



‘Storying otherwise’ towards care-full writing practices in higher education

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Abstract

In this paper, ‘storying otherwise’ (Haraway in Terranova, 2016), as a radical act of deliberate experimentation, is utilised to explore care and care-full writing practices in higher education. We think-with care and care-full writing through a posthumanist lens, drawing on an experimental writing session at the European Conference of Qualitative Inquiry 2024. Diffracting the stories that were created in the session, we employ e-zine making as an analysis method to open up different possibilities and new realities. In doing so, care is framed as a creative and sensorial act of connecting across time, prompting us to reconsider what care-full writing might involve. When care becomes an act of connecting with past/present/futures, we make different stories, rememberings and imaginations come to matter in writing. Enacting care creatively by partnering with our environments, materials, and other bodies through experimental and collaborative forms of writing allows care with others to be expressed, shared, explored, and valued differently. And, acknowledging the sensorial experience with/in writing, connecting to what is collectively felt around writing, opens the writing space up to shared experiences that expand collective capacities for engagement. We conclude with suggestions for deliberate and provocative writing spaces that allow those creating academic writing (including

students) to engage with the entanglements of past/present/future, material and the sensorial, from which different writing emerges. In doing so, we argue that writing can be an important space for care-full practices in academia.

Keywords: care; academia; collaborative writing; zine making.

Introduction: care in the academy

It is well recognised that higher education has undergone a significant shift through the promotion of the knowledge economy, marketisation, and an alignment of the mission of universities with the private interests of business (Courtois and O'Keefe; 2015; Eaton et al., 2020; Williamson, 2021; Leathwood and Read, 2022). However, there is growing evidence that this focus on maximising value is creating a care-less (Lynch, 2010) and hostile (Oliver and Morris, 2022) environment that fosters precarity (Burton and Bowman, 2022) and a sense of unbelonging (Burton, 2021).

It is within this context that Baker and Burke (2023) describe undercare, which they define as a 'depletion of caring resources, compassion fatigue and self-interest, which in turn create ... "care vacuums"' (Baker and Burke, 2023, p.176), as becoming commonplace in academia. The casualisation of academic labour is on the rise, reductions in staffing or closures, and the increasing demand for productivity, grounded in micromanaged workload, is causing burnout and anxiety (Wilkinson and Wilkinson, 2020; Burton and Bowman, 2022). The response to a growing crisis in mental health in academia has often been to showcase poorly funded, time-limited, spatially defined interventions. Wellbeing festivals, meditation workshops, breathwork sessions, and mandatory 'tick-box' training for staff risk becoming tokenistic gestures that fail to create meaningful, lasting organisational change.

Care for staff and students in academia is commonly framed as an individual responsibility (do Mar Pereira, 2017), as a practice of 'self-care' that aligns with deepening neoliberal discourse (Ward, 2021). Wellbeing in this context is framed as acts of repair, foregrounding a deficit narrative of fixing someone who is not as well as others, where solutions involve mitigations or adjustments to enable wellness to be achieved. Arguably,

this instrumentalisation of care in academia masks systemic injustices and harmful institutional practices by focusing attention on the individual (Lynch, 2010).

Aims

Thinking with (under)care in academia, this paper explores how 'storying otherwise' (Haraway in Terranova, 2016) may disrupt normative practices in higher education to make space for diverse enactments of care and a wider participation in care-full interactions. To 'story otherwise' is a radical act of deliberate experimentation, in what Ortiz describes as involving 'pluriversal imagination ... [and] as border thinking for communal healing' (Ortiz, 2023, p.180). We 'story otherwise', with an openness to idiom, style, and different medias of writing, to shift attention away from dominant narratives, theories, and epistemologies that recycle the present, and instead attend to the questions, 'How to care in academia?' and, 'What might care-full practices involve?'

We draw on our experiences of facilitating a collaborative writing session for the European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ECQI) conference (2024) using an online Dropbox Page, which created a shared writing space between conference participants in the room in Helsinki and others outside of the conference space who joined remotely. Building from Osgood et al.'s (2020, p.596) work to 'reconfigure hegemonic framings of the "academic conference"', our starting point was the exclusionary nature of academic conferences, as we explored what alternative care-full academic practices might look and feel like through writing together layered stories of conferencing, academic writing, and connectedness across time, space, and matter.

Theorising care: a feminist, new materialist lens

In this paper, we adopt posthumanist framings of care to firstly challenge humanist assumptions of care as an individual, human-only practice that responds to personal needs, and secondly problematise institutionalised neoliberal framings of care as merely an imperative for productivity and separate from knowledge making. As Taylor states, humanist 'care, is about care for the other', where the other is more vulnerable, weaker, less able, or needing to be taken care of (Taylor, 2018, pp.88-89). In these framings of

care, the separation of humans from each other, the stigmatisation of vulnerability that reinforces hierarchies, and the perception of care as a human-centred practice shape how we enact care in higher education.

The dismantling of human individualism, ableism, and exceptionalism is central to posthumanist thinking (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 2016) and requires us to reframe care – not as a human-to-human only transaction – but as entangled in everyday encounters with each other and with other-than-humans. Tronto (1993) describes this care as an ongoing practice of maintaining and repairing involving all bodies (human and non-human) and environments, in what she calls the 'interweave [of] a complex, life-sustaining web' (Tronto, 1993, p.103). This shifts ethical care from the transactional giving of care from human to another, to ethical care as an 'ongoing responsiveness to the entanglements of self and other, here and there, now and then' (Barad, 2007, p.394) through attentiveness to the 'specificity of material entanglements in their becoming' (Barad, 2007, p.91). To re-see care as a more-than-human concern, which also involves materials, environments, and other than human bodies, is to reframe care not as an individualistic human concern, but as part of our entangled and 'messy' living.

Such an everyday, entangled view of care requires acknowledgement of its significance as an ethical and political obligation. As care is relational, situated, and messy, meaning 'different things to different people, in different situations' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017, p.1), it is pertinent to ask the question, 'What is care in academia?'. We are interested here in care that Puig de la Bellacasa (2017, p.6) describes as a 'thick, impure, involvement in a world where the question of how to care needs to be posed'. In this way, the question of care becomes a 'hands-on, ongoing process of re-creation' (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017, p.6) of new patterns of relations and new speculative openings about what care, caring, and care-full ways of working possibly involve. It is this re-patterning through speculative experimentations that we aimed to create spaces for in our collaborative writing sessions.

Framing our collaborative writing experimentations: methodology

Developed through our previous work (see Vackova et al., 2023; Dowdeswell et al., in production), we conceptualise our collaborative writing as biodigital. This is a writing process dynamically shaped by specific socio-material encounters across both physical

and digital spaces, within and beyond academia. In doing so, we write not as a contained, individual, and cognitive-only pursuit, but as a deliberate experimentation with the bodies, objects, and materialities that surround us. This is akin to Latto et al.'s definition of 'bag-lady stories' as 'speculative, functional, corporeal and incorporeal' (Latto et al., 2022, p.158). In this way, stories are considered as the coming together of matter (both human and non-human), jumbled in a bag, where some may stay and some may fall out as a process of 'material-discursivity' (Barad, 2007, p.148).

In developing an experimental practice of 'storying care otherwise', we were drawn to academic conferences as a particular site of convergence (Latimer, 2021) where tensions between knowledge production, open discussion, accessibility, ethics, and care intersect. Layers of precarity bound up in social and cultural inequities of race, sex, gender, class, language, and nationality make it problematic for participants, with different needs, localities, circumstances, and resources, to come together, share ideas, and develop knowledge together. It is within these lived academic precarities, which arise from broader inequalities in higher education (Burton and Bowman, 2022), that we responded to Osgood et al.'s call for 'conferencing otherwise' (2020) and developed a synchronous in-person and online writing event at the European Conference for Qualitative Inquiry (2024) to creatively disrupt and reconfigure 'sedimented ways of neoliberal conferencing' (Osgood et al., 2020, p.596). The combining of an in-person and online space allowed for ideas and experiences to reach out and mingle between those attending and those who would otherwise have been excluded from the conference. Interested in layered, responsive, conversational interactions around writing, rather than linear, isolated stories, we experimented with Dropbox Papers as a space of convergence that allowed participants to not only write together, but to edit, respond to, and expand others' writings on and off the page and in the margins.

Through biodigital collaboration and conferencing otherwise, our writing session enacted opportunities for boundary crossings and care-full connectivity, with an aim both to repair relations with each other and our material and environmental spaces, and to expand academic communities. Driven by care and commitment to more just academic futures, the session was inspirational, affirmative, and joyful (as felt by us and noted by many of our participants). However, it was not easy. It was an effort and hard work to fight through technical difficulties; create a safe and accessible writing environment online; connect

across our diverse expectations, circumstances, and localities; and write in ways that challenge our habits and push against firmly set conventions and boundaries.

Experimenting with writing at the ECQI

In this session we bring together a physical group (in the ECQI conference, in room U4062 of Helsinki University) with an online group (in a Teams meeting). Both groups right now are hearing the same introductory materials, and both groups will shortly be collaborating together in writing (conference script).

Buffeted by the tensions of navigating the ever-growing complexity of conference spaces, the 10 people who joined us physically in the conference room in Helsinki arrived at the very final parallel session of a three-day conference. Our attendees, tired from the pace, the social engagements, the high levels of concentration, the frantic searching for rooms, and the crossing of icy streets, physically slumped into the chairs in our room, discarding suitcases and creating a different cacophony of sounds to other conference sessions earlier in the week. While there was a keenness to engage with the writing space we offered and to enjoy and savour the last moments of togetherness, our session was punctuated by the sound and movement of some participants having to leave early to catch flights.

For the 16 people online, their participation in the session was framed by the tension between the barriers preventing them from attending the ECQI in person and their desire to participate in discussions. Some participants had technical difficulties as we collaborated across several digital platforms. Some admitted that they could not afford to attend the conference, and others had caring responsibilities incompatible with travel and long stay abroad. Hectic lives and busy schedules, full of responsibilities and commitments, and tensions with digital access slowly entangled with the gently paced, informal, and embracing atmosphere of the online session. Cups of coffee, warm sounds of home, and comfortable surroundings wove their way around us, easing us into focused, responsive, and quiet writing.

Once our online and in-the-room participants had accessed the Dropbox page, we framed the writing session with three provocations which we introduced at intervals into the collaborative digital writing space. These provocations invited writers to engage with and think about the roles of materials, sounds, and bodies. The provocations (see Table 1)

were designed to stimulate story fragments that problematised the notion of care across time-place-space. In the session, the following prompts were each accompanied by an image, collage, or a sound clip to encourage a multisensory experience and activate a whole-body approach to writing.

Table 1. Story provocations.

Provocation A: rendering each other capable

Haraway asks us to team up 'to make something new in the world of multispecies relationships' (Haraway, 2016 p.19), where we render each other capable in 'ways not written into preexisting scripts, but invented or provoked...in relations of attunement' (Haraway, 2016, pp.128-129).

Spend some time looking around and playing with the 'stuff' of academia that is around you. Can you make a 'collage,' a playful assemblage from bags, cables, pens, laptops, lanyards, conference programmes or others, the items that render you capable, and that you render capable?

Provocation B: soundings of 'neglected things'

Puig della Bellacasa (2017) prompts us to engage with 'neglected things' in generating new forms of care.

Can you think-with the sounds of your own environment? Are there any 'neglected' others in your space that make themselves known through sound?

Provocation C: body-writing

Helen Cixous (1993) reminding us of the work of French feminists in their conceptualisation of *Ecriture Feminine*, writing with the body. Writing with the body is a disruptive space of taking care.

We invite you to think with your body and with the affects of our writing here and now. If you like, you can stand up and walk, or lie on the floor, or look outside the window, or do a jump or climb over a desk... allowing yourself to playfully engage with body-writing.

Initiating storying otherwise through multisensory provocations elicited a frenetic outpouring of memories, felt reflections, poignant observations, and emplaced experiences. Storying otherwise made story fragments matter and responses welcomed, as we collectively generated new stories, concepts, and ideas around care in academia. In the shared online document, we encouraged all participants to add, elaborate, but not to delete, others' words. We encouraged consideration of how, in care, we partner with more-than-humans, paying close attention to the entanglements of home-life-work, and to the role of diverse bodies in our writing practices. The online session sometimes lost contact with the face-to-face session due to technical issues, but the connections across time and space remained evident as we were plunged back together after buffering pauses. These collective stories, as rich, multi-vocal data, became the starting point for further exploration of new possibilities for care in academia.

Zine making: storying otherwise as diffractive analysis

To engage with collective stories of care written in our experimental session further, we adopted a diffractive approach to the analysis of the stories. Diffractive reading involves re-reading evidence (including theory) *through* each other (Murriss and Bozalek, 2019). We therefore took the time to read and re-read the stories through each other and through the key questions of, 'What is care in academia?' and, 'What does care involve?'. We then further diffracted the stories through posthumanist theorisations of care (i.e., Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017), and our concerns with and experiences of vulnerability and precarity in academia. The aim was to engage with the stories affirmatively and creatively, as a further act of storying otherwise, to notice and produce difference (Murriss, 2016) rather than merely reflect on what is already there.

As we diffracted these stories to generate new understandings of care in academia, and new openings to think differently about our human and more-than-human caring relationships, we found ourselves drawn to write our own analytic stories to form the basis of an e-zine, *Together We Have Care* (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Together We Have Care e-zine (Posthumanist Collective, 2024).



Zines are self-made publications, traditionally handmade but increasingly digitised as e-zines, that assemble texts and other materials through processes of 'collage, irregular approaches to layout, numerous different typefaces and handwritten notes' (French and Curd, 2022, p.84). As French and Curd note, the multi-layered and multi-voiced pages of a zine allow for an exploration of 'subjective viewpoints' and can 'situate these in relation to plural and competing discourse ... encompassing many voices, tones, and conflicting opinions, knowledge, and subjectivities' (French and Curd, 2022, p.89). At the centre of zine making is attention to what Lyotard describes as 'little stories' (Lyotard, 1984, cited in French and Curd, 2022, p.84), emphasising the fragmented, the minor, the incidental, the alternative, or disruptive narratives that allow zines to 'splinter widely accepted truths' about people, cultures, and institutions, as well as their value and the knowledge they produce (Given, 2008, cited in French and Curd, 2022, p.87). It is through attending to little stories in the creation of our e-zine that we were able to think beyond the existing narratives of care in academia and generate new framings of care-full encounters.

Our e-zine helps us think anew about the possibilities for care in academia. Below we share an analytical commentary on the e-zine stories, with a specific focus on what we have learned or rethought about care in academia as a result of this process.

Towards care-full practice: our findings

Care as connecting across time

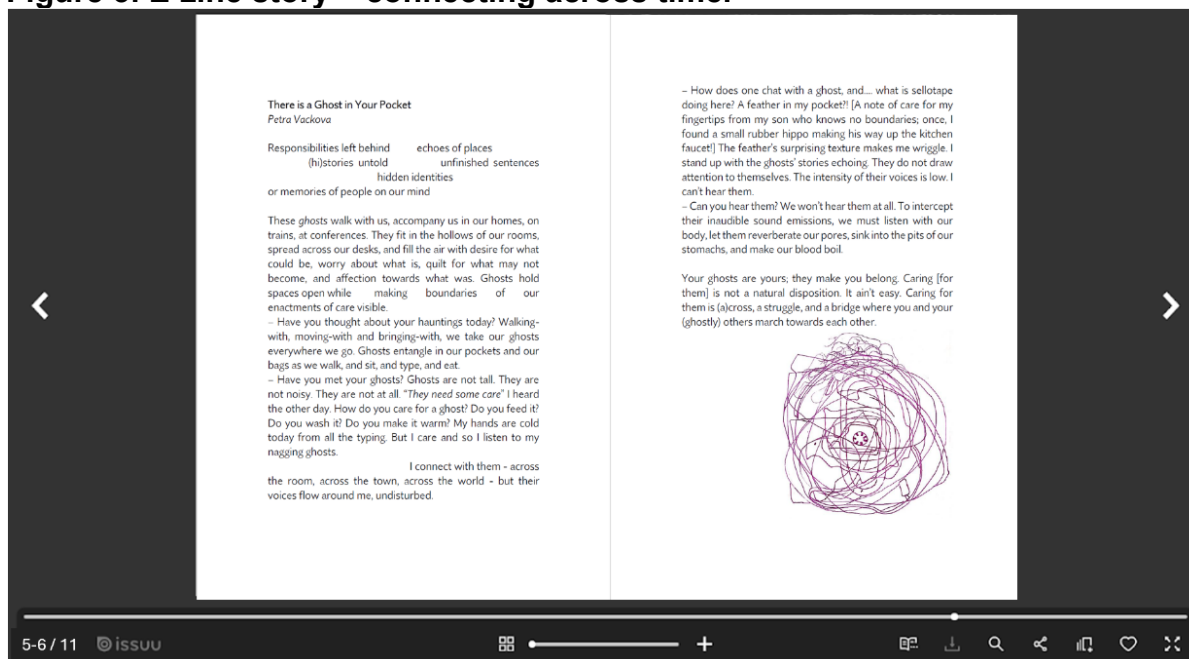
Reading and re/reading the story fragments became a form of attuning and response to what is normally invisible in our daily interactions, collapsing past, present, and future into one space. The stories brought to fore our various inheritances, entangling them with echoes of places, memories of people, and (hi)stories untold. Missing words and unfinished sentences made us engage with and share our hauntings (Figure 2).

Figure 2. E-zine story – hauntings.



Caring became a process of 'living thinking' (Vackova, 2022, p.94), a form of remembering differently and connecting, in felt and collective ways, with dear memories, forgotten desires, and that which has been lost. Responding to ghosts and finding their echoes in our stories resurfaced the in/justices of and systemic exclusions framing our experiences of academia. Ghosts, however, became more than just 're-memberings' (Barad, 2023, p.27); they also created bridges to different temporalities, past, present, and future, as we imagined how we would enact care differently if we lived with our ghosts differently and how we might develop different approaches to care if we could no longer remember.

Figure 3. E-zine story – connecting across time.



The practice of care became more than a practice 'of the now', where in humanistic frames we try to 'fix' an issue that is impacting in the present. Care became connecting across time to generate different possibilities for doing, thinking, and living otherwise with ghosts that no longer merely haunt the present, but make a past/present/future entanglement filled with possibilities for hope-full and care-full, more just, new beginnings (Figure 3).

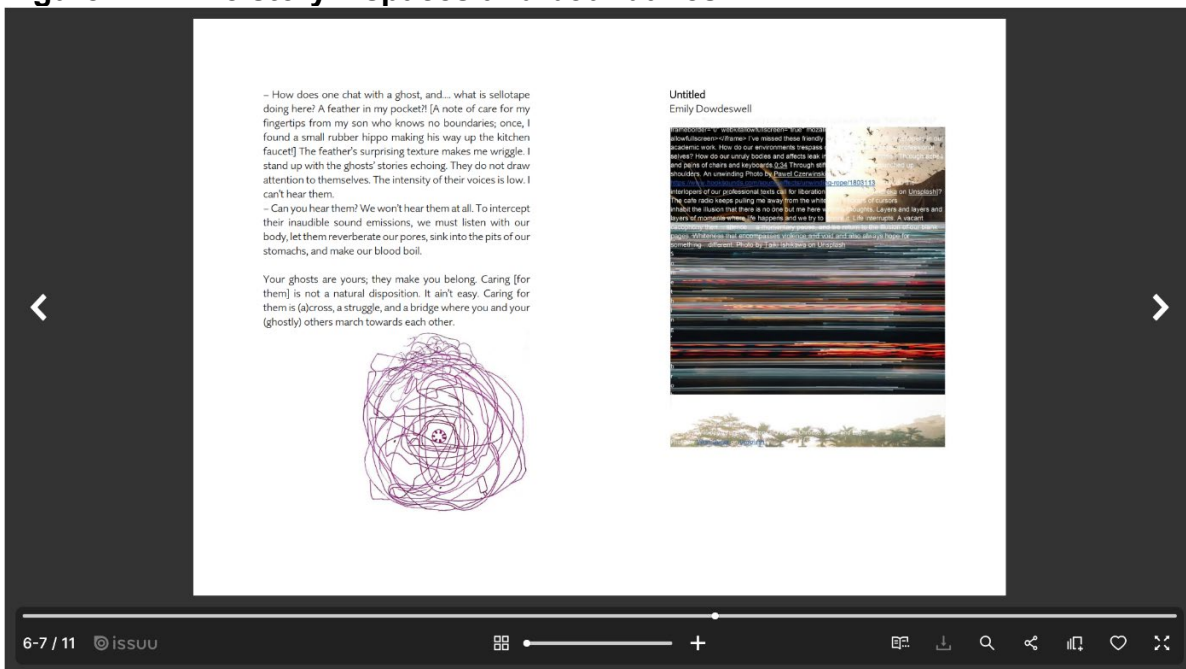
Attuning to our ghosts, sharing rememberings, and imagining what if, prompted us to consider the question, can we learn to care differently if we learn to remember differently? How can we allow the past/present/future to be part of what it means to care, when practices are focused so solidly on the now?

Care as creative

A common thread throughout our storying otherwise was the role of creative interactions, with humans and more-than-humans, in reframing how we considered care-full practices. Our stories made our playful entanglements across boundaries of work, self, and life, 'felt' (Springgay, 2019, p.57), and deliberate. Creatively playing with words, images, and materials, and bringing them into different relationships with each other, made us re-read

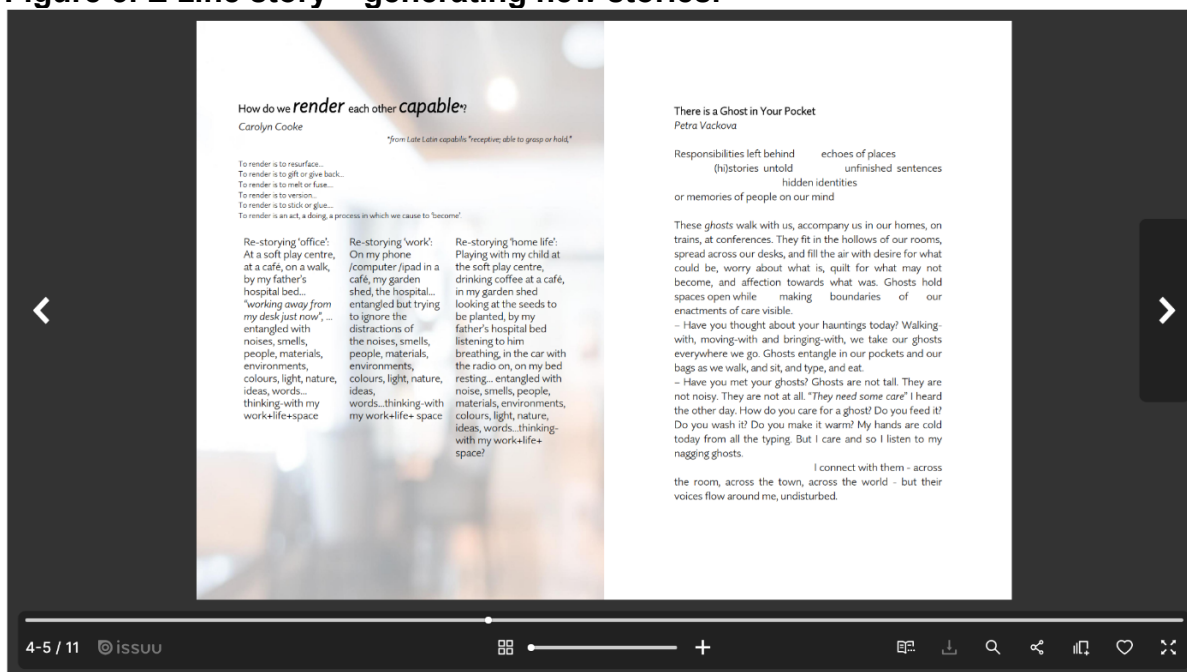
story fragments in novel and generative ways. This creativity was evident in the writing session through participants creatively exploring and expanding definitions of terms, adding self-generated images, or writing in novel or fictional idioms to explore and generate thinking. This creativity was then reflected and played with further in the e-zine, particularly in exploring the role of spaces and boundaries (Figure 4).

Figure 4. E-zine story – spaces and boundaries.



This focus on creative 'co-mingling' (Springgay, 2019, p.57) with others and our material environments reframed care as transcending institutional silos of responsibilities and work-nonwork living. Writing as a process of 'becoming' (Barad, 2007, p.393), as a performative act of sticking, versioning, and melting stories together as a collaborative, creative act, created powerful moments where new stories arose in the margins and across the page in unexpected ways (Figure 5).

Figure 5. E-zine story – generating new stories.



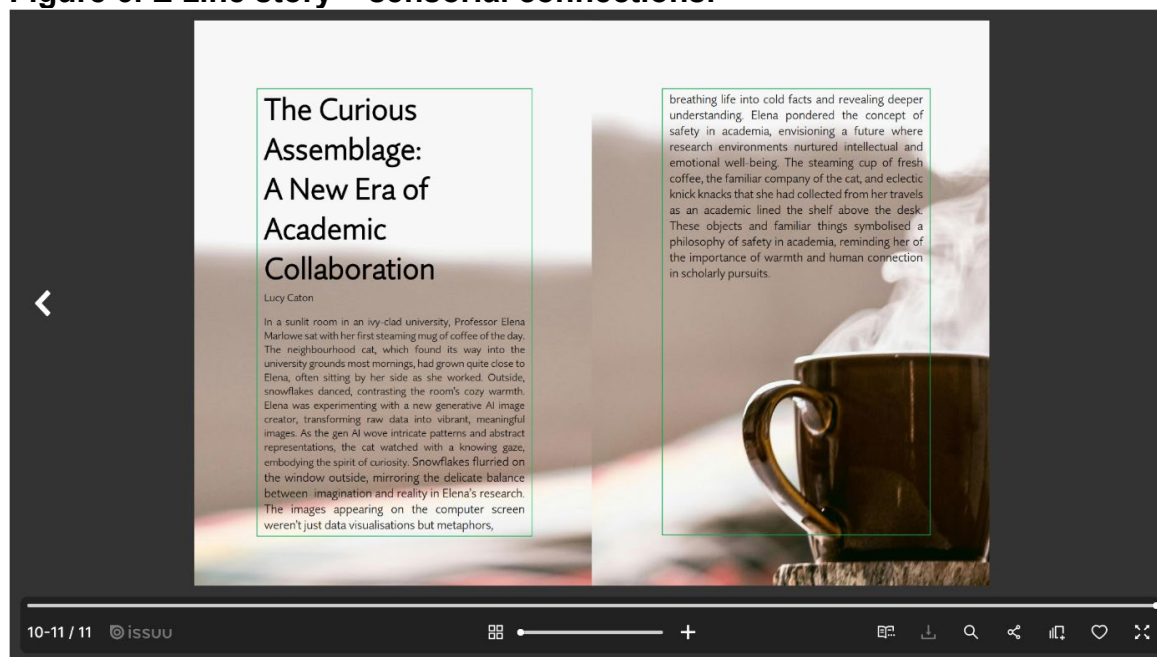
One such story was that of care as making each other capable (Figure 5). This focused our attention on the care-full practices that are made possible through the specific material entanglements of 'office', 'work', and 'home life'. Reading the text both down, but also across these spaces, drew attention to the creative synergies and tensions of this pluralistic living, where differing material interactions rendered different but connected versions of self. In this way, questions arise as to how we hold spaces open for such creative entanglements, to allow holistic care *between* spaces? How do we reposition care as a material *as well as* human concern? How do we reposition care beyond an individualistic practice, to one of mutual becoming?

Care as sensorial

Care as a sensorial act became central in our stories. Fragments of personal stories, detours in speech, sighs, items in our pockets, and flickering screens challenged our habitual sensorial competences and inspired new sensorial repertoire. To respond, to write together in and around the story fragments as they appeared on screen, was to be alert to not only our own sensorial position to the text (surprised, moved, saddened by, or shocked), but also to how the original author and others were responding to our 'feltness'

in our replies. This attentiveness to the sensory, both emotional work and also our sensorial responses to our environments, materials, sounds, and smells, was a key feature of our collaborative writing. This was a sensory attentiveness beyond one person's words, an individualistic and atomised attentiveness to one story fragment, but was instead a collaborative sensorial response, something shared and developed together, building from and extending the attentiveness in each response. Smiling, brief stifled laughter, concern, shared experiences of sounds and touch, were shared on screen, in the room, and on the ever-expanding online document. Sensorial experiences were particularly evident in the fictionalisation of some of the storying fragments, and as a result, a fictionalised story was included as part of the e-zine, where image and sensory connections were foregrounded (Figure 6).

Figure 6. E-zine story – sensorial connections.



Thinking about care, as something collectively attended to, something collectively 'felt', as a sensorial act, is to consider such questions as how care can be reframed as a collective act, no longer the domain of the line manager or tutor alone, but recognising the web-like confluence of care-full practices and relationships that any one person is amidst? How can collective care be deliberately enacted? How can the sensorial aspects of care be foregrounded in care-full practices?

Through our findings, we return to the possibilities extended by writing collaboratively, as an act which illuminates the lively, organic, messy elements of the biodigital in academia.

Engaging with care as more than now, care as creative entanglements, and care as sensorial, calls attention to the invisible structures of our relationships and the possibilities of collaborative writing as a boundary-crossing, care-full academic practice.

Care-full learning and teaching in and around writing in higher education

This article attends to the importance of 'storying otherwise' in academia to suggest potentially more affirmative, just, and response-able framings of care and care-full practices in higher education. Writing together differently, in non-conventional ways and writing different kinds of stories within the context of academia, is not easy, nor straightforward (Taylor et al., 2020), but, as we argue, it helps us develop more just and collective ways to inquire and explore. 'Storying otherwise', to us, is a form of relational cartography that helps us bring different ideas, viewpoints, sensations, and materialities together and map, as well as enact, possibilities for care in our academic workscapes differently. Through this experimental, collaborative writing, we were re-directed to consider care as a creative, sensorial practice of connecting across time, while at the same time employing these findings in practical ways towards developing a different, more care-full writing practice.

Shifting from care as a concern only for the present, to care as connecting with past/present/futures, makes different stories, rememberings, and imaginations come to matter in writing in higher education. By engaging creatively and collectively with the inheritances, histories, and futures that accompany us and our stories as we write, we practise how to remember differently by re-reading our past collectively, reclaiming memory of less privileged stories and reworking our relations in the act of 'active reinvention of a self that is joyfully discontinuous' (Braidotti, 2013, p.167). To open writing to different kinds of (hi)stories, that is to other personal, forgotten, minor histories and stories, we disrupted the linearity of our storying through prompts, images, metaphors, responses, and felt observations. Our words (un)intentionally meeting on a page redirect our stories, open up new spaces of encounters (on the page and beyond) and trigger new, unexpected feelings and sensations. Pears-Scown (2024, p.9) proposes that to remember differently, we have to break up our stories to disrupt 'the linear notion of what comes "before" and what comes "after"' and materialise them differently so that 'they can hold [us]

differently'. Re-directing, re-reading, and re-writing each other's memory stories may then empower students by increasing their awareness of their shared experiences and by expanding their capacities for collective engagement (Taylor et al., 2020). Moreover, multimodal and interactive forms of engagement (pictures, videos, audio) (Banks, 1995; Rose, 2014), in and around writing in an online space in higher education, may provide a means to explore complex social and cultural phenomena (Banks, 1995) by inviting participants to reflect on the interconnectedness of past, present, and future, and help students develop relational understanding of the self in the digital space (Rose, 2014).

Moving from care as individually performed, to recognising care as creative and playful entanglements with materials, environments, and other bodies, asks us to reconsider the nature and purpose of academic writing in higher education. In our experimentations, creating spaces for different idioms and forms of writing allowed such playful entanglements to be fully explored and expressed. This was not an easy space to develop, where accessing the digital space, and the linearity of the space as an endless scrolling document, limited some participants' abilities to respond and write as freely as they would have liked. However, for many of our participants, the bringing together of digital and physical spaces allowed for playful writing with technology/self/work/home/others, where to entangle ourselves with each other, our concerns, and our relationships, generated different doings. This performative writing, as exemplifying the relational 'messiness' of academic writing, disrupted ideas of neat and complete writing products or care as ever completed. Instead, it encourages modes of writing as inquiry (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005) that map the complex relationalities involved in knowledge creation, where we make visible and attend to how writing occurs. Paying attention to this generative messiness, to the entanglements from which our writing comes to be, aligns with others' experimentations with types of journaling (see Alterio, 2004; Murriss, 2016) and zine making (see Piepmeier, 2009; Creasap, 2014; Lonsdale, 2015; French and Curd, 2022) as research and for student assessment. These ongoing forms of writing, which are freely structured for performative, connective, creative writing across and between experiences, allow care with others (human or more-than-human) to be expressed, shared, explored, and valued differently.

Our work has also illuminated the generative potential of sensorial writing practices as a care-full space to explore complex issues and understandings. During our collaborative writing session, in coming together to respond to and add to each other's' stories, attention

shifted from individualistic sensorial experiences to what was collectively 'felt' (Springgay 2019, p.57) in the writing. Springgay describes such writing as a 'touching encounter' (Springgay, 2019, p.57), in which to engage with our senses is to acknowledge that 'humans and nonhuman matter compose' (Springgay, 2019, p.59) together. By encouraging our writers to move around and explore their writing environments through, brought their sensorial experiences of their surroundings into the writing space. We were struck not only by the power of the 'felt' responses, but by the generative power this had to develop and create new stories of care. While many academic writing practices, both for research and for students, downplay emotive personal accounts and writing with sensorial experiences, we suggest that storying otherwise, and particularly zine writing, allows for the type of touching encounters and transcorporeality that Springgay (2019) considers essential in opening up questions about writing as inquiry.

In this paper, we highlight framings of care as involving creative, sensorial connectivities across time, which challenge traditional, transactional views. These framings, albeit from one collaborative writing experience with people both within and with desires to connect to the ECQI conference, created a space to consider care and care-full writing practices in a different way. This is not to suggest that this is a definitive guide, but we offer this analysis as a generative stimulus to develop further inquiries and pedagogical thinking about care-full ways of learning and teaching in higher education. In doing so, we argue that care in academia needs to be both responsive and deliberately provocative to recognise entanglements of space/time/matter and human/non-human bodies. We suggest that care-full writing practices that involve writers in creative, sensorial, and connective spaces, are cognisant of, and make us ready to engage in, relations with all others (human and non-human matter). This requires us to be attentive and attuned, 'open and alive to each meeting ..., to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly' (Barad, 2007, p.x). Moving towards caring together in academia invites us to be alert to the ways in which creative writing, collaborative writing, and creative digital pedagogies can produce relational forms of engagement across the digital and physical spaces of academic practices. Storying otherwise, as an act rooted in collaboration, material, and sensory engagements, has the potential to create spaces for such care-full attentiveness, where writers connect with their environments, themselves, and others, and in doing so reach out in more intentional ways that strengthen (academic) communities.

Acknowledgements

The authors did not use generative AI technologies in the creation of this manuscript.

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