

I have devised a method, as my original contribution in the PhD, that is called *meditative enquiry* (Stephens 2021), and am completing my PhD by publication. I propose to present a variation of meditative enquiry in the form of a type of 'Imaginary Conversation' combining poetry and short-form prose; a type of theoretical, speculative fiction, a type of poem and prose combination; a type of prose-poem, that interrupts itself. I can read from extracts of the text that has been sent to a publisher.

This latest enquiry is based on Maurice Blanchot's work on 'Reading' in *The Space of Literature* as the primary source, in addition to *The Writing of the Disaster*, with extracts from Simone Weil's *Gravity and Grace*, *Waiting on God*, her text on *Reading*, as well as some other of their texts. Both thinkers were highly politically motivated. Blanchot was 'radically engaged' in the May 1968 protests in Paris. Weil's political work championed the cause of French manual and factory labourers and included writing on colonialism and the French state. Other sources I draw on include naturalist writers Annie Dillard from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* and *Teaching a Stone to Talk*, and from Thoreau who offers themes from *Faith in a Seed* and *Walden*, who both 'read' nature. Freire's, is another voice that appears at the end of the dialogue, and is very sympathetic with both Weil, and Blanchot. Freire's words will be taken from an interview with him, in the year prior to his death, conducted by a friend, Sean Taylor. The auto-biographical operates within *any* meditative enquiry.

Chris Small, who was one of my teachers, gives me, as the author, a key idea in composition of the material context of music. He argues for an active verb, musiking, that *always better describes* music as a common event, inspired by both African and African American and folk music in particular. If musiking, like 'poetry reading' is always a political and relational event, it critiques the largely modern, northern - aristocratic and industrial - paradigm, and production of the solitary reader. This presentation will elaborate on my notes and citations – echoing themes of citational justice that will I relate to, as an academic of colour, through Sara Ahmed's *On being included: racism and diversity in institutional life* and *Living a feminist life*. This relates to the above writers in multiple ways.

My recent PhD work focussed on the meta-issues of nonself through my meditation practice, writing, and reading. I define this as meditative enquiry, a form of post-identity politics, embodied practice research sympathetic with a materialist, post-humanist perspective connected with social justice.

I am part of a research group at UAL's LCF called the SoWhat Matters Lab, which references posthumanist and feminist thinking 'to explore and probe radical future practice models that address the interconnected climate, social, cultural, and economic crisis'.

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Key reference:

Stephens, T. (2021) A meditative enquiry into presence: Unmaking the autoethnographic self. *Journal of Writing in Creative Practice*, Vol.14 Issue 2. Available at: <https://arts-london.academia.edu/Stephens>