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The Politics of Circulating Feelings in the Writing of Juliana Spahr

Through the life-writing of American poet Juliana Spahr, this essay investigates not only how the lyric is being used by contemporary poets to represent compound feelings but also what relationship affect might have to the political. It considers how Spahr constructs a porous subjectivity that circulates through a system that is simultaneously social, biological, and textual in its environment. Spahr demonstrates how the continually changing relation of self to place and other may lead to a confusion and complexity of feeling. In particular, it focuses on the nested or interrelated nature of what Sianne Ngai has termed ‘ugly feelings’, particularly in terms of sexuality, colonialism, and globalisation. It is argued that Spahr’s poetic navigation of such feelings seeks to locate possibilities for cultural adaptation and transformation.

Keywords: poetry – emotion – life-writing – postcolonialism – sexuality – environment

Focusing on the work of Juliana Spahr, this essay examines how contemporary writers are using the lyric to reconsider the inter-relatedness of being and place, while exploring how the poetic representation and transmission of compound feelings can be political. Charles Altieri and Lisa Sewell have both identified a constellation of post-Language poets who draw upon experimental traditions but who bring together the personalised charge of the lyric and public discourse as a way to make poetry socially responsible or generative (Altieri 2011: 127; Sewell 2007: 4). Referring to the work of Robert von Hallberg, Lynn Keller points out that the lyric is based on praise poetry, which typically has a socially affirmative function. As Von Hallberg notes, ‘Praise is a medium of exchange whereby general values were allowed to circulate through a culture’ (qtd. by Keller 2010: 76). Yet the bonds and ethos of community have increasingly been viewed as impossible or inoperable, with poets like Juliana Spahr writing ‘even while we believe that we want to believe that we all live in one bed of the earth’s atmosphere, our bed is just our bed and no one else’s and we can’t figure out how to stop it from being that way’ (2005: 30). Sianne Ngai suggests that an alternative modelling of the social is the network which enables ‘diverse and remote kinds of connections’ and a means to evaluate and order ‘beings in such a world’ (2012: 367-68). While Ngai critiques the network structures in Spahr’s memoir The transformation, I am interested in how Spahr not only explores experience as a sentient, social, and textual being through the network or system, but also engenders a specifically biopolitical critique. Instead of approaching life-writing through the lens of the individual self, she investigates the relationship between self, environment, and culture. Focusing on the dynamics of connectivity and change between bodies and between words, her continuous action of writing and rewriting the self as part of a larger assemblage builds up a political charge.
that is rendered more powerful through a circulation of affect.

Spahr’s poetry collection *Fuck you-loba-I love you* (2001), her ‘barely truthful’ memoir *The transformation* (2007: 217), and five of the eight sections of *well then there now* (2011) draw upon a documentary poetics, exploring her experience of living in Hawai‘i between 1997 and 2001. Spahr notes that September 11, 2001 had made her reflect

about what I was connected with, and what I was complicit with, as I lived off the fat of the military-industrial complex on a small island. I had to think about an intimacy with things I would rather not be intimate with even as (because?) I was very far away from all those things geographically. This feeling made lyric—with its attention to connection, with its dwelling on the beloved and on the afar—suddenly somewhat poignant, somewhat apt, even somewhat more useful than I usually find it. (2005: 13)

Spahr’s comments foreground an awareness of the forces determining subjectification, even in places seemingly distant from centres of power. Hawai‘i has a complex relation to global economies, one that Rob Wilson points out is deeply historical. Wilson notes that since the United States came into statehood, ‘if not earlier as an outpost along the Pacific frontier of expanding trade, commerce, culture, belief and arms to and from Asia, Hawai‘i has functioned as a “liminal space” of racial negotiation and cultural mixedness’ (2001: 139-40). Viewed predominantly as that which lies between East and West, or Asia and the United States, it has been a space of the middle or between-ness. What this has meant is that in Hawai‘i ‘whiteness never went unmarked and unchallenged as the master code of difference and identity’ (140). In light of its colonial history (as a previous independent nation and as the United States’ 50th state) and its multi-valenced and multicultural traditions, there is a heightened anxiety over forces of globalisation coming at the expense of local concerns, including nationalist struggles for sovereignty. Following Espell Ha‘ura, Spahr argues that there is ‘a Pacific of disconnection and a Pacific of connection’ (2004: 76). Embodying an archipelago, Hawai‘i might be viewed as either ‘islands in a far sea’ (of separation) or as ‘a sea of islands’ (joined through travel, trade, and migration) (76).

In her writing, Spahr meditates on what it means to live in such a place as a white mainlander occupying a position of institutional privilege as a professor at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa. She further considers what it might mean to be living in a non-normative relationship and the possibility of multiple rather than a singular beloved. In both instances, the social role is predicated on a recognition of the self as out of place. As Sally R Munt suggests, there is often a ‘nested quality’ to emotions, whereby the experience of being white in Hawai‘i for Spahr becomes intertwined with her experience of living polyamorously (2008: 2). Indeed, the thinking about there being more than one beloved or having more than one connection enables Spahr to explore new ways of belonging and the complex feelings of being both in a place of connection and a place of disconnection.

Sara Ahmed notes that emotionality is ‘dependent on relations of power, which endow “others” with meaning and value’ (2004: 4). Feelings are ‘produced as effects of circulation’ (8). Spahr’s poetry focuses on how the self is paradoxically affected or moved by the objects or things (from beloveds to the social institutions like the nation state or the university) around it, thus better encapsulating the difficult states of existence in which we are constantly cast. Viewing post-colonial
and queer experience through a nexus draws attention to how both involve what Ngai has called ‘ugly feelings’, a range of ‘negative emotions’ often related to ‘ambivalent situations of suspended agency’ (2005: 1). The process of creatively and theoretically working through such feelings may be transformative, shifting an experience of shame, denial, and misrecognition towards legibility, community, and love. In some respects, Spahr explores what Stephen Burt calls ‘compounds of feeling’, that may include shame, sadness, astonishment, fatigue, and love, as well as responses to this predicament, including silence and listening. One term to accommodate such a compound is ‘han’ which Spahr notes is ‘an emotion that combines sadness with hope, as the emotion that happens as a result of repeated colonisation’ (2007: 72). In articulating and analysing the confusion of feelings, Spahr enables a lyrical space in her writing for a political imaginary that may negotiate, critique and transform what it means to have various identifications in contemporary Hawai‘i. Moreover, she invites participation by the reader in what kinds of roles selves might be able to perform and how ‘we’ might enact more than we would typically imagine possible.

Spahr notes that upon moving to Hawai‘i to take up a job teaching expansionist English, she learns that there might be ‘as many as one thousand two hundred languages in the ocean and that one large especially rocky island in the ocean had close to eight hundred alone’ (2007: 28). That is, she is implicated in an imperial structure that historically viewed local languages as ‘limited [in] scope and applicability’ or specificity (28). In The transformation, Spahr explores this positioning to the local and what it might mean to be ‘haole’. Using a rhetoric of biodiversity, she aligns the processes of cultural diversification (evidenced through the development of multiple languages) and dominance to natural processes of adaptation and selection. Throughout, she foregrounds the instrumentality of the human in bringing change to an environment, particularly how human modes of perceiving and ‘language’ an environment impact upon that environment. In Hawai‘i, ‘haole’ is a term used in the world of plants to describe a particularly noxious and invasive species, but is also used to refer to foreigners. In the opening lines to The transformation, she notes: ‘Flora and fauna grow next to and around each other without names. Humans add the annotation. They catalogue the flora and fauna, divide them up, chart their connections and variations, eventually name them, and as they do this they read into them their own stories’ (2007: 13). She tells the story of the passiflora, the passionflower that is brought to Hawai‘i and of its capacity to smother and break other vegetation. In Hawai‘i, it is called the huehue haole. While she points out that the passiflora, or passionflower, has been named after Christ’s suffering on the Cross (of sacrifice), its English name also alludes to desire and excess.

Spahr explores the experiences of an outsider through being haole, but also of being one part of an intimate relationship between three people. Public role and private, internal psychological disposition become an imbricated moebius strip that shifts continually between bad feelings, of guilt (at occupying the space of the perverse) and of joy to be found in such experience. Language differentiates the world, catalogues it, lists it in relation to similarity and difference, provides it with a narrative, and moreover, affect. A relationship of three has no vocabulary; it is unthinkable. Spahr notes, ‘Once they were on the island they had no word for themselves. They had only theories’. Yet they hoped that ‘they could be shaped by each other into some new thing’ (2007: 15). The transformation opens with the following:

This is mainly the story of how the history of the island changed them, the story of the huehue haole and the tree canopy. It cannot help but also be a story about how they were
shaped by being and perhaps not being perverts, but still it is more a story about three of
them who moved to an island that was not theirs. While this could be a little-grass-shack
story with a ‘ukelele and a palm tree’, they were lovers of desks and they were trying to be
like the finches who grew new and different beaks in reaction to the wide variety of
microclimates on the island...[But] this is...a story of how they became aware they were a
they in the cruel inquisitive sense, in the sense of not being a part of us or we, in the sense
of accusation, whether they wanted to be or not. It is a story about realizing that they
cannot shrug this off and so a story of trying to think with it. (2007: 21)

Spahr argues that even with a desire for connection and a willingness to adapt to a new
environment, this is not always possible. What occurs is a story of ‘coming to realise that they not
only had a gender that was decided for them without their consent and by historical events that
they had not even been alive to witness, but they also had a race and a sexuality that was decided
for them without their consent and by historical events that they had not even been alive to
witness’ (2007: 22). That is, modes of subjectification are always already regulated even at the level
of language: ‘There were rules about identities and genders and rules about sentence structures and
tense and voice and emotion’ (2007: 58). The story then is about ‘finding ease in discomfort’ (2007:
22).

This discomfort is registered by the reader through the absence of or minimalising the usual
elements of memoir (such as chronological progression and the development of voice) in The
transformation. Instead it is a highly repetitive meditation on individuality, coalition, and difference
indebted to the techniques of Gertrude Stein. Through a process of re-citation, Stein’s
autobiographical or biographical writings explore performativity, of actively constructing and
reconstructing the self. This is apparent in both The transformation and the poetry of Fuck you-aloha-I
love you. The opening poem, ‘localism or t/here’, is in the present tense and its general abstraction
draws attention to the markers of place:

There is no there there anywhere.
There is no here here or anywhere either.
Here and there. He and she. There, there.

Oh yes, We are lost there and here.
And here and there we err.
And are that err.
And we are that lost.
And we are arrows of loving lostness,
gliding, gliding, off, and off, and off
        gliding.
And arrows of unloving lostness getting
     stuck even while never hitting the
mark.
And we are misunderstanding fullness and
emptiness
And we are missing our bed and all its com-
forts that come night are night
without end and sometimes during the day also and are singular even when coupled, doubled, and tripled and have something to do with the comforter’s down coming from the duck. (2001a: 3)

The logic of difference, between a ‘here’ and a ‘there’ is blurred and the individuation of associated binarisms such as self and Other, ‘He and she’ are also put under pressure and transform into ‘we’. The human too, is not privileged to have emotion, for animals like the duck (whose down lines the comforter) are also privy to feeling. Between the ‘here’ and the ‘there’, there is the possibility for identity to start ‘gliding’, to either ‘err’ or to be ‘lost’. As ‘arrows’, we are getting stuck even while never hitting the mark. With destination unclear, communication fails. The trope of the arrow has connotations of both violence and of love, as does ‘comforts’ when it is enjambed into ‘com-’ and ‘forts’. Words are left by themselves on a line but also doubled, even tripled. The subject is simultaneously identified and misrecognised in language, as can be seen in the slippage between ‘missing’ and ‘misunderstanding’.

In the poem ‘things’, Spahr focuses on the dual meaning of ‘kind’ as meaning both type and affect. She states:

There are these things and they
Are three fold at least.

They are da kine.

They are things; they are more. (2001a: 7)

‘Da kine’ is the most used and versatile term in spoken Hawaii pidgin. A surfing dictionary lists ‘da kine’ as ‘the word you use when you don’t use the word’. Another definition in mixed Pidgin is ‘Can have any kine connotation depends on how you say um and who you say um wit’. Spahr uses ‘da kine’ in the same way that Stein refers to ‘kind’ or ‘type’. The love objects for the speaker are plural rather than singular, they are always ‘more’ or excessive. ‘Things’ refers to the tripling of love, to things that are ‘three fold’ (7) or ‘clover-like’ (symbolic of both noxious weed and luck) (7), and which is as ‘steady as a three legged stool on an uneven floor’ (8). For Spahr, pronouns become a hold-all for multiplicity and inclusion, ‘they’ referring possibly to a relationship of three in the real but also the triangular exchange between author, text, and reader.

The title of Spahr’s collection, *Fuck you-aloha I love you*, is drawn from a repeated phrase in ‘things’. The phrase focuses on the desire for connection, for an erotics of intimacy (‘for the moment when / Things extend beyond you and me / And into the rest of the world’ (8)) even as there is the thrash of anger. The ‘fuck you’ is divided from the ‘I love you’ only by the term ‘aloha’ which in English means a signalling of beginnings and ends of conversation. In Hawaiian, it means affection, peace, compassion, and mercy. In making the word ‘aloha’ a bilingually ambiguous middle term, the word functions to ‘flip switches’ between ‘fuck you’ and ‘I love you’. Through staging the possibility of there being ‘both’, Spahr enables a decolonised practice of reading. ‘things’ could be said to
articulate an anarchic utopias: a saying of how ‘all is not right with the world / yet still all right’ (11). It is a ‘reaching for them always’ (15) even as it seems impossible.

In ‘things’, Spahr focuses on the sociality of affect, its required visibility and recognition:

    Da kine is the tear that the incarcerated
tattoo, one drop for each year caged, or
one drop for each man killed, beneath
the eye.

Here the tear is a wrong made sad yet a
defiance of this sadness.

It is worn for all to see, it is permanent
It will leave with the incarcerated
Upon release, to remind us that all is not
Well, and that all tears are not cathartic. (2001a: 14)

Here the tear from sadness does not disappear but is permanently marked on the face. A tear may mark a ‘wrong’ or social crime but can also be defiance. The tear may not be the endpoint of mourning but also a mark of the absurd, as in the expression of the clown.

Steve Evans has recently drawn attention to the rhythmic singularities in Stein’s writing, noting that Stein ‘comes to see rhythms—sonic, graphic, plastic, yes; but also erotic, existential, social—as the very essence of all existing’. He argues that in Stein’s writing, the phatic and indexical functions of language surge into the foreground, filling the space vacated by the formerly dominant referential function. Spahr uses the indexical frequently in ‘things’ (such as ‘There are these things’ or ‘Here the tear is a wrong’) which point to the circumstances of the speech act, often vague, often referring to grammar itself. In saying ‘I am in a place called there and I / am trying to make it into a place / called here’ (2001a: 15), she emphasises how the indexical term needs a human agent to point to a context. Phatic, Evans reminds us, is the way we use utterances to make, sustain, and eventually break contact with one another, independent of any consideration of the referential ‘content’ of our statements, it can be how individuals adjust the frequency or tone in their voices in spontaneous indication of the concord or discord they are, moment by moment, experiencing with each other. Evans notes that the experience of reading Stein, of bathing in the rhythms of her sentences and paragraphs and of finding one’s individuality is not dissolved but rather intensified, by contact and connectedness.

In Spahr’s work, there is a similar tension between connection and individuality (one of sadness at one’s finitude, even as there is a joy in sensuous being with another). This is mirrored in the linguistic interaction with the text by the reader. Even when there is ‘joining’, there is the circle that is not met. That is, there is always the non-identificatory: when one realises the limits of one’s knowledge; moments of partial or qualified identification; moments when one realises and respects unlikenessness.

As with *Fuck you-aloha-I love you* and *The transformation*, Spahr’s *well then there now* presents a located
self, this time visually cued at the beginning of each section by a map and the precise co-ordinates of where the section was written. Unlike the previous two volumes that are unambiguously poetry and memoir respectively, well then there now shifts between and indeed threatens to undo recognisable genres and forms like the sonnet, the prose poem, the memoir, and the essay. Throughout, there is a questioning of life as individualised:


Things should be said more largely than the personal way.
Things are larger than the personal way of telling. (2011: 23)

In terms of pronouns, ‘I’ is rarely used, instead Spahr focuses primarily on the ‘we’ as a creature of relation. In the ‘Sonnets’ sequence, Spahr builds upon Bernadette Mayer’s revision of intimacy through the sonnet form. Spahr has remarked of Mayer’s Sonnets:


By treating moments of encounter on the streets with strangers, with landlords, and with friends as a form of intimacy no less important and transformative than sexual intimacy, Sonnets places personal relations in a larger nexus of concerns. It opens intimacy into a productive space that is not limited to the domestic or the male and female couple. (2001b: 99)

Spahr’s work might be viewed productively alongside the work of contemporaries like Laynie Browne who also uses the sonnet form as a means to explore kin, intimacy, and the ordinary. However, Spahr could be said to focus more on the structures that writing imposes on modalities of Being. In contrasting the sonnet form to blood, she asks what regulations there might be: ‘When blood is thought as meaning./ An intimate confession’ (2011: 23). The sonnet is traditionally associated with the lyric, individualism, as well as romantic and courtly love. Blood is likewise associated with passion and vitality; after all, it is that which goes in and out of the heart and fills the body. Yet while love is an abstract emotion, blood is organic, indeed, essential matter to human life. It is both a specialised form of connective tissue as well as a fluid that circulates in an intricate network transporting both nutrients and wastes. Spahr presents blood through:


The catalogue of the life span, the operation, and the animal.
The catalogue of force and animal force. (2011: 21)

Charles Altieri has argued that Spahr presents a ‘thin’ subjectivity but it is perhaps better to consider it a porous subjectivity (Altieri 2011: 128). The sonnets in her sequence are interconnected with one another in various ways. A sonnet that talks about ‘we’ as an ‘intricate system’ ‘all without our complexities’ could be read as adding to or commenting on the previous sonnet which lists the constitution of blood:


white blood cells at 4.2 thousand per cubic millimeter
red blood cells at 3.88 million per cubic millimeter
haemoglobin at 14.1 grams per decaliter
hematocrit at 42.6% (Spahr 2011: 20)

Eight of the sonnets might be viewed as pairing up, with a blood-list poem or catalogue facing what could be called a socially networked poem, the system of the individual being juxtaposed by
the broader social system within which the individual is positioned. The sense of pairing is reinforced by the justification of the sonnets according to the book’s spine. In this respect, sonnets on facing pages might represent complements, separate but linked through the physical core of the book. Spahr is representing the anatomy of the book with reading as a process of circulation and reproduction, a reproduction that is rich in variation:

Togetherness of the lesson and the splitting.
Togetherness of the lesson and to duplicate one’s self. (2011: 21)

The idea of a system is reflected, then, at the level of the book, as much as within the poetic sequence and within the thematic material of the poem. In formatting sonnets into pairs, the reader is conscious of reading across two pages rather than only within a single page. The blood-list poem gains more meaning in the context of their facing sonnet so that we begin to think of a line like ‘mean corpuscular volume at 109.6 fluid liquid’ (20) in light of its counterpart line on the other page: ‘We are full of thought and we live’ (21). While one is an empirical quantifying of blood, the other is qualitative, reflecting Descartes’ attention on the relationship between mind and body, although it is simply with the conjunction ‘and’ rather than in positing the terms in dialectical tension. The two lines themselves are part of the following pair of quatrains that share a similar playfulness in repetition, both foregrounding a dynamic between semblance and difference:

mean corpuscular volume at 109.6 fluid
mean corpuscular haemoglobin at 36.3 picograms per cell
mean corpuscular haemoglobin concentration at 33.1%
red blood cell distribution width at 13.5% (20)

We are full of thought and we live.
We live with things several.
We are full of thought and we are different.
For which things so several. (21)

While the quatrain with the mathematical lines is formatted in lower case, the facing quatrain begins each line with capitalisation. In doing so, Spahr is perhaps challenging the hierarchy of authority between the empirical or scientific discourse and social rhetoric. Spahr keeps to a Shakespearean structure of three quatrains followed by a couplet for the majority of the sonnets. However, she does not attempt to rhyme or have a regular meter across the two pages of the paired sonnets. In this respect, the facing poems might be thought of as both linked and separate.

The sonnet sequence takes blood and the poem as structures with constituent parts (2011: 23). Whereas blood has elements like basophil, granulocyte absolute, lymphocytes, and monocytes, the poem has its nouns, its verbs, its metaphors, its grammar. Attention is being brought to bear on aesthetics in its base materials. Spahr views the poem as the house of the lyric. Lyric is viewed as a vehicle of intimate confession. Yet Spahr reconceptualises this as ‘Confession’s structured plan of percents and regulations’ (2011: 23). The lyric might be thought of as:

A catalogue of the individual and a catalogue of us with all.
A catalogue of full of thought.
A house where we with all our complexities lie.

Spahr is at pains to show the interconnection between self and its parts, and the self’s relationship to a social and natural environment. Each environment is like an organism in that each has a system. Beyond a comparison of blood and lyric is a mediation on the intricate system of place, with its identifications, homes, and irregularities.

The catalogue of the extension of life, the operation, and the animal.
The catalogue of the extension of the execution of life and the animal. (2011: 21)

The cell or house exists within a larger system: ‘The house of norms and abnormalities and their percentages’ (25). At issue is who has a home, who has a right to a home, and who ‘authorizes so one is not what individual one says one is. / Who authorizes so one is not single. / Who empowers so one is not alone. / Who is expert of confession’ (27). Just as there is the ‘who of comparison,’ or the ‘who of alignment,’ there is the ‘who of empathy.’ Spahr questions whether empathy emerges out of ‘structural alignment’ (27).

She considers the introduction of the alien or the new into an environmental system, and the impact it has:

We tried not to notice but as we arrived we became a part of arriving and making different.
We grew into it but with complicities and assumption and languages
and kiawe and koa haole and mongooses.
With these things we kicked out certain other things we meant to or not.

As Spahr’s sonnets enact, a sequence is possible in terms that are textual, social, and organic. A cell can link to other cells to flow as ‘blood’. The body can take in elements from the outside; is a site of exchange; culturally there are also ways to being open to change.

Significantly, Spahr breaks the pattern she begins by giving the tenth sonnet only three quatrains. The eleventh and final sonnet also has just twelve lines but foregoes the quatrain structure altogether. The last two ‘sonnets’ could be viewed as failures or a break-down in the sonnet form and reflects the failure of the poet-speaker to understand that ‘the place was never ours’ because it never could be ‘until we grew and flowered into something other than what we were’. Instead the ‘we’ of the poet-speaker ‘continued to make things worse for this place’ (2011: 29). In Lyric powers, Robert Von Hallberg states that, ‘An expectation of failure, not triumph, is built into poems ... Lyric begins in a sense of implacable limits, against which it is appropriate to strain’ (2009: 5). He elaborates further, ‘poetry is writing that has not yet come entirely into being; it remains an idea’ (5). To extend Hallberg, Spahr’s poetry stages the possibility and impossibility of transformation, and is, I would suggest, both idea and feeling.

In many respects, the sonnets in well then there now continue to use similar strategies as the poems in
Fuck-you-aloaha-I-love-you and the Stein-like narrative of The transformation. They also overlap with the poems in thisconnectionofeveryonewithlungs which opens with:

There are these things:
cells, the movement of cells and the division of cells
and then the general beating of circulation
and hands, and body, and feet
and skin that surrounds hands, body, feet. (Spahr 2005: 3)

Just as cells are networked, so too are words, poems and books. The poem dated November 30, 2002 in thisconnectionofeveryonewithlungs refers to a three-legged stool that is likewise mentioned in the poem ‘things’ in Fuck-you-aloaha-I-love-you. Across her writing, Spahr demonstrates through a simultaneously personal and abstract lens how the individual is simultaneously connected to and separate from the surrounding cultural and physical system. In the earlier writing, this is identifiably and specifically Hawai‘ian. As Spahr demonstrates, there are systems within or alongside systems that are at the level of culture, text (corpus, book, poem), and body. In The transformation, she notes, ‘They began to see poetry as a series of contiguous systems, systems that did not merge but that were still beside one another’ (2007: 82). And in ‘a younger man, an older man, and a woman’ of Fuck you-aloaha-I love you, she discerns:

In culture we have muscles and
we use these muscles to let us
move towards and on top and out
of each other.

We build ourselves into a
configuration.

We tremble as we do this.

Even after we have built, we
tremble. (2001a: 64)

The health of the system is dependent on the interaction between its parts: ‘Together we promote individual/ health through using our muscles/ with each other’ (2001a: 72). With uncertainty, there is the possibility to become ‘more flexible and lithe’ (72). To recap Sara Ahmed, ‘What moves us, what makes us feel, is also that which holds us in place, or gives us a dwelling place. Hence, movement does not cut the body off from the “where” of its habitat, but connects bodies to other bodies: attachment takes place through movement, through being moved by the proximity of others’ (2004: 11). Spahr’s work foregrounds that while ‘A place allows certain things/ and certain of we of
a specific/ place have certain rights’ (2001a: 19), the introduction of the alien or ‘crooked’ (2001a: 80) will have consequences, ripple-effects that are likely to be both affective and material for all within that environment or system.
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