



Access as Materiality:
Crip digital futurities in printmaking

Slide 1: Welcome

Good afternoon, it's a real privilege to be sharing this space with you all today. My name is Chelsey Campbell, I'm a queer disabled artist, educator, and cultural worker from amiskwacîwâskahikan, or Beaver Hills House, on Treaty 6 territory, also known as Edmonton, Alberta in so-called Canada. My pronouns are they/them, she/her, either/or are fine but 'they' makes me feel very seen. For access, I'm going to give a brief visual description of myself, I am a fat, white, non-binary femme with long-ish brown hair parted in the centre and bushy eyebrows that peak above oversized gold-rimmed stretched hexagonal frames. I'm wearing a soft pistachio green linen pantsuit with a cream turtleneck, complete with my fave pair of cow print shoes.

Before we start, I'm going to begin by asking you all to pass these pipe cleaners around the room — help yourself to as little or as many as you would like!! Personally I like to engage my bodymind kinetically when doing deep thinking and listening. IYKYK, but if you haven't experienced the joy of fidgeting through research talks I recommend it!

Slide 2: In situ

I always like to begin with situating myself in place. I'm here today as an uninvited guest on the territory of xučyun, the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo-speaking Ohlone people. I want to extend gratitude to the traditional carers and knowledge holders whose generous care labour has enriched this land since time immemorial.

The First People's connection to the land teaches us about our inherent responsibility to protect and respect Mother Earth. With land acknowledgement, we honour the ancestors and children who have been buried here, the missing and murdered Indigenous women, men, and 2-spirit people, and the process of ongoing collective healing for all beings from the violence of colonialism.

Slide 3: Our home on native land

I'm a white settler of Scottish descent from so-called Canada. It's been my privilege to be born and raised in amiskwacîy, my home *on* native land. I have learnt many generous, tender lessons from the land, nourished by kinship networks whose roots grow slowly, *deeply*, over time and space.

As a call to action, I want to highlight the really beautiful work of Indigenous-led organization, Native-Land at native [dash] land [dot] ca (<https://native-land.ca/>). It's an opportunity to explore Turtle Island through the traditional languages, territories, and stories without the colonial imposition of artificial borders and violent erasure of traditional names.

Slide 4: Crip Advisor

I'd like to begin with an acknowledgement of gratitude to all the people behind the scenes whose labour, care, and dedication makes our gathering possible today. Often done by immigrant femmes of colour, their care work influences every surface and space we inhabit. Their presence is felt everywhere, although often treated as unseen and invisible. So to the cleaners, maintenance staff, technicians, students, and all the members of the Cal community whose care labour makes institutional spaces generative, safe, and nurturing. *Thank you.*

I want to say such a sincere thank you to the entire Art Practice department and the Berkeley community for the warm welcome. To Stephanie, Greg, Jill, Al-an, and Erik, you have all my gratitude for organizing this really incredible opportunity to experience UC Berkeley. And finally, to every bodymind in this space, I see you, I appreciate you. It's a privilege to share and to be in community with you all. *Thank you.*

Throughout our time together, I invite you to listen to your bodymind — feel free to sit, stand, move, shift, tic, fidget, and stim, whatever is comfortable for you. For accessibility, I will be folding in visual descriptions of the images on the screen. This is part of a broader access practice, in which, I am constantly exploring, examining, and critiquing how we make access and accessibility a real, tangible property in pedagogy, studio practice, and community.

That said, disability is not a monolith, and there are as many unique access needs as there are disabled people so I want to acknowledge my personal room for growth in this matter. We are all in an act of becoming and so I wish to be held accountable for the ways in which I can become more equitable and just in building access for others.

On the screen, there is the soft edge of rag paper on a dark wood background. My name, pronouns, my email address and website are there should you wish to reach out. If you would like to follow along with a transcript of this talk, you can find a copy on my website under the resources/artist talk tab (chelseycampbell.com). There's also a QR code on the bottom right that links you to the transcript. On the top right corner of the paper, there is the Crip Advisor seal embossed into the soft rag paper. Two icons of the classic wheelchair user are placed back to back to form a pair of outrageous spectacles. My monogram is designed after the 'Trip Advisor' logo as part of an ongoing institutional critique/performance work in which I inhabit the role of Resident Crip Advisor, my very own administrative assistant cataloguing acts of ableism enacted on my body and community in social, institutional, and internalized space.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that throughout this talk, there will be mentions of systemic and structural 'isms,' like ableism, racism, and disablism. These 'isms' never travel alone or lightly, and there are likely some individuals sharing space today that have embodied experience with ableism, medical trauma, or discrimination in academics. So I want to issue a trigger warning that we will have some very brief mentions throughout the presentation to contextualize some of the work. Please centre the care you need and deserve throughout our time together.

Slide 5: Access as Materiality

My research-creation centres crip storytelling as queer alchemy. A critical tool in transforming intersecting oppressions into evidence of queer-disabled ingenuity, joyful resistance, and collective liberation. And this feels particularly profound to be talking about my community *with* community *in* community at Berkeley, home of disability rights and the independent living movement. Eli Clare, white disabled trans activist/writer, speaks about manifesting community through this action of writing. That his longing for community was willful, breathing life into a kinship and care network that he hadn't yet had access to but would come into being through this act of research-creation. That's queer crip magic. And the fact that I'm here in community is not lost on me, so I just want to hold space and acknowledge that there's some real queer crip magic in the air today!!

Today I will be sharing a little bit about my research-creation practice and how I'm looking at this concept of "access as materiality" as it relates to my teaching, studio art, as well as, my community-based practice.

Slide 6: Nothing about us without us.

A frayed rectangle of white linen rests on the screen. The jagged edges of the woven cloth tease out, stretching like fingertips dragging along the surface of still, almost jet-black water. The top left corner of the linen is carelessly folded over itself, waiting for a moment of care, a gentle caress. Short vertical dashes and twisted knots in corporeal hues of reds, purples, and greenish yellows coalesce to form a palette of bruising and healing. At the centre of the cloth, "**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US**" rests in stark relief against colourful blooms of embroidery floss.

Nothing about us without us.

A rallying cry, a proclamation. Nothing about us without us became the slogan of the Disability Rights movement. For me, it's a starting point for every work, every space I inhabit, a reminder of the core principle of intersectionality within the disability justice movement — as Aurora

Levins Morales says “we are led by those who most know these systems.”¹ So nothing about us without us is a moment to acknowledge and give gratitude. It’s an offering, a manifestation.

Nothing about us without us.

Slide 7: Crip gifts

If you are not familiar with the word ‘crip,’ then let me say how honoured I am to introduce you to some pure disabled magic! Crip is a reclamation of language, a political act, a way of making and holding space for sick, chronically ill, mad, d/Deaf, neurodivergent and disabled kin. Queer, autistic and disabled nonbinary femme writer Leah Lakshmi Piepszna-Samarasinha puts it best: “***Our crip bodies are gifts, brilliant, fierce, skilled, valuable. Assets that teach us things are relevant and vital to ourselves, our communities, our movements, the whole goddamn planet.***”²

As a note, throughout this talk, I will be using crip and disabled interchangeably, although I recognize not everyone identifies under these terms. This is not to diminish the individual experience of disability, nor the power of naming and claiming ourselves, but rather, to acknowledge the disabling socio-political and rhetorical forces that impact a bodymind’s capacity to fully and authentically thrive.

Slide 8: Cripistemology

My practice utilizes a cripistemological framework which Merri Lisa Johnson and Robert McRuer describe as “placing crip(s) at the beginning or center of the production of knowledge.”³ This methodology explores the production of knowledge *from* the embodied experience of disability — ways of knowing, being and surviving the pervasiveness of ableism and cure rhetoric connected to my own lived experience. This emphasis on lived experience is important to note, as Alyson Patsavas in “Recovering a Cripistemology of Pain” states that this

¹ Sins Invalid, *Skin, Tooth and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer*, 2nd ed, Berkeley: Self-published, 2017, <http://www.sinsinvalid.org/disability-justice-primer>.

² Leah Lakshmi Piepszna-Samarasinha, *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2017), 31.

³ Merri Lisa Johnson and Robert McRuer, “Proliferating Cripistemologies: A Virtual Roundtable,” *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 8: 2 (2014), 158.

socially-situated experience commits “a specific positionality to mark the limits of the knowledge claims produced.” She goes on to state, “the assumption that we “know” another person’s experience is, arguably, one of the most pernicious manifestations of privilege.”⁴ So this framework situates the lived experiences of disability within systems of power and privilege.

Slide 9: “Intersectionality” is a big fancy word for my life

All of these frameworks simply restate what prolific, generous queer disabled of colour writer Mia Mingus said on her blog *Leaving Evidence* in 2010: “Intersectionality” is a big fancy word for my life; for your life, for our lives.”

Slide 10: Wherever you are is where I want to be

On the screen, we return again to the embroidered cloth, the scale so stretched and exaggerated that the warp and weft of the cloth are laid bare. It sits defiantly against a dark wall, a billboard, a message reaching out demanding notice.

Nothing about us without us.

I made this embroidery from what Piepszna-Samarasinha calls “the majestic disabled revolutionary space”⁵ of our beds, having lost my mobility due to an access issue at my institution. This wasn’t new, neither the ebb and flow in my mobility nor the constant negotiation for access with a colonial institution. We build whole worlds from our beds — online crip spaces and expansive digital kinship networks where chronically ill, mad, neurodivergent, sick and disabled communities share resources, embodied experiences, and political reimaginings. Our despairs and joys become the narrative threads that hold our outrage and celebrate our collective survival.

⁴ Alyson Patsavas, “Recovering a Cripistemology of Pain: Leaky Bodies, Connective Tissue, and Feeling Discourse,” *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 8: 2 (2014), 205.

⁵ Leah Lakshmi Piepszna-Samarasinha, *Care Work: Dreaming of Disability Justice*, (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018), 9.

This work was placed in FAB Gallery's main window as part of my MFA printmaking thesis show *all of us, also*. This window is in front of the campus' main access road, where 10,000s of students, faculty, and staff walk, limp, roll, bike, and drive past daily. The title of the work, "wherever you are is where I want to be," is a celebrated quote within queer disabled community from Mia Mingus,⁶ her care work extending far beyond the Bay area through our digital networks.

Nothing about us without us.

Slide 11: *drift*

So we've discussed all these beautiful crip ways of knowing and being, well get ready for a hard left, I'd like to contextualize my practice and highlights some early themes that emerged in my past work that still influence me today.

My previous research explored patient narratives and the medical-industrial complex, drawing on Foucault's exploration of the medical gaze and objectification of patient experience. Using my own history with chronic illness, pain and disability, my work navigated through the dichotomous nature of patient and person, drifting between the intersections of empirical medical data and lived experience.

Slide 12: *bodyimages*

It was also around the time that I started to develop my book arts practice, drawn to how books contain complex understandings of space and time, a concept which I come to understand now as 'crip time.'⁷ Books are sculptural, holding embodied knowledge that transfers from the artist's hands to the audience's. It's one of the rare mediums that you are invited to touch and hold.

⁶ Mia Mingus, "Wherever You Are Is Where I Want To Be: Crip Solidarity." Leaving Evidence (blog), May 3, 2010, <https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2010/05/03/where-ever-you-are-is-where-i-want-to-be-crip-solidarity>

⁷ Alison Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 27.

Designed to look like a doctor's clipboard, the book sighs open, revealing imagined and reconstructed bodily spaces created through copperplate etchings and photolithographs. The book's metal casing is cold and heavy to the touch, an immediate spark of discomfort like bare flesh kissing the cool metallic surface of an examination table. Sourcing text from Susan Sontag's *As Consciousness is Harnessed to Flesh*, which journals from her own illness experience, **bodyimages** is one of the first examples of the practice of autoethnography emerging in my practice.

Slide 13: (in)visible

Photography, 3D modelling, performance, printmaking, and medical documentation all informed my research practice at this time as I explored what I referred to as "impending patienthood" and how it disrupted my relationship to my physical self and domestic space. Just so we are clear — "Impending patienthood" is a wildly euphemistic term for working through deeply-held internalized ableism.

This is a page from an artist book folio called **(in)visible**. Which brought together text from Susan Sontag's *Illness as Metaphor* with my own medical scan datasets. The images in the book were constructed from a recent MRI of my failing hip. This marks the first time I used my own medical scan data, and I return to that dataset over and over, building a kind of relationship with the data that I've sliced and sculpted and held. Capturing screenshots in medical software, OsiriX, and layering them in Photoshop, I developed this back-and-forth digital methodology to build complex, soft, almost liquid forms of bone and bodily mass that I would eventually print as photolithographs. The pages of the book are full bleed, forcing the reader to balance the paper's razer-cut edges on the vulnerable flesh of their fingertips to avoid marking the inky surface. Under the leaky body, blind embossed text rests quietly, almost invisible in "**this liminal position.**"

Slide 14: The Pines

Replicating a decorative headboard, a small artist book stretches out, revealing its delicately folded pages. Unlike the previous two books, the waxed, almost transparent tissue paper is

unruly, demanding two cupped hands to cradle in and a soft touch. Along the top of the headboard, text emerges illuminated against the carved wood: '***Patients must not write, patients must not laugh, patients must lie still, patients must relax...***'

Recovering from a major surgery and a traumatizing experience in the medical-industrial complex, I was reading Lisa Diedrich's *Treatments* while on bedrest. In the book, Diedrich describes this imaginary sanatorium called The Pines with a sign above each patient's bed that contained this 'Patients must' text. Tracing the outline of the antique carved folding screen that formed my own recovery bed's headboard at home, I remember feeling this intense flash of grief and sorrow and shame and anger because while I knew that while the story in this book was imagined, the trauma, the medicalized system that perpetuates systems of harm against disabled people is very lived and very real, and that it this violence impacts intersectional bodyminds disproportionately. It was at that time I also picked up *Care Work* by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha at the suggestion of my crip elder Danielle Peers. So when I say that stories are transformative, let me say that this is proof. The tender access work of their book opened an entire world for me, it lead me to Disability Justice, to community, to this moment.

Books are portals, an opening, *magic*.

I returned to my studies as a full-blown queer crip in 2019. This book is the first thing I made in grad school, and it still has such relevance to my practice now. Both in the material relationship between the technological precision of the laser-cut wood book-covers contrasted against this delicateness, this soft, almost organic form of the hand-cut paper with toner transfer. It also illuminates the beginning of a visual language in my studio practice that I utilize to mark my specific positionality. Using objects from Western-European colonial archives, as well as my own collection of family antiques and heirlooms, to position my white settler middle-class privilege.

This language, this balance between power and privilege, became critical. Especially, as I began to look at my work as a site of radical possibility, a place to amplify and celebrate queer disabled community, to build access through artistic practice, and to create openings for crip futurities in printmaking.

Slide 15: Autoethnography

Through tenacious vulnerability, crip storytelling makes visible our struggles and hopes while holding space for kinship and connection. Knowing first-hand the generative capacity of storytelling, my research began to focus on the ways that disabled, chronically ill, sick, and mad communities shared stories as a survival mechanism in the crush of white supremacy, capitalism, and ableism.

Autoethnography, the storytelling of personal narratives in a specific cultural context, became a methodological pathway for me to explore storytelling within a Western-European context without appropriating Indigenous oral storytelling traditions. And this distinction is important to make when we take into consideration the question surrounding the production of knowledge and marking our personal limits.

In this research methodology, stories are personal, political, and grounded in the collective. Later, I came to work specifically within the framework of Norman Denzin's performance autoethnography, which moves "back and forth between the personal and the political, the biographical and the historical"⁸ to stimulate collective political imagination. Denzin describes the radical possibilities of this methodology, saying, "Under this framework we teach one another. We push against racial, sexual and class boundaries in order to achieve the gift of freedom; the gift of love, self-caring; the gift of empowerment, teaching and learning to transgress. We talk about painful experiences, those moments where race, class, gender, sexuality intersect. We take these risks because we have created safe space for such performances ... We are free in these spaces to explore painful experiences, to move forward into new spaces, into new identities, new relationships, new radical forms of scholarship, new epiphanies." and I'd like to add new access, in ways we had only dreamt of before and have yet to dream.

⁸ Norman Denzin, *Performance Autoethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*. (New York: Routledge, 2018), 47.

Slide 17: writing ourselves in

Shayda Kafai in *Crip Kinship: The Disability Justice & Art Activism of Sins Invalid* speaks so beautifully about the power of writing ourselves in: “I have thought a lot about what can happen when we tell our own bodymind stories, when we resist erasure and write ourselves *in*. How can telling our bodymind stories instigate change? How do we alter our timelines and collaboratively create new futures when we learn our histories and share our bodymind stories? How does our relationship to ourselves change when we proclaim our bodyminds in all our rolling, limping, drooling, frenetically stimming, and Mad glory? We can reclaim our willful resistance as a bold tool. They invite us to construct and revel in a liberatory place to recover from ableist, racist, cis-heteropatriarchal elimination, and to write ourselves *in* despite being told that we do not matter.”⁹

Slide 18: spoon rest

A long line of acrylic spoons stretch across an unseen horizon, a collection of souvenirs,¹⁰ traces of some unspoken experience. They feel familiar, not unlike the small silver spoons that delicately rest against velvet cases in the hazy, sun-soaked kitchens of childhood memory. Still, the blush of neon orange hints at something more profound. A warning, perhaps, but the radiant colour feels unexpectedly exultant, defiant in its fluorescent hue.

And if we return to this principle of access as materiality it’s worth noting that this image is from my thesis exhibition, where I worked closely with Gallery Manager and wonderful human, April Dean, to reconfigure and rethink gallery standards. All the work was hung at a lower sight line (from 56-58” to 48-50”), dynamic compositions were used when possible to engage a range of bodyminds in the space, replicas were made so people could touch and feel pieces when possible, fidget toys and seats were in every space, and each work was accompanied by an audio and written alt-text as poetry transcript inspired by the access work of Bojana Coklyat and Finnegan Shannon.¹¹ Access became a real material property as we thought through the

⁹ Shayda Kafai, *Crip Kinship: The Disability Justice & Art Activism of Sins Invalid* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 21.

¹⁰ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 135.

¹¹ Bojana Coklyat and Finnegan Shannon, *Alt-Text as Poetry* (website), <https://alt-text-as-poetry.net/>.

exhibition and this is important to note when we think of Denzin's framework that feeling safe is critical to taking radical risks.

Slide 18: unnatural

Denzin's framework, this back-and-forth methodology, also influences how I think through my work. There are a couple of objects in this slide that you'll see again, the cane and patient belongings bag, the pill — they get recontextualized in print sculptures, and in VR. I explore this for two reasons: one is that they are complex objects and I want to spend more time with them, there's so much storytelling under the surface of different materials; and secondly, as part of a broader care ethic, I incorporate sustainability in my art practice both in a material sense and in my bodymind's energy levels. This sustainability practice means that I recontextualize or reuse existing work, seek second-hand materials, partnering with industrial shops to purchase their material waste, and constantly raiding the paper recycling bin in the print studio. It also means that I explore using technology as an extension of my body in printmaking, so in the case of this work, my dear Trotec Speedy 400 Laser Engraver at the University of Alberta's graduate print studio.

On the screen, spoons surge like uneasy waves, erratic at first with giant swells of reddish-orange punctuated by small breaks, a singular spoon so modest it's almost entirely consumed within the surrounding chaos. A word calls out, *unnatural*¹² rattles against the edges of medical data and hospital ephemera etched deeply into the underside of each spoon. Memories of the medical-industrial complex that shamed my bodymind and reduced its disabled splendour to qualitative data points to disrupt and intervene upon. A sudden break.

Calm, quiet.

Still.

¹² Paul Redding, "Science, medicine, and illness: rediscovering the patient as a person," *Troubled Bodies: Critical Perspectives on Postmodernism, Medical Ethics, and the Body*, ed. Paul A. Komesaroff (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 96.

Slide 19: testimony

Inspired by a performance piece by Latina writer-activist crip poet Maria Palacios, *spoon rest* explores unlearning through qualitative data and mystory.¹³ In her piece “Testimony,” Maria moves past feelings of shame through this process of stripping away ableist declarations placed on her bodymind (by herself and others) and arrives at a place of deep loving crip embodiment.

spoon rest was originally envisioned to capture a recovery period as I had an emergency hip surgery on March 13, 2020, little did I know it would also capture the collective grief of a global pandemic. The work was conceptualized using spoon theory, a self-pacing metaphor by Christine Miserandino,¹⁴ personal journal entries, and qualitative data from my phone tracing the first thirty days before the pandemic until the lifting of the first lock-down sixty days later, which also coincided with my recovery period. Each spoon marks a day, the size of the spoon is calculated based on the steps taken, stairs climbed, my emotional state, and medical interventions for pain.

In search of soft and sacred spaces, a row emerges after the crescendo. Quieter than before. There is time, a gentler pace to consume each spoon one by one. There is grief here too. So much, in fact, that I question whether the spoons got actually got smaller or whether they were just crushed under the weight of our collective sorrow. But each spoon, every memory demands a pause, a moment of rest. The past *dis-ease*¹⁵, the shame, the medicalized body begging for care is replaced with something tangibly softer. A cat sitting defiantly on a wheelchair, a washcloth caressing soft folds and craggy scars, a crip rebirth.¹⁶

¹³ Norman Denzin, *Performance Autoethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*. (New York: Routledge, 2018), 41.

¹⁴ Christine Miserandino, “The Spoon Theory Written by Christine Miserandino,” *But You Don’t Look Sick: Support for Those with Invisible Illness or Chronic Illness* (blog), April 25, 2013, butyoudontlooksick.com/the_spoon_theory.

¹⁵ Sonya Huber, *Pain Woman Takes Your Keys, and Other Essays from a Nervous System* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 19.

¹⁶ Shayda Kafai, *Crip Kinship: The Disability Justice & Art Activism of Sins Invalid* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 159.

Slide 20: narrative threads

Throughout the pandemic, I found comfort in stories. The tales we tell each other, the narrative threads from community and friends provided safe harbour from the ableist rhetoric crashing down with each wave of the pandemic. Stories are a healing salve for collective trauma and loneliness. I return again to Aurora Levins Morales, disabled Latina activist, writer, poet, performer, wearer of so many fabulous hats, who beautifully captures the generative capacity of sharing our pain, our trauma, and grief.

“... in telling each other about the fabric of our daily lives, we could see how our strands were part of something much larger, that the struggles we faced in our relationships, our sexuality, our work and educational lives, our sense of self and purpose—none of them were isolated problems caused by personal defects of character, as we’d been told. Once we understood them and framed them to each other and ourselves as societal, outrage took the place of shame.”¹⁷

Slide 21: cripkerchiefs

Six handkerchiefs made from laser-cut Japanese tissue papers hang from clear acrylic panels — suspended off the wall, they gently breathe and sigh as bodies move in the space surrounding them. Each handkerchief is floating on a bed of soft cotton-rag paper, the fragile slip of tissue resting gently on the surface. Brilliant lush colours of sky blue, ochre, and flame orange are arranged in a row, the alternating colours resembling some sort of celebratory bunting.

There’s something magical about handkerchiefs, like our stories, they are kept close. Tucked safely away in our pockets to absorb the residual warmth of our bodies — only to be plucked from that warm embrace to offer comfort and care to ourselves or to extend an act of care and kindness to another.

¹⁷ Brooke Lober, Aurora Levins Morales, “Everything’s Connected: An Interview with Aurora Levins Morales,” *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* 18: 2 (October 2019), pp. 372-393

To wipe away tears from grief,
or anger,
or laughter,
or some potent cocktail of all of the above.

They catch our secrets and hold them for us.

The intimate embrace of the warp and weft in textiles are like our crip care networks; each thread, every stitch, is made stronger by its interconnectedness to one another.¹⁸ It was through this work that I began to find community, so I'm going to turn it over to my dear crip kin Jason Purcell, Arsenal Pulp Press author, musician, co-owner of the best independent bookshop in amiskwacîy Glass Bookshop, and all around angel human. I had the privilege of working with Jason and director Tatiana Zagorac in 2021 on a short film about their beautiful poetry book, **SWOLLENING**, which premiered at LitFest last fall. The clip is about a minute, so I invite you all to gently stretch, drink some water. I'll let Jason take it from here:

Slide 22: interdependency

SWOLLENING clip, interview with author Jason Purcell, film by Tatiana Zagorac (2022).

<https://glassbookshop.com/item/6nvBPL0yqFjEG2LkJ04kDw>

Slide 23: queer crip magic

A tender interlocking of blue threads form a spectacular lace enrobing the words '**QUEER CRIP MAGIC.**' The lace unfurls from the centre like freshly-picked wildflowers, their petals locked in the sleepy embrace of morning. The embroidered details feel tenuous as if breath could release the threads to dance in the current of a soft exhale. And yet, the boldness of the text grounds it, defiantly holding its place.

Using archival imagery of wedding handkerchiefs, *cripkerchiefs* celebrates the labour of femmes, and narratives of disabled joy, community and resistance. It's a response, a love letter

¹⁸ Leah Lakshmi Piepszna-Samarasinha, *Care Work: Dreaming of Disability Justice* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018), 33.

to Johanna Hedva's *Sick Woman Theory*, in which she explores how illness, disability, and vulnerability are historically linked to the domestic and 'feminine' to exploit and devalue care labour, in particular, the labour of poor, immigrant femmes of colour.¹⁹ These wedding handkerchiefs were traditionally generated by the hands of women and carried as a precious belonging due to the fragile and vulnerable nature of the cloth. This work is, as Hedva so beautifully puts it in *Sick Woman Theory*, "for those who are faced with their vulnerability and unbearable fragility, every day, and so have to fight for their experience to be not only honoured, but first made visible."²⁰

Sourcing text from disabled writers, conversations with my community, as well as personal journal entries from the pandemic, each cloth is etched with a fragment of our story — a narrative thread captured on the surface. The laser engraver critically exposes the warp and weft of the handkerchief, requiring a delicate touch to keep the text from fraying and disintegrating from the surface of the weave. The fragile state of the handkerchief mirrors the tender state of our stories, of recovery and care.

Slide 24: recovery room

Replicating the comforting form of my favourite walking stick, a cane leans against the wall, waiting for a moment of activation, *of touch*. Next to the cane, a bag sits, its exhausted belly sighing onto the cool, reflective acrylic surface. The text, '**PATIENT BELONGINGS**,' cut deeply into the form, revealing a clandestine secret — a hint of copper gleaming in the soft glow of purple light.

Slide 25: all dressed up (no place to go)

Using the same medical MRI scan dataset from *in(visible)*, I virtually reconstructed my body — sliced into paper-thin morsels of data that trace the irregular contours of my malformed bone. There's a hushed intimacy to spend time with your body, to feel the contours of flesh and form, to materialize your data, to empathize with and for our unseen edifice.

¹⁹ Andreas Chatzidakis, Jamie Hakim, Jo Littler, Catherine Rottenberg, and Lynne Segal (The Care Collective), *The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence*. Brooklyn: Verso, 2020), 24.

²⁰ Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory," *Topical Cream* (website), April 1, 2022, <https://topicalcream.org/features/sick-woman-theory/>.

Slide 26: good things come to those who wait (or so I've been told)

good things come to those who wait (or so I've been told) is a to-scale model of the 'patient belongings' bag that I brought home from the hospital on March 14, 2020, the first day of the lockdown for many of us. It was full of care items from friends intended for a hospital stay but instead, the bag sat unused as I was sent home to recover in an absence of care during a period of profound carelessness. Sheltering at home and with limited access to technology or new materials, I used a 3D scanner app on my iPhone and a lazy susan to capture a scan of the bag. I moved the model through multiple 3D modelling software (meshmixer, rhino, cinema 4D), importing the final 3D model as volume into an open-source medical imaging software called 3D Slicer. This allowed me to create axial slices of the model replicating the process of MRI scan data visualization.

Converted into slices and exported as .pngs, I would make these wild arrangements in Illustrator to use as much of the surface of the paper as possible. It looks similar to a texture map if you are familiar with 3D modelling, but much more chaotic. Using a Cricut machine as a matrix, printing razor-thin cuts onto the paper substrate. It took 2 and a half months to arrange and cut all the slices, all 1608 of them, and another 3 and a half months to construct. So. many. papercuts.

Fabricated from reclaimed prints and constructed layer by layer by aligning edges with fingertips gently, softly tracing the cut boundaries. The surface is refined and softened through the repetitions of a worn piece of fine-grit sandpaper, the details of ink-stained memories captured on each layer and striation erased and altered to form something new.

Slide 27: dream beyond the wounds

A large sheet of white cotton-rag paper floats off the wall, a vibrant pinkish-purple hue emanates from behind an expansive textile constructed of laser-etched and intricately cut flame orange tissue paper. The surface of the cloth is host to so many wrinkles and folds that, at times, it resembles freshly tilled earth. Playful loop-de-loops of needlework surround the centre of the fabric, like twisting tendrils stretching towards the warmth of the sun.

Slide 29: big sick energy

Flowers joyfully bloom on each corner, a garden of feminized labour so tenderly cared for and nurtured. '**big sick energy**'²¹ glows triumphantly at the centre of the linen, the seeds of crip imagination resting in the fertile soil. The scent of fresh, damp earth weighs heavy in the air.²²

The title of this work, *dream beyond the wounds*, is in reference to adrienne maree brown's article in *Ding Magazine* by the same title.

Slide 29: a responsibility to imagine

In which brown states, "Find the wounded places in your community, where thinking and action are stagnant—bring the medicine of imagination. We have the gift and responsibility to imagine. And yes, this is a dark age. And a darkness such as this is the perfect setting for our dreams. Visionary fiction is a way to shape dreams of justice — to understand that art is not neutral, that what we dream and create is a practice ground for the futures we need."²³

Slide 30: queer crip print

Printmaking has always been magic, a radical site of collective imagination and community. I remember when my pain and mobility shifted and most traditional forms became inaccessible to perform myself, there was this real sense of grief and loss. Because if you ask any printmaker we are suckers for the most gruelling repetitive tasks. I think that's because through the physical act of printmaking we end up being in dialogue with our medium, stones and screens have ghosts, copperplate etchings foul bite, and some work talks back way more than we would like, but I *love* it.

²¹ This work is a joyful love letter to Johanna Hedva's *Sick Woman Theory*. *dream beyond the wounds* "is for those who are faced with their vulnerability and unbearable fragility, every day, and so have to fight for their experience to be not only honoured, but first made visible." Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory," *Topical Cream* (website), April 1, 2022, <https://topicalcream.org/features/sick-woman-theory/>.

²² Zena Sharman, *The Care We Dream of: Liberatory & Transformative Approaches to LGBTQ+ Health* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 31.

²³ adrienne maree brown, "Dream Beyond the Wounds," *Ding Magazine* (website), accessed on June 17, 2022, <https://dingdingding.org/issue-2/dream-beyond-the-wounds/>

So finding ways, in dialogue with technology, to embody labour in different, sustainable ways for my bodymind has been medicine for my imagination. And my research-creation practice has made space for me to reimagine how I can make my printmaking, community, and teaching practices more sustainable, equitable, and accessible. ***That's queer crip magic.***

Slide 31: chill pills

Pills spill down the wall like confetti, emitting a jubilant heliotropic glow that pools in the shadows of the room. Four oblong pills marked with black, reflective halves dart through clusters of small, brightly coloured pills. The obtuse proportions feel hard to swallow, but the sugary pink edges spark a certain delight. The tang of sweetness as it hits the tip of your tongue only to be carried away by a surge of cool, crisp water. Aloe and pathos clippings spill out of two pills. Impossible to contain their wildness within cupped hands, the plants twist along the mess of wires²⁴ that hang from each pill like IV lines. Nurtured by a queer alchemy of care and community, roots spread slowly, patiently, *deeply*.²⁵

Planted in love and growing closer through the expansive and intertwined networks of our crip kinship.²⁶

Slide 32: know thyself as virtual reality

I want to end with one final work as I just had the privilege of celebrating the opening of last Friday. *Know Thyself as a Virtual Reality* is an exhibition of seven new virtual reality artworks made using personal data (such as medical, biometric, and social media data), and it's part of the broader KTVR multi-year research project led by Marilène Oliver and Lianne McTavish. It was an honour to be invited to work alongside such an incredible group of artists and scholars to explore the intersections of technology, VR, and our data bodies.

²⁴ Digital networks are critical in crip world-building, we make entire communities and worlds from the revolutionary space of our beds. Shayda Kafai, *Crip Kinship: The Disability Justice & Art Activism of Sins Invalid* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 118.

²⁵ Zena Sharman, *The Care We Dream of: Liberatory & Transformative Approaches to LGBTQ+ Health* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 31.

²⁶ Shayda Kafai, *Crip Kinship: The Disability Justice & Art Activism of Sins Invalid* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 57.

Slide 33: rest with me awhile yet

For this project, I had the privilege of working with Peter Seres at the Peter S Allen MR Research Centre at the University of Alberta to acquire a new full-body high-resolution MRI scan dataset. Which I incorporated into a new VR and print installation work titled ***a vase, a vessel, a body, a home***. The work explores the pleasures and politics of rest, complete with a very comfortable bed in the middle of the gallery space, a small library of crisp books to curl up with, and a laser-engraved bedcloth that implores the audience to “***rest with me awhile yet.***”

Slide 34: rest as resistance

Lianne McTavish, incredible white settler art historian at the University of Alberta (her work on the early modern body is fascinating), describes my VR work in KTVR as follows “The work of Trisha Hersey is a key inspiration, for she argues that bodies are sites of liberation. To proclaim the value of rest and recuperation is to refuse the demand for constant productivity that fuels white supremacy and capitalism. Campbell’s VR work features a bedroom as a majestic, revolutionary space. All bodies are welcomed into this space and its conceptual community; they are encouraged to rest without hesitation or guilt, building the sustenance needed to resist the relentless demands of an oppressive world that privileges what bodies can do rather than [who] they are.”²⁷

Slide 35: *a vase, a vessel, a body, a home*

Constructed from a LiDAR scan of my domestic space, 3D models, and my MRI scan dataset, the bedroom is diffuse with light and the comfort of plants drinking in the golden sunshine pouring through the windows. Soft billowing drapes breathe and sigh in the space, almost replicating a flowing stream, a babbling brook. Birds chatter outside a large window, the view obscured by colour blooms of data that resemble the vibrant pinks and oranges of a prairie sunset. As limbs reach and stretch from the prone position of the bed, the data recedes, revealing “*wear my home and call it my body, wear this body and call it home.*” *As your body eases further into the comforting embrace of the bed.*

²⁷ Lianne McTavish, “a vase, a vessel, a body, a home,” *Know Thyself as Virtual Reality exhibition* (website), Accessed on March 1, 2023.

Slide 37: teaching

Pedagogy and practice are critical sites for joyful resistance. Built on the foundations of Disability Justice, tenderness, and care ethics, my teaching practice constructs learning communities as crip-centric liberated zones.²⁸ Through this methodological approach, access becomes material, a tangible property that defines how we make and hold space with, and for, each other. My pedagogy approaches teaching and technical instruction through crip frameworks, so things like engaging bodyminds kinetically to focus when exploring new skills or engaging in deep collective thinking, and assigning readings in multiple mediums for accessibility.

I just want to share an example of this practice of access in the classroom and how it builds joyful, generative learning environments. In Word & Image, a Book Arts Printmaking course at the University of Alberta, I use Finnegan Shannon and Bojana Coklyat's Alt Text as Poetry to build more complex and moving experiences with their artist books projects. We explore book arts as full-bodymind experience in the way that books hold space and time, how they stimulate the senses through touch, smell, and even taste. And by approaching this artistic practice beyond just ink on a page or printmaking process, we're building whole worlds.

A flag-book stretches open, fragments of childhood memories spill out like little saccharine tufts of pink tulle. Caught on small slips of dusty pinks and baby blues, text dances across the surface of halftone photographs. Small satin pink bows peek out from the paper flags, hinting at some secret hidden passage beneath. "the checked tiles felt endless."

Slide 38: little saccharine

A music box rings out, the tune is familiar but the tinny melody moves slow and disjointedly. In the box, a pink paper booklet rests. A ballerina cutout is posed, ready to spring to perfect form at the turn of a page. In a quiet, almost forgettable drawer, the artist book waits —tucked away like memories.

Slide 39: machmoum.

The persimmon red envelope is warm and welcoming, an invitation to open. At first tug of the thread, something faintly sweet and familiar lifts into the air. The pages of *machmoum*. are long, almost unyielding — demanding two hands to hold on. "**because I'm afraid of letting go**" is written on the

²⁸ Shayda Kafai, *Crip Kinship: The Disability Justice & Art Activism of Sins Invalid* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2021), 18.

surface of the open spread, trampling over the delicate blooms of jasmine. A slip of silver leaf paper and a lush green leaf rests underneath, cherished.

Slide 41: Notions of Care

Simulacrum of sewing notions, buttons, scissors, thread and a thimble, spill out in a playful composition. They are posed to reveal snippets of text, "**something new**" threaded into each book. Hands touch, arms reach, longing for a moment of connection, an act of care. Each notion has a place, a snug pocket to rest within. Trails of red thread streak across the neat surface of the **Notions of Care** box.

Slide 42: FEEL

An exploration of softness, **FEEL** is supple in hand. An ode to Judith Butler forming a warm comforting invitation for bodyminds to stim, tic, and play. Built on collaboration and demanding a tactile touch, "**hold me**" echoes out from the centre of the stitched page. A playful request to do-it-yourself and do-it-together.

Slide 43: SNAP

Last thing I'm going to share today is about the project I'm currently working on. It also is an opportunity to share just one of my favourite places in the world with you all, SNAP, the Society for Northern Alberta Print-Artists. SNAP is an artist-run centre, printshop, and gallery in amiskwacîy. Last year I had the distinct privilege of serving as SNAP's interim director after serving on the board for many years. During this time, I developed funding for SNAP's first-ever Queer Crip Residency, which brings together 5 queer disabled local artists to explore Access as Materiality and create 5 new zines to disseminate in community and bring the conversation around access into more arts spaces. So there are some lovely familiar faces there, including Jason Purcell, and Sylvie Ellis from that slide. Moving forward, I'm really excited to continue researching and exploring crip aesthetics and Access as Materiality. Especially focusing on intersections between printmaking, technology and access.

Slide 44: thank you!

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