the plot and drama. The Brazilian bodies that will press a knife on his throat have virile muscles and an attractive presence (Lingis, 2016). The third ear and arm of Stelarc, the suspensions performed at the edge of tearing his body apart, remind Lingis of "the pleasure of feeling the sun in the heat of summer and of walking in the rain. The pleasure of walking under the trees of the street and in the forests [...] The pleasure and the wonder, profound like no other, of giving birth and caring for our child" (Lingis, 2018).

His body encounters bodies before it encounters meaning. He makes us see a bodily eloquence that lies in the expressiveness of the silence of foreign bodies, in language without words (Lingis, 1994b). In their singularity and plurality, bodies express themselves like artists of art brut (Lingis, 2011). Few authors seem so strongly to embody what Merleau-Ponty (1945) used to call "erotic understanding." Lingis' philosophy is a carnal phenomenology (Harman, 2006). He is not doing research, he is in search. What he confides to us is not commanded by a research question posed beforehand; it is the event of the encounter, the learning he gained from it that impels the topic and the narrative. What he has learned, what he will share with us, is usually unexpected, and we must wait until the end of the text to find out where he wants to lead us. His ethics are ill-assured, fragile, ready to be challenged by the next encounter (Lefiche, 2018). He sees in art brut creative forces at work without a utilitarian function; forming gratuitous, ends in themselves found in the gigantic faces of the Easter Island statues that whisper the futility of our emergencies, or in his encounter with Augusto, the Nicaraguan, triggering a reflection on communication, or from a guide in the Andes from whom he both learned passion and an acceptance of not always achieving what one intends (Lingis, 2017).

We often need some time to understand the deeper meaning of his texts, or we need the musical moment that closes his oral performances. Lingis does not explain what he has learned. Learning has its full worth when it is shared, when it happens collectively. When you attend a presentation of Lingis, you assist in a performance. Lights are shut off, music is meant to turn you into a receiving mood and the author will affect you, bombarding you with colorful images and moving sounds. He tells you his story with his frail voice. The lessons he draws are of an incomparable wisdom, and might haunt you for a long while. Lingis tries to affect you because true learning requires being affected, being forced to think, being transported to unfamiliar settings and situations. Text and performance do not aim to describe the world as it is, they force you to encounter the other and the world in its multiplicity and violence providing a few more steps in your learning path. Ethics comes here before epistemology or ontology.

Lingis' texts address us. They describe moments of affect, but there are several levels to reading him. At one level, we have a moving story. At another level, our usual conceptions

of justice, progress, civilization, humanity and ethics are challenged. We end up with the feeling that our concepts were shamefully naïve, or incomplete. A feeling that we in fact know very little. That we still need to search and learn. What do we learn from Lingis? To get ready to let ourselves be affected, eroticized by the encounter and the world, ready to rethink what we think we knew from books and from limited life experiences. Research is full of life and adventures. Philosophy is a journey and progresses by journeying. Lingis is an explorer both of foreign tribes and of unfrequented paths of thought.

Lingis testifies that the researcher can learn. Or even better, it is because the researcher is able to learn that she/he is a researcher.

Kathleen Stewart: contaminated evocations

Kathleen Stewart is also driven by a quest. She also lets herself be guided by affect, and she learns by attending to affects. However, Stewart is not facing the other or the stranger so much as the strangeness of our world; a world that is not what it pretends to be. She does not tell stories of extraordinary encounters, but snapshots of our contemporaneous quotidian happenings. She does not travel far and wild, but crosses the roads of her home, America. Her narratives are not in the first person singular, but positioned in the third person; the “she” that writes is Kathleen Stewart, as if it could be whomever. She is less inspired by Levinas, than by Deleuze. But she also sets us on a path of learning and relating.

Kathleen Stewart champions affects, sensuous participation and experimental writing. She teaches at the Department of Anthropology of the University of Texas at Austin, yet her influence reaches far beyond this discipline. In her first book, *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an ‘Other’ America*, she followed the footsteps of James Agee and Walker Evans whose classic documentary for *Fortune* portrayed the daily lives of sharecroppers in the South of the USA during the Great Depression. Half a century later, she stayed in the same town, this time suffering from deindustrialization. Agee favored long descriptions of homes and furniture, his concern was to not speak for the other. He forces us to live with the sharecroppers; he mirrored “the cruel radiance of what it is” (Ranci re, 2011). Stewart, rather, depicted moments of affect: moving moments. She reveals forces that always are in motion: surges and becomings; avoiding entrapment in representation. Her writing creates a contact zone in which flux and intensities are felt and experienced.

She learns – and has us learn – by attending to things and events. She learns by getting attuned to flows and processes. And she learns by letting herself be contaminated. For her, globalization, capitalism and neoliberalism are not things to be observed and judged from a distance; they lie in us, in the deepest levels of our subjectivities. They pass through us; they are the stuff of our world. We define ourselves, drowned in their efficacy. They manifest themselves in forces, pressures, expectations and habits. They form a disquieting strangeness, and are potential threats; they affect our familiar world. Ordinary existence is made up of affects: affects of fear, of anger, of shame, but also affects of joy, of relatedness, of resistance. Affects put us on the move and render our world inhabitable.

Instead of trying to analyze or characterize globalization or capitalism, Stewart opens herself to affects in the community she studies; she captures them and invents poetical phrases to affect her readers. Affects and intensities flow from the world studied to the readers. We get affected in our turn, forced into their and her proximity. A flow of relatedness is created.

Affects and affect-based texts increase our sensitivity and awareness. Suddenly something arises as an event, something that does not fit, something disquieting or lovable, comes to us. Suddenly something arises that we have to learn to feel, that we find it hard to define, that manifests itself as affects that touch us and oppresses us, making the familiar

look strange. “Something throws itself together in a moment as an event and a sensation; a something both animated and inhabitable.” (Stewart, 2007, p. 1) Affects fill our ordinary life with “a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergences” (Stewart, 2007, p. 2). Affects are the stuff of our dreams, hopes and disgust, of our intimate and social lives; they make us alive, make us talk, make us hope or despair.

Affects are for Stewart at the same moment the matter of, and what matters in our life; what we need to learn to attend to and the main tool of the researcher. Affects are not just the content of what is studied; they are also a strategy for inquiry. Since they are literally moving things, they have to be mapped, requiring different coexisting forms of composition and habituation. In her second book, *Ordinary Affects*, moments of affects are written-up in small vignettes that resonate one with the other. Her art lies in the arrangement of the affective vignettes. This choral of affects does not produce a *telenovela* but an ethnography. The arrangement of affects is the ethnography. She records a collection of small differences, to be stored, to be noted, to be reflected upon, to be thought about. In this second book, affects are not mingled with concepts or with discussions with other ethnographers. The reader has first to be affected, in order to see all the small things that do not fit. As readers we are put to work; we are put on the move both affectively and theoretically. In the long run, this constant attention to ordinary affects can start a long process of transformation, of awakening. She has learned a wisdom that she wishes to share.

What do we learn from such texts? We learn to inhabit our world outside of the grand narratives that are imposed on us, to dream of an America outside of the American dream. We learn to like the neighborhood, the small stories that populate everyday life. We learn to live in this world, where on one hand we experience the desperate repetition of our condition, and on the other we witness the wealth of small moves, of potential lines of flight, of beauties and threats, of ordinary talks, hopes and treasons. We learn what it is to live in America today, and in many other parts of the world as well. We learn an ethics of openness to affects, of relating to our world, and to our contemporaneous.

Mathieu Brosseau: poetics of the pre-individual

Mathieu Brosseau’s quest impels him to his writer’s desk. Poet, thinker, experimenter, his language is first of all poetic – in search of the most accurate evocations. The one who writes here is not Lingis’ unique and singular “I” nor the impersonal “she” of Stewart who is the “she” of a shared historical condition. Brosseau writes from “ones” (in French, “uns”), which is the singular plural theorized by Jean-Luc Nancy (Brosseau, 2011). The danger is that attempted consideration of the “ones” becomes a delusion and a prison, leading to nowhere but despair:

Frames are nothing but territories that we draw around us to die inside of ourselves. But there is something else, and this something is an animal, endless, a way out of frames, an un-seen (Brosseau, 2016, p. 12).

Brosseau is in search of something more originary than a self that recoils; something that ordinary life makes us forget. It is something to be awakened to, to be found again. The “I” and the “she” have to be muted for such contact to be possible.

In one book, Brosseau (2013) called this something, “Çaction,” in which “ça” (that) and action are merged. “That” is what seems evident but cannot be named. And the “ça” is also (in French, the word for) the psychoanalytic ‘id.’ In the place of “there-being” or *Dasein*, you find *çaction*, something which acts and produces. Brosseau’s texts try to reproduce the truth of the movement of generativity or how *çaction* gives rise to drives and desires, to words and

worlds, making life enjoyable and terrible, but in any case, worth living. *Çaction* is the condition of authenticity, a tangential awareness of the void and of loss; and it is a vehicle to regain aliveness, to break with the boredom of self.

In another book, this same something is called the “central animal” (Brosseau, 2016). Whereas the quest for the “central animal” could seem solipsistic or masturbatory, Brosseau insists that it is what connects us to each other, forming the possibility of *rapprochement*; it is the door toward relatedness. The “central animal” is pre-individual and thus shared and shareable. It is the only existent good, which is worth striving for, to write about and to share. Brosseau’s quest is not driven by an encounter with the other, but by what links us, while he posits that the core link lies in the commonality of the “central animal.” True relatedness is not the *rapprochement* of selves, but it starts with acknowledging and contacting the “central animal” in each of us.

In one sense, *çaction* and the “central animal” are the real authors of the texts. But how to write if the self always threatens to smother the “central animal,” to remove its capacities to tell? When the effort to see and explain prevents one from being? Writing requires putting brackets around the self, with its fictions, its pretenses and illusions. Contact with the full range of immediate experience and its connections with *çaction*. Writing requires us to find refuge in the night of the “self” and to find connections with others and the possibilities to dream (Brosseau, 2009): “I come to you and love you because I do not exist, toc toc. Only my aborted voice exists” (Jean-Luc Nancy in Brosseau, 2011). Sentences surge, as desires and drives surge, rather than be created by the author. The writer’s work is to inhabit language, to such an extent that being and making are simultaneous. Sentences hit us, as readers they resonate within our bodies and puzzle our minds, forcing us to both feel and think. Our self is in turn dissolved via a flow of impressions and an estrangement of ideas and language. Resonances and plays with language produce a relatedness more obvious than an encounter between selves. We are related by “[t]he beast that precedes the fault that precedes the scream that precedes the language that precedes forgiveness.”

Poetry is less a technique or a form than a way of being. For Brosseau, writing requires the dismissal of the self, it calls upon us to lose any assurance of knowing, in order to contact the pre-individual that we are no longer able to listen to and to let a new language arise. Writing is thus learning. Brosseau speaks from the position of a refugee in our world (Brosseau, 2015), unable to speak the common language that erases the affective sources of desire and authenticity:

You no longer speak the exact same language as your Teddy bear. The other language of remembrance. You take *jouissance* in the new language, to recover the old one, the one which is not chatting (Brosseau, 2016, pp. 19-20).

His writing is not the narcissistic or exhibitionist exposition of the self, but the quest for a more authentic relatedness, aiming at more originary contact, and meaningful existence. His writing is research and a learning trajectory.

He reminds us that we must find poetics to do justice to the entirety of lived experience, to get attuned to affects, to produce relatedness without controlling and overflowing relations with the “self.” Language has to be created in order to do justice to estranged experience, true otherness and the multiplicity of affects. According to Nancy (1997), if we understand, somehow, in one way or another, we reach a poetic threshold of sense – and this access is rightly what defines poetry. If ethical qualitative research requires relatedness before any effort for distance-taking, if it requires learning before controlling and checking, then an ethics of writing, has also to be a poetic endeavor.

In this number of *SBR*

In this number of *SBR* you will firstly find an interview with Alphonso Lingis wherein he answers Hugo Letiche and my questions. Secondly, an article by Hugo Letiche exploring Mathieu Brosseau's "method" and import. And thereafter a contribution from Samuel Vessière whose ethnographic explorations have centered on bodily awareness and the ethics of the economy of desire. Margaret Page and Hugo Gaggiotti weigh in on the theme of co-inquiry. Lastly, there is an article from Robert Earhart about the (un-)finishing of the ethnographic task and text.

What the interview from Alphonso Lingis in this volume makes us realize is that our academic work tends to be all about causes and choices. Theories and discourses on causality and decision-making are pervasive, and we engage years of study, fortunes of research grants, enter into numerous debates and write pages and pages to study them, but there is no place, no idea, no one single thought dedicated to chance. Leadership, performance, success, business ethical behaviors have to be explained, or to result from a series of choices, conscious or not, but chance and luck have to be ruled out of our studies. But as Lingis asserts, this nullifies our experience of other and closes us off to very many events. The chances for just this author of this text to have been born, to be who he is and to write this text are infinitesimally small. And the same for each reader. This perspective on chance did not arise to Lingis by experiments or close reading of philosophy or spirituality books. It rather appears as a life experience. This is what Lingis has learned from encounters, discussions and reflections, most of them also occurring by chance. Lingis' message is a learning narrative, a learning made possible thanks to a relatedness to strangers, to circumstances and to nature around him. He has provided in his writings a series of such encounters and events that contributed to and gave rise to his thought on chance. His texts are a performance, they seek performativity. They seek to make us more aware of chance, not in order to make a point, but because such a consideration could lead us to an ethics of gratitude. Lingis shares his wonder, his joy, his gratitude. The last time I met him, I fetched him after a horrible travel of four days in nearly non-human conditions, due to a series of mishaps, bad luck and uncaring service by an airline. Yet he had no single word of complaint. He was rather excited to tell about recent experiences, and he was open to Paris architectural and cultural marvels, his tired body driven by the gratitude of just being there. What the researcher learns not only changes his thought, but also is a way of life.

Hugo Letiche, in the subsequent text, recounts convictions learned in his research and in supervising others' research. To him, the most creative and enthralling texts in organizational studies behold a strong element of researcher reflexivity. However, whereas reflexivity in the 1980's was before all an epistemological concern, in search of awareness of the grand narratives and power flows irradiating from them, nowadays reflexivity demands an affective sensitivity to others, contexts and circumstances. This seems to be embodied in Thrift's call for non-representational theories. But for Letiche, researcher reflexivity is far more demanding, dangerous and complex than that. He bears witness to Mathieu Brosseau's writing to introduce a discomforting and engaging affective reflexivity: one open to the dark side of ordinary affect, to the meaninglessness of existence and to questioning the unity and consistency of the author's self, motivation for doing research and writing, and the nature of relatedness to others and to social concerns. Letiche's reflexivity of reflexivities does not look for a sure ground on which to base our research. It demands honesty and engagement from the researcher, and a readiness to be affected by what is encountered; however destabilizing, unavowable or unexpected it may be. This requires an ethics of research that has little to do with distancing and box ticking; it is a research ethics of relatedness and learning.

In the next paper, Samuel Veissière reflects on his book on transnational feminism in the light of his experience of fathering of two young boys, and informed by ample testimony of the horrors of gender roles, skin color and postcolonial archetypes. Families are morally condemned, children flee and relationships end in existential ruins. Veissière reflects on what he could pass on to his children. Gender stereotypes have traditionally been passed on to new generations as a kind of normative ethics, but today discourses of masculinity have become problematic. What discourse of gender can be transmitted to one's kids in our times? In his will to open to more gender fluidity, Veissière argues that toxic masculinity and toxic femininity archetypes need to be presented to children as counter-models, alongside more positive models. Veissière proposes a positive stoic model to be addressed to boys and girls of any sexual orientation. As in the Ancient Greek tradition, these elements are summarized in short sentences aimed at directing one's life in moments of confusion.

How does one teach in business schools after the 2007 crisis? Margaret Page and Hugo Gaggiotti have experimented to enhance their relatedness with students. A course on recovery from crisis was designed as co-inquiry: students and teachers to share their questions, doubts and solutions, based on visual materials selected by the students. In distinction to the usual top-down models of teaching, this mode of relational inquiry paved the way for many surprises and learning on both sides. An example of surprise came from the selection of visual materials chosen. Instead of looking for images of the present, many old images showed up. Thinking first of problems of copyright and plagiarism, the authors came to realize that the use of replica to deal with an unmanageable real was purposive. Another example of surprise was the absence of a sentiment among the students of living in times of crisis. Does a will to not reproduce the errors that led to the crisis, lead to changes in teaching in business schools, not only of the content taught, but also the mode of relating to students? Co-inquiry, shared affects, exploration of questions and doubts, could perhaps enhance relatedness.

In the final text of this special issue, Robert Earhart reflects on the turbulent journey that constituted his doctoral thesis. He believes that authentic research requires the researcher to relate and be affected by the subject of inquiry. Ideally, one should experiment, live one's theme in the first person singular, in order to know what one is talking about. However, being so close and affected by the research can lead to significant personal and professional risks. In his research on CSR consulting, Earhart became involved financially and lost money on research contracts, had to revise some friendships, experienced tensions in his personal relationships and had to severely re-consider some of his most deeply rooted convictions. Authentic research is, according to him, a way of life. What one learns in a research is not only new elements of subject content, one also learns to live.

Jean-Luc Moriceau

DEFI, Institut Mines-télécom/TEM, Évry, France

References

- Brosseau, M. (2009), *La Nuit d'un Seul*, Éditions La Rivière échappée/Apogée, Rennes.
- Brosseau, M. (2011), *Uns*, Le castor Astral, Le Pré-Saint-Gervais.
- Brosseau, M. (2013), *Ici dans ça*, Le castor Astral, Le Pré-Saint-Gervais.
- Brosseau, M. (2015), *Data Transport*, Éditions de l'Ogre, Paris.
- Brosseau, M. (2016), *L'Animal Central*, Le castor Astral, Le Pré-Saint-Gervais.

- Clough, P.T. (2007), *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, 1st ed., Duke University Press Books, Durham.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987), *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Continuum, London.
- Denzin, N.K. (2003), *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Devereux, G. (1967), *From Anxiety to Method in Behavioral Sciences*, Mouton and Co, The Hague.
- Gherardi, S. (2017), "One turn and now another one: do the turn to practice and the turn to affect have something in common?", *Management Learning*, Vol. 48 No. 3, pp. 345-358. No
- Gregg, M. and Seigworth, G.J. (2010), *The Affect Theory Reader*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Harman, G. (2006), *Guerrilla Metaphysics: Phenomenology and the Carpentry of Things*, Open Court, Chicago, IL.
- Letiche, H. (2018), "Présenter lingis", in Moriceau, L. and Le Theule, M.A. (Eds), *L'art du Sens Dans Les Organisations*, Eska and PUL, Quebec.
- Letiche, H. and Lightfoot, G. (2014), *The Relevant PhD, Sense*, Rotterdam Publishers.
- Levinas, E. (1969), *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Lingis, A. (1994a), *Abuses*, University of CA Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Lingis, A. (1994b), *Foreign Bodies*, Psychology Press, London.
- Lingis, A. (2000), *Dangerous Emotions*, University of CA Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Lingis, A. (2007), *The First Person Singular*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, IL.
- Lingis, A. (2011), *Violence and Splendor*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, IL.
- Lingis, A. (2016), "Justice", in Letiche, H., Lightfoot, G. and Moriceau, J.L. (Eds), *Demo(s): Philosophy, Pedagogy, Politics*, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam.
- Lingis, A. (2017), "Aconcaga", in Wheeler, R.C. (Ed.), *Passion in Philosophy, Essays in Honor of Alphonso Lingis*, Lexington Books, London, pp. 3-16.
- Lingis, A. (2018), "Corps numériques", in Moriceau, J.L., Letiche, H. and Le Theule, M.A. (Eds), *L'art du Sens Dans Les Organisations*, ESKA et Presses de l'Université Laval, Laval.
- Linstead, S. (2017), "Feeling the reel of the real: framing the play of critically affective organizational research between art and the everyday", *Organization Studies*, Vol. 39 Nos 2/3, pp. 319-344.
- Massumi, B. (2015), *Politics of Affects*, Polity Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945), *Phénoménologie de la Perception*, Gallimard, Paris.
- Moriceau, J.L. (2016), "Une approche affective de la communication organisationnelle", *Revue Française Des Sciences de L'information et de la Communication [En Ligne]*, Vol. 9.
- Moriceau, J.L. (2018), "Écrire le qualitatif: écriture réflexive, écriture plurielle, écriture performance", *Revue Internationale de Psychosociologie et de Gestion Des Comportements Organisationnels*, Vol. 24 No. 57, pp. 45-67.
- Moriceau, J.L. and Paes, I. (2016), "An apprenticeship to pleasure: aesthetics dynamics in organizational learning", *Society and Business Review*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 80-92.
- Nancy, J.L. (1997), *Résistance de la Poésie*, William Blake and Co, Bordeaux.
- Rancière, J. (2011), *Aisthesis: Scènes du Régime Esthétique de L'art*, Galilée, Paris.
- Spry, T. (2011), *Body, Paper, Stage: Writing and Performing Autoethnography*, Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, CA.
- Stewart, K. (2007), *Ordinary Affects*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Thrift, N. (2007), *Non-Representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect*, Routledge, London.

Wheeler, R.C. (2017), "Alterity after infinity: an interview with Alphonso Lingis (2015)", in Wheeler, R. C. (Ed.), *Passion in Philosophy, Essays in Honor of Alphonso Lingis*, Lexington Books, London, pp. 91-104.

Whiteman, G. (2010), "Management studies that break your heart", *Journal of Management Inquiry*, Vol. 19 No. 4, pp. 328-337.

Further reading

Stewart, K. (1996), *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an "Other" America*, Princeton University Press, Princeton NJ.

Veissiere, S.P.L. (2009), "Notes and queries for an activist street anthropology: street resistance, Gringopolítica, and the Quest for subaltern visions in Salvador Da Bahia, Brazil", *Education, Participatory Action Research and Social Chang: International Perspectives*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, NY, pp. 209-222.

Veissiere, S.P.L. (2010), "Making a living: the gringo ethnographer as pimp of the suffering in the late capitalist night", *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, Vol. 10 No. 1, pp. 29-39.

Veissiere, S.P.L. (2011), *The Ghosts of Empire: Violence, Suffering and Mobility in the Transatlantic Cultural Economy of Desire (Contributions to Transnational Feminism)*, LIT Verlag, Münster.