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Ken Gale¹

Abstract

In this article, I argue that writing with intimacy through an animation of Deleuzian thought helps to destabilize the simply human practice of signifying, representing, and locating emotions within a metaphysics of being, which firmly ignores affective relationality and the emergence of posthuman practices of thinking and doing. By positing the practice of intimating, I argue that such an approach will prompt movement away from thinking about what a body is or what it might mean toward moving with and sensing encounters and engagements with what bodies can do. Continuing this line of thinking and writing with Deleuze will involve me in engaging in rupture, of taking a line of flight, of speculating about intimacy, not as a linear, molar attribute of simply human bodies, but rather as a complex, relational multiplicity of molecular lines. In this, I suggest that, in what Manning calls the “politics of touch,” bodies are always in the play of affective relationality, engaging in the dance between affecting and being affected, always sensing and shifting in intensive moments of movement and change. I extend this argument by proposing that intimating, as a practice of doing, involves working, with Deleuze and Guattari, with difference as “involutionary,” as emergent in and creative of fields of play in which “becoming-animal” leads us to new sensings of what bodies can do. In this “becoming-animal,” therefore, I will argue with and from Deleuze that intimating can be conceptualized as a means of “worlding” in which practices of always being on the lookout can be used to animate new creative relational forces in event/ful encounters with spacetime in so(u)rceries of the always not-yet-known.

Keywords

intimating, Deleuze, becoming-animal, affect

Every stratum is a judgment of God; not only do plants and animals, orchids and wasps, sing or express themselves, but so do rocks and even rivers, every stratified thing on earth.

—Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 44)

An intimacy long unfolding fails to be apprehended, and the story concludes in familiar solitudes, human exceptionalism, and lithic indifference.

—Cohen (2015, p. 8)

When the body is figured simply as discursive, it is held in a place where it can signify but not sense: sense is not something that can easily be captured linguistically.

—Manning (2007, p. 20)

and others in relation to the notion of intimacy; I can only sense bodies as becoming, and in this sensing, working with the Deleuzian conceptualization and the continual practicing of “bodies without organs” (Deleuze, 2004; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) is what animates thinking and theorizing as practice. “Bodies without organs” are about movement and sense, and as such, they always precede organization and the fixities of discursive construction: “the body without organs does not lack organs, it simply lacks the organism, that is, the particular organisation of organs . . . *an indeterminate organ*” (Deleuze, 2004b, p. 47). In this sensing and with the thinking of Whitehead in play, I lean toward making sense of bodies as processual rather than substantive. In this sensing and with the thinking and practice of Deleuze and Guattari in play, I

This is the case for all bodies. Human bodies, more than simply human bodies, nonhuman bodies; bodies of thought, bodies of knowledge, bodies of work, and so on. In this article, that brings into play the work of Deleuze

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understand and bring to life this theorizing as practice in terms of creative concept forming as event: “concepts are events” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 36).

So turning back to move forward: through the a priori reasoning of Cartesian thought and the rationalist logic of a Kantian critique of pure reason, we have been provided with the fixed and inviolate knowledge of the “thing-in-itself.” Over generations, this thinking has, in turn, discursively and pervasively created a metaphysics of being in which human-centrism, neurotypicality, and individualized conceptions of the self and subjectivity, with specific features, characteristics, and filiations, have been established. In the fluidity and emergence of the figure of “becoming-animal,” Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 238) talk in preference of alliances over filiations, of involutions over evolutions. In “becoming-animal,” while it is possible to talk of retaining “certain characteristics: species and genera, forms and functions and so on,” what is more important for them are “modes of expansion, propagation, occupation, contagion, peopling.” As they say, “The wolf is not fundamentally a characteristic or a certain number of characteristics; it is a wolfing” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 239). Similarly and with this thinking in mind, we can see that established knowledge and understandings of intimacy are usually and normatively linked to notions of closeness, togetherness, affinity, rapport, attachment, familiarity, and so on. In the epistemic formulation of such characterizing modalities, as part of what Deleuze (2004a) has described as the subjective presuppositions of the “image of thought,” intimacy has come to be understood as an emotional construct, something that has existence in and an integral part of specified and individualized human body.

In these substantive worlds of meaning-making, more attention is paid to *what a body means* than to *what a body can do* and in sustaining this metaphysics of being rather than creatively living with the processual dynamics of becoming. And so, in such world making, embodying intimacy in thought, in systems of signification, captures it and restricts its ability to move. As Manning says, “when we position the body to signify only discursively, we often stop its movement, placing it on a grid from whence we render it intelligible” (2007: 20). However, by sensing what intimacy can do through actualizing and engaging doing, it is possible to work to shift attention away from interpretation, representation, and critical analysis and move it toward a bringing to life, what I refer to as a *presencing* of worlds of affective relationality, where action speaks louder than words. Furthermore, by engaging with Deleuze and Guattari’s “body-without-organs” and Whitehead’s (1929) conceptualization of “organic realism,” an emphasis upon process over substance emerges in which substantively established dualist constructions of mind/body, rationalism/empiricism, subjectivity/objectivity, and so on are actively troubled and then dissolved. In this and in animating what

Manning (2007) calls the “politics of touch,” all bodies are always sensed in a constant play of affective relationality, engaging in Spinoza’s dance between affecting and being affected, always shifting in intensive moments of movement and change. Sensing bodies in continual moments of movement, movements in moments, helps to creatively subvert and challenge the colonizing effects of the formation of ideas and of attributing and fixing meaning to the existence of supposedly stable and simply substantive bodies. In the movement toward and the “worlding” (Stewart, 2007) of these fluid and transmutational processes of actualizing thinking, it is possible to begin to animate a movement away from the fixities and simple significations and objectifications of meaning toward a bringing into play processually activating animations of doing. In this and with the moving from “wolf” to “wolfing” in the passage from Deleuze and Guattari’s “becoming-animal” cited above, this article rhetorically energizes a shift of emphasis away from and offers a resistance to the substantive force of intimacy toward a becoming with the processual and fluid possibilities of intimating. So, by intimating, by moving away from discursively constructed fixity and shifting toward becoming in affective and relational multiplicity, life can also be shared with other bodies, with bodies of love, bodies of collaboration, and bodies of friendship and to the nonhuman, to so-called inanimate bodies. As Deleuze points out,

We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 257)

And so, in a momentary movement from thinking I pause and, in fascination, I am drawn by what for many might be the ordinary. I walk on the beach, in the sunshine, in the wind, in the rain, and my attention is caught by life that is immanent and deeply connected in mine. I see a sea-sand-polished piece of elvan stone with the iridescence of a lined quartz scar running through its elliptical length. It is animate; it beckons with its shine, with luminous, intense potentiality as it rests there among a millennia of shoreline detritus. I pick it up. It relaxes and rests in my hand like a small exhausted rescued fledgling. I feel its pulse. We are close, bonded in the delicate frisson of an electric moment. Knowing reciprocates and movement is a momentary lifting. I turn it in my hand, gently dusting sand particles from its surface; it begins to shine and move with the gentle gyrations of my fingers. I am aware of the breeze blowing from the west bringing smears of cumulus to cloud and chill the rays of the limp autumn sun. The quartz scar bleeds light; the smooth elvan breathes life into its cusping with my

palm. Looking up into the light wind, feeling the feathery wispieness of its touch on my face, I slide treasure into my pocket, feel its warmth pulsing through the soft material to my skin and move with it breathing new life into the emergence of the unfolding shoreline.

As Stewart (2007) says,

(t)he vagueness of the unfinished quality of the ordinary is not so much a deficiency as a resource, like a fog of immanent forces still moving even though so much has already happened and there seems to be plenty that's set in stone. (p. 127)

There is a frightening knowing emerging from an awareness of the taking for granted of the ordinary. There is a dull, mundane almost non/sense/ing in allowing stones, sticks, and a leaf to exist in the world of the inanimate. In my always emergent becoming-non-human, I am scared by my torpid allowance of the discursively constructed existence of the inanimate nonhuman. How can I have let this exist within me? How can the knots of the entanglement of this hierarchically dismissive language of the nonhuman with vital matter continue to disallow the vibrancy of these living materialities? How can this disregard for the pulsing animation of existent things, what Bennett (2010) calls "thing power," be allowed to seep into human bodies and to construct them as other in the multiplicity of worlds of living things?

And so, what Stewart refers to as the "unfinished quality of the ordinary" has its vibrant unfinishedness in the potency of moments of always coming to life. Sensations of movement, the quiet ticking of a clock, the brush of the wind in the coming to life of a face, the warmth of the sun shining through closed eyelids, and the abandoned leaf falling into new and energetic composition are all deeply forceful in the generation of vital intensities of affect. It is not good enough to live with these materialities in the crass partiality of the simply human. Movement and moment are always vibrant, ever changing, in their continuing pulsating happening. Attunement, becoming attuned with this is to be agentic in giving new life. It is forceful in energizing the ecomateriality of what Springgay and Truman (2017) refer to as "thinking-in-movement" where "we become open to stimuli we cannot represent." In this, attunement is capacious, it has potential, it does. It wakes sleeping bodies. It stirs human emotion. It lifts weight. It creates pressure. It brings to the foreground what was abandoned in the background. It lives with the connection to what was designated in pompous disarticulation as the "context" and sees, in all its bleeding, leaking, effusing materiality, energetic and living animate embodiment: there are no contexts, only connections. Attunement is the always living with the direct and powerful simplicity of Spinoza's assertion that all bodies, human and nonhuman, have the capacity to affect and be affected. In this sense, in the moving animation of a living, breathing, forceful world, this can be the fuel of attunement. And so,

this attunement is more than (a) being-in-tune; in its becoming, attunement is affective, it is forceful in the nuance and delicacy of its intimation. Being-in-tune suggests a simply human disciplining that qualifies in tune/not in tune as a rigid binary construction of rightness and wrongness. Becoming-attuned suggests shifting, orientation, moving toward, and incessantly folding in and folding out in the generation of intimate connection with the more than simply human. Attunement is a more than conscious choreography in which bodies are always in play, in which sensing takes over from simply knowing and the synaesthetic exposes the limitations of the cognitive through multi-faceted connectivity that is always passionately more than one. There is a beauty here that intimates as doing in the not yetness of its capacious unfinishedness. Water drips on stone, the tune shifts and holds, bodies flex and relax, harmonies excel in purity and then thrive in ecstasies of dissonance, a pattern comes to life and then is embellished by the exuberant quality of an improvisational extemporization, and faces take on the serious hues of concentration and then revel in the hilarity of the new perfection of the suddenly discovered note. Sounds are textured. Tastes can be seen. Seeing warmth lives in the sensual delight of the touch of skin. In these synaesthetic movements and moments asking with wonder: what can a body do?

In relation to an argument for the processual use of intimating in preference to the use of the more substantive intimacy, it becomes possible to sense an ontological flattening that runs frictionally with notions and practices of ontological hierarchizing. The latter are more likely to be essentialist, about the configuration of substance and organized in terms of differences between or difference from. As mentioned above, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason provides an argument and a rationale for the existence of things-in-themselves, each possessing substantive or noumenal qualities that categorically distinguish them from other things-in-themselves. In contrast, ontological flattening works processually to destabilize such fixities. In "becoming-animal," as Deleuze and Guattari argue, filiations give way to alliances, suggesting that categorizations and characterizations of whatever form have porosity are potentially always dynamically active and are, therefore, subject to change. Therefore, in exemplification, it can be seen that ontological flattening also works to trouble systems of classification which place human over nonhuman. Such relations, according to Deleuze and Guattari, are not filial, as might be argued; in alliance, they are always subject to change. The wasp and the orchid engage in continual territorializations within their alliance, their becomings are rhizomatic as

becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp. Each of these becomings brings about the deterritorialisation of one term and the reterritorialisation of the other; the two becomings interlink and form relays in a

circulation of intensities pushing the deterritorialisation ever further. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 10)

In this event/ful thinking and doing with Deleuze, intimating can be sensed as forceful; emergent in the vibrancy of touch, feeling in movement, and a moving presence that does. As intimating does, it exerts power, it is influential and acts to move bodies in time and motion. Therefore, it seems wasteful to spend time thinking about what the nature of intimacy is or even what it might be. In the animation and activation of intimating, events occur through the actualization of exertion and energy; intimating as an affective relational force enacts encountering, an always becoming. The intensities continue to circulate, but the becoming of the alliance can never be the being of filiation. What is occurring here, in this differentiating, “circulation of intensities,” is always more than the wasp and the orchid: it is not a filial evolution, they are in alliance, they are involved.

Assemblages of human and nonhuman bodies in relational space are energized by capacities of potentiality as they act and are acted upon. In a recent interview, Massumi (2017) talked of Spinoza and the capacity of bodies to affect and be affected as “powers of existence” and that these powers of existence are “irreducibly relational.” In this, he points out that the capacity to affect and be affected “are reciprocals, growing and shrinking as a function of each other. So, from the start, affect overflows the individual, tying its capacities to its relational entanglement with others and the outside. Affect is fundamentally transindividual.” This “overflowing” of the individual resonates with Manning’s challenge to the personalizing and individualizing containment of bodies found in orthodox approaches to experience, subjectivity, and identity. By presenting toward “a leaky sense of self” (Manning, 2009, p. 33), Manning takes our thinking beyond the simply human in emphasizing that there is always more than one. This “always more than one” (Manning, 2013) is made sense of in processual and individuating terms. Intimating, seeing, and doing intimacy, in processual terms, actively challenge the orthodoxies and formal modalities of “content/form binary” constructions. Sensing this, I am drawn to Manning’s (2010, p. 118) hyphenation “in-formation” when she says “When form becomes in-formation the body multiplies.” “In-formation” is compositional and processual; it is about fluid movements of individuation in the shifting *agencement*,¹ heterogeneity, and contingency of always transmutating “bodies-without-organs.” It is not about the organized molar individualism of the discursively constructed and identified material body as somehow separate from its presencing in the world, in terms of its own world making. In affect, body becomings are “in-formation” and so, as Manning (2010, p. 118) later says, “(t)he body’s individuation is its force for becoming, not its end-point.” Therefore, intimacy and the animating power of intimating

is a long unfolding, intensely vibrant, relational force that is active in energizing sense, movement, and world making in the creative, always coming to life all bodies, human and nonhuman.

In relation to this, Kathleen Stewart says,

Ordinary affect is a surging, a rubbing, a connection of some kind that has an impact. It’s transpersonal or prepersonal—not about one person’s feelings becoming another’s but about bodies literally affecting one another and generating intensities: human bodies, discursive bodies, bodies of thought, bodies of water. (Stewart, 2007, p. 128)

So the becoming of this practice of intimating, through an animation of Deleuzian thought, serves to destabilize the simply human practice of signifying, representing, and locating emotions within a metaphysics of being. It challenges the evolutionary filiations that ascribe certain characteristics to certain individuals and species and that firmly ignores affective relationality and the emergence of more posthuman practices of thinking and doing. Taking such an approach prompts movement away from thinking about what a body is or what it might mean, toward moving with and sensing encounters and engagements with what bodies can do. Continuing this line of thinking and writing with Deleuze involves an engagement with rupture, of taking a line of flight, of speculating about intimacy, not as a linear, molar attribute of simply human bodies, but rather as a complex, relational multiplicity of molecular lines, intersecting, leaking, seeping in capillary ways, always de-territorializing the solidities and fixities of segmentation and stratification.

In his observation of peregrine falcons that wintered near his home in Chelmsford, UK, J. A. Baker (1970) portrays in his writing an obsession with the species that he watched day after day for many years of his life. In these writings, his diligent observations are always in play with all kinds of transformational encounters, but, like the wasp and the orchid, in their becomings, there is always a certain not yetness, whose intensities are charged with the capacious possibilities of the always not yet known:

By two o’clock I had been to all the peregrine’s usual perching places, but had not found him. Standing in the fields near the north orchard, I shut my eyes and tried to crystallise my will into the light drenched prism of the hawk’s mind. Warm and firm-footed in long grass smelling of the sun, I sank into the skin and blood and bones of the hawk. The ground became a branch to my feet, the sun on my eyelids was heavy and warm. Like the hawk, I heard and hated the sound of man, that faceless horror of the stony places. I stifled in the same filthy sack of fear. I shared the same hunter’s longing for the wild home none can know, alone with the sight and the smell of the quarry, under the indifferent sky. I felt the pull of the north, the mystery and fascination of the migrating gulls. I shared the

same yearning to be gone. I sank down and slept the feather-light sleep of the hawk. Then I woke him with my waking. (Baker, 1970, p. 120)

In Manning's (2007) "politics of touch," bodies of all kinds are always in the play of affective relationality, engaging in a Spinozist dance between affecting and being affected, always sensing and shifting in intensive moments of movement and change. Intimating, as a practice of doing, does not simply evolve with associated features and characteristics in solidifying, substantiating forms of linear development. Intimating involves a working with differentiation that practices it, with Deleuze and Guattari, as "involutionary," as emergent in and creative of fields of play in which "becomings-animal" lead us to new sensings of what bodies can do. In this "becoming-animal," therefore, I will argue with and from Deleuze that intimating can be conceptualized as a means of "worlding" (Stewart, 2010). In thinking intimating as a practice of worlding, I am also attentive to the work of Massumi (2015, p. 14) in *The Supernormal Animal* when he talks about "creative-relationally *more-than human*," a non-humanness that prompts, animates, and motivates all kinds of new, speculative, and experimental practices and becomings. Stivale also offers a presencing of creative relationality in his engagement with the video discussions held between Deleuze and Parnet and published in English as *Gilles Deleuze from A to Z* in 2012. Stivale points out that in these discussions they engage with "the crucial link between creativity, the very possibility of thinking, and animality, through the practices of 'etre aux aguets' (being on the lookout) for 'rencontres' (encounters)" (Stivale, 2017, p. 197). There seems to be further linkages that can be made between these practices of alertness and being on the lookout with those of "worlding" that Stewart describes in her living with "ordinary affects." Equally, as Bennett (2010) also points out, that in affective relationality, like the wasp and the orchid, not only can becoming be animate in our alertness and being on the lookout for encounters, but also we can be drawn, through the actualization of forces of intensity, toward those seemingly inanimate items. In her encounter with

"(g)love, pollen, rat, cap, stick . . . in the grate over the storm drain to the Chesapeake Bay," she found "stuff that commanded attention in its own right . . . stuff (that) exhibited thing power: it issued a call, even if I did not quite understand what it was saying . . . it provoked affects in me:" (Bennett, 2010, p. 4)

Bennett's powerful conceptualization of "thing power" as "vibrant matter" in the "political ecology of things" serves to demonstrate Spinoza's oft-quoted contention, that in emphasis I repeat here, that all bodies, human and nonhuman, have the capacity to affect and be affected. Further and in relation to this, these examples powerfully show that these always reciprocating practices of intimating animate

and activate creative relational forces in eventful encounters with movements and moments in the always not-yet-known of emergent space and time.

The vibrant and intensive presencing of these capillary linkages serves to move the emphasis on thinking away from an attachment to and a working with molar forms, where lines of segmentarity work to striate space and fix meanings and practices within established ways of being, toward an engagement with molecular forms in which the processual becoming-animal is about flexibility, multiplicity, and alertness to the possibilities of the always not yet known. In this working with becoming and by differentiating away from the molar toward to molecular, as I have already suggested, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argue that "becoming is not an evolution, at least not an evolution by descent and filiation. Becoming produces by filiation; all filiation is imaginary. Becoming is always of a different order than filiation. It concerns alliance" (p. 238). In making these moves, they shift our attention away from the identification and representation of animals in molar forms. They do this, first of all, in terms of what they describe as Oedipal animals, like dogs and cats, which are individualized, sentimentalized, and domesticated within the context of emotionally charged relations of filiation and ownership. Second, they do this in terms of animals that are discursively assigned certain symbolic qualities and attributes and structured and modeled within the context of, for example, a mythologizing system of Jungian archetypes within the context of the rituals and beliefs of different cultural settings. It is in relationality with the third type of animal, the demonic animal, that becoming-animal can occur and a different form of intimacy can be seen to emerge.

While they point to the possibility that any animal can be treated in all three ways, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the "Oedipal animal" and the "archetypal animal" are best understood to exist in molar form and that the "demonic animal" exists and can be best understood in terms of active and affective relationality in the creation and always moving engagement with lines of molecularity. Therefore, I sense that in thinking with Deleuze, hitherto, intimacy has been territorialized in molar ways and, in particular, it is more commonly thought of, understood, and practiced in relation to the Oedipal animal. In short, it is framed within discourses and attachments of love and feeling that are grounded in individualistic and individualizing emotional engagements in simply human relationships of stability, commitment, and filiation. In contrast, "Demonic animals," what Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 241) describe as "pack or affect animals that form a multiplicity, a population, a tale . . .," can be understood in terms of Manning's "leaky bodies," bodies that are "always more than one," bodies that are always on the move, bodies "in-formation," "bodies-without-organs" that both follow and create heterogeneous and contingent capillary

lines that have the potential, in multiplicity and intensity, to stray in diverse courses and directions, in delirium, to actively go off the rails in experimental and speculative practices of experimentation and creativity. These *becomings-animal* work to deterritorialize, through dis-identification of the coded and representational subject of the molar form, and hence to destabilize the established discourses that fix embodiment and materiality in controlled and restricted ways. So, thinking with Deleuze in these ways, how can intimacy be understood differently and practiced within these multiple and active lines of molecularly that have been offered as an interference with its location and practice within conventional human-centric practices and associated metaphysics of being?

Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 240) ask us: “Who has not known the violence of . . . animal sequences, which uproot one from humanity, if only for an instant, making one scrape at one’s bread like a rodent or giving one the yellow eyes of a feline?” Their rhetoric here challenges the convenient linearities and rationalities of conventional evolutionary theory and replaces them with the need for an experimental and involutory approach which is not fragmentary or regressive and which reminds us of, brings into focus with, and calls us toward those unnatural participations and “unheard-of becomings” of the demonic animal.

This leads to an active conceptualizing of “intimacy” in relation to Deleuzian flows and transmutations. In this, substantive fixities give way to the immanent force of movements in moments, moments in movements. When Whitehead (1929) talks of “actual occasions,” I make sense of his words in terms of concepts as events. Worlding brings concepts to life; in this coming to life, concepts, in event/full/ness, do something, they change things, they world, then they disappear. I make sense of this as a brief activation that does, then, like the sparkling, illuminating incandescence of the exploding firework in the sky it disappears. This feels like the creative utility of speculative experimentation when “what if . . . ?” prompts a doing-in-the-world, followed by a falling from the firmament of action, leaving only the transformation that the energy of its sparks sets in motion. In engaging with Whitehead’s speculative approach to philosophy, Stengers (2011) points in this to the work that concepts do in terms of transformations, in terms of “experience of ‘sheer disclosure’ rather than the concepts themselves. The concepts are required by the transformation of experience, but it is this disclosure that has . . . the last word” (p. 17).

I sense, with Haraway (2016), a “sympoiesis,” a coming together of this “experience of ‘sheer disclosure’” and the way in which Deleuze talks about becoming-animal and the molecular practices of creativity, thinking, and a working with the event/full/ness of the not yet known. Stivale (2017) stresses that

In Deleuze’s view, creativity is precisely a concept of new perspectives that enable the creation of new worlds, new time-spaces and new . . . refrains. Just as animals live constantly on the lookout and thereby must define their territory and assure their very existence in specifically delimited ways at every second, so too do artists and philosophers open themselves to possibilities of innovation and thought through the violence that they risk in having an idea through a genuine encounter—a potentially threatening, frightening encounter that might open them to an entirely new mode of perception and sensation, a completely new “refrain.” (p. 197)

Enjoying the risk of what Massumi (2002, p. 28) calls “sprouting deviant,” I wish to use this argument as a means of engaging intimacy somehow differently. In the practices of what Stewart and others have referred to as “worlding,” I want to address intimacy not so much in terms of particular meanings originating from the fixities of a stable body of thought and engage with it rather, in terms of what it does, as a practice, to engage in intimating. The speculative and experimental sense I have of intimating, as outlined in this article, is designed to be a means of doing in the world, of working with the entanglements of discourse and materiality on the boundaries and edges that are set between human and nonhuman relationality. In this sensing, *doing* intimacy, intimating, involves interfering with, troubling, and disturbing the lassitudes of habit that are grounded in a metaphysics of being and in practicing an alertness to forms of theorizing and concept making in the event that always promote inquiry into the not yet known.

Being alert (*etre aux aguets*), being on the lookout for encounters (*recontres*) also involves encountering, intimating within, a sense of worlding, resisting the comforting solace of discourse where alertness is the very resistance to what discourse sets up in its construction of reality. Being on the lookout, sensing encounters, encountering, works to foster an intimacy with the world, intimating at knowing, on tip toes, straining to see/hear/touch/taste/smell more than you could see/hear/touch/taste/smell before.

I want to understand and engage in intimacy as a becoming, a *becoming-animal*, an intimacy of processualism and individuation, where standing on my toes, shading my eyes, peering into the distance at the searing speck of a peregrine in a stoop, or an intent crouching, leaning down and into the interstices of a tiny rock crevice to talk with a sea anemone, is becoming both in and on the lookout for the intensive multiplicities of an encounter, the ontogenetic involution of event.

Writing these words and then reading them again, right here, right now, in the words of Deleuze and subsumed in affect:

. . . a strange imperative wells up . . . : either stop writing, or write like a rat . . . If the writer is a sorcerer, it is because writing is a becoming, writing is traversed by strange

becomings that are not becomings-writer, but becoming-rat, becomings-insect, becomings-wolf . . . (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 240)

In these individuating instantiations, there are deep and intensive moments and movements of intimacy; I am washed by the politics of touch, in the sensuality of this dance, I am this peregrine, I am this sea anemone, I am this intimacy. Into not yetness: always intimating.

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Note

1. I have used agencement here in preference to the usually translated form of “assemblage” to be found in Deleuze and Guattari (1987) as a means of emphasizing Spinoza’s claim that all bodies, human and nonhuman, have the capacity to affect and be affected.

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