



White, R.S. (2021) 'Breaking silences and revealing the disappeared: walking-with legacies of slave-ownership, Bath (UK)', *International Journal of Education Through Art*, 17 (1), pp. 81-113.

Official URL: https://doi.org/10.1386/eta_00052_1

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Submission for IJETA special issue: *Walking as a radical and critical art of inquiry: Embodiment, place and entanglement.*

Guest Editors: Lexi Lasczik, David Rousell and Amy Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles

Breaking Silences and Revealing the Disappeared: walking-with legacies of slave-ownership, Bath (UK).

Abstract: 146 words

An emergent walking arts approach is presented as an opening towards social repair. Drawing on an intra-disciplinary project, ‘sense-ing’ legacies of slave-ownership in the UNESCO World Heritage City of Bath (UK), an iteration of *walking-with* is discussed in the context of ‘pedagogies of discomfort’. Walkers on the *Sweet Waters* project, hosted by the author, participated in a research-creation process agitating thought and extending resonances through mark making and social media trails. The article explores strategies of curated juxtaposition and dissonance as provocations to involuntary thought and empathic response. A participatory, performative walking is outlined accessing embodied ways of knowing and the agencies of walkers and heritage. Walkers become story carriers and ‘affect aliens’, unsettling heritage accounts, breaking silences and revealing the disappeared. Reflecting on a creative critical intervention on ‘authorised’ heritage the article presents a somatic approach to learning, heritage and social justice through walking arts.

key words: walking-with, heritage, dissonance, embodiment

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introduction

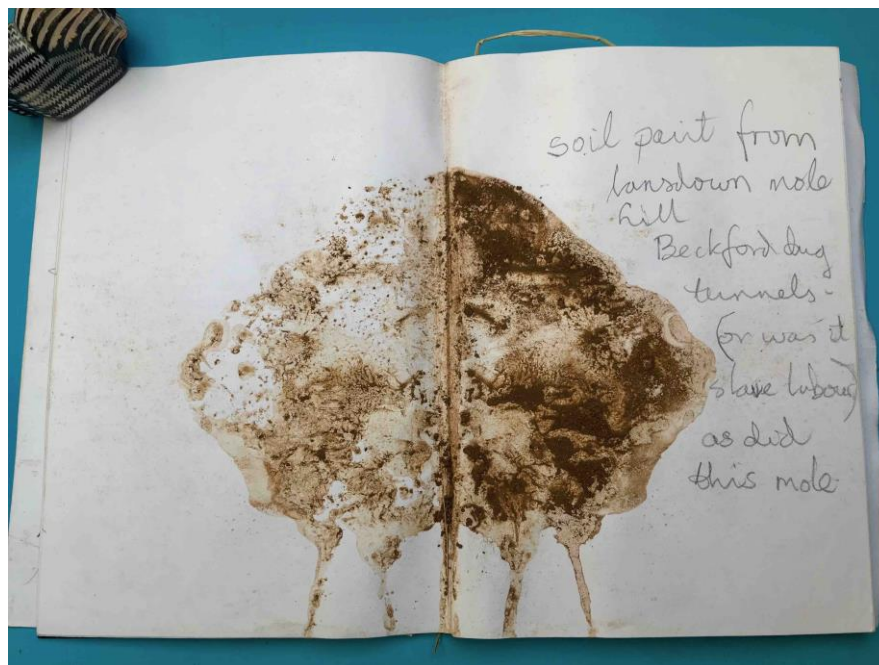


Figure 1: *soil and water*, 2017. Scanned walker's notebook. Courtesy of author. Image shows marks made with mud and water folded and dried in a note book. Text reads 'soil paint from Lansdown molehill. Beckford dug tunnels (or was it slave labour) as did this mole'.

This is an artist-researcher's exploration of a socially engaged walking arts project. Walker's notebook pages (e.g. Figure 1), evoke the messy complexity and immanence of the *walking-with* approach used (Jeffries 2010; Kelly 2013; Sundberg 2013; Springgay and Truman 2018b). Drawn, written and rubbed as the walk progressed, these experimental visual tracings and other images, text and digital media, are the surviving fragments from the embodied learning experience case-studied in this article.

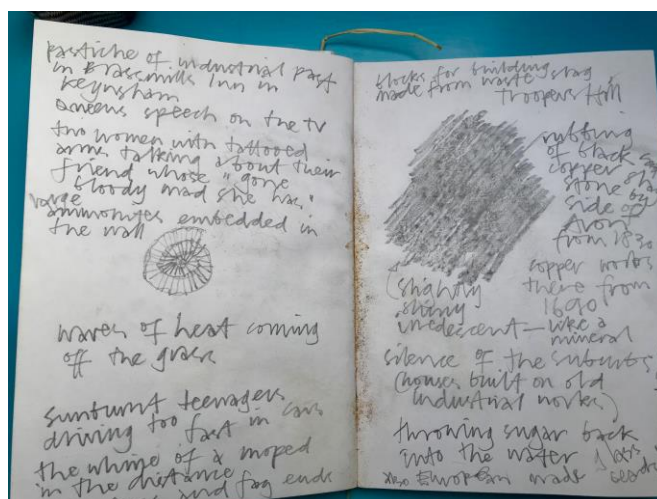


Figure 2: *rubbing and end notes*, 2017. Scanned walker's notebook. Courtesy of author. Image shows hand written text, drawing of an ammonite and a rubbing of a piece of copper slag. Text refers to the source of the slag, remains of the metal industry, overheard conversations, and provides descriptions of the sensory experience 'waves of heat coming off the grass', 'silence of the suburbs' and the start of an intervention involving 'throwing sugar back into the water'.

The project, *Sweet Waters*, hosted by the author, attended to legacies of slave-ownership in Bath (UK) and along the River Avon (see Figure 3). The process and the contribution to education through art proposed in this article is founded on the social justice/Freirian principles of love, humility and hope (Freire 1973, 1996). Referencing work on emotion, affect and pedagogy in the context of heritage (Witcomb 2013, 2015; Zembylas 2016, 2018; Smith et al 2018), this commentary offers a contribution to ‘pedagogies of discomfort’ (Zembylas 2018) as first steps in a process of social repair.

For some, the experience was significant, as suggested by reflective comments gathered at the end of the cycle; for example,

It completely transformed the way that I saw and understood the city that I grew up in and now live in as an adult. It is fascinating to see how we can make a huge aspect of history disappear because it is uncomfortable. It also led me to have insights about current day exploitation in completely different ways by people who have large amounts of money around the world.

(Respondent 9: *Sweet Waters* Walker survey response 2017)

For others, questions remained, remarks left in one of the circulating notebooks (see Figure 3) offer a private/public rhetorical response, perhaps, in the spirit of dialogue, as a provocation never taken up in the blank page that followed, ‘*thank goodness for plantation owners...*’

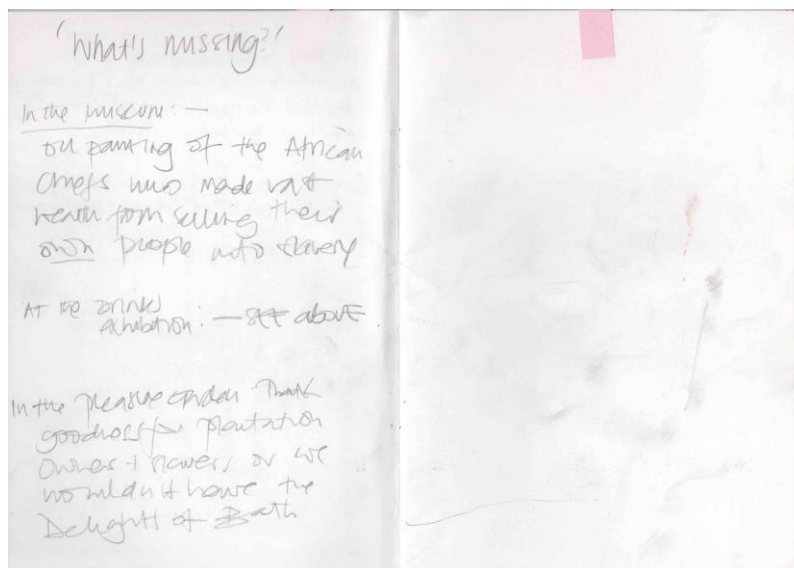


Figure 3: *irony or provocation*, 2017. Scanned walker’s notebook. Courtesy of author.

Image shows writing in pencil on the left and a blank page to the right.

The text refers to an oil painting viewed in the museum, ‘*African Chiefs who made vast fortunes from selling their own people into slavery*’ and, referencing the pleasure gardens where we walked, *thank goodness for plantation owners...or we wouldn’t have the Delights of Bath*’.

Following an overview contextualising the project, an account of the walks is presented exploring some of the tactics and strategies developed; an iteration of a *walking-with* is discussed sampling key moments in the process. The article concludes outlining a contribution to informal education and social repair through art with some observations on two key capacities walkers may have gained, becoming story carriers and affect aliens.

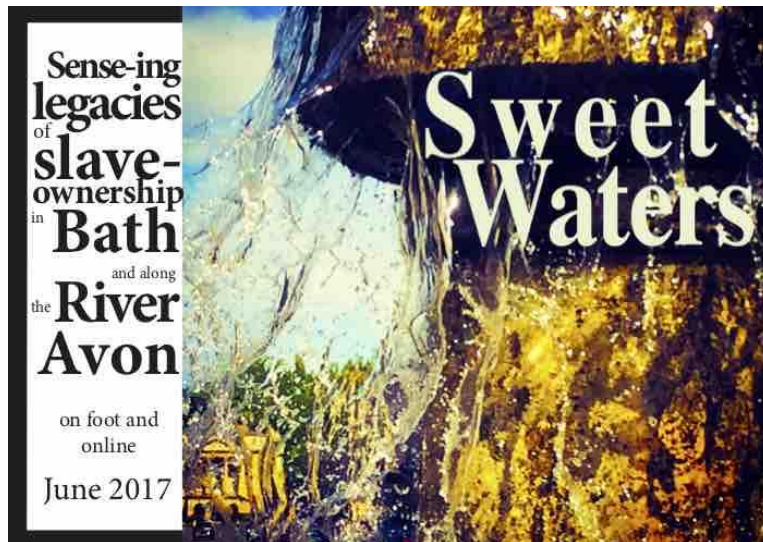


Figure 4: *Sweet Waters*, promotional postcard 2017. Courtesy of author.

context:

walking arts, critical heritage and 'pedagogies of discomfort'

Sweet Waters responded to an urgency 'to dig where I stand' (Lindqvist 1979), not only as a Bath resident with regard to physical place, but with regard to myself as a white European man seeking to become accountable, to develop and realise response-abilities (Barad 2012). The critical heritage sensibility established in my practice is informed by and responds to established and wider commentaries on the silences, absences and hegemonic consequences of the authorised heritage accounts of Britain and its empire (e.g. Smith, L. 2006; Hall 1999; Dresser 2007; Hassard 2009; Perry 2013). As a walking artist in a city inscribed with the legacies of slave-ownership these absences manifest in tourist marketing and orientation, notably in guided heritage walks (e.g. The Mayor of Bath's Corps of Honorary Guides 2019; Bath Preservation Trust 2018; Bath and North East Somerset Council 2019, 2018),

creative practice context

As a creative contribution to critical heritage processes, this practice locates in the context of the work of other radical walking artists working with heritage and memory (e.g. Smith, P. 2014, 2015; Richardson, T. 2015; Pujol 2018; Wilson 2019), movement and performance artists exploring embodiment (e.g. Little and Dumit 2017, Kampe 2015; Hammond 2012; Tufnell and Crickmay 2004; Miller 2014) and socially engaged artists working with affect and mobile/locative media (e.g. Levine 2014; Satsymph 2017; Speakman 2017). Levine's artwork, for example, constructs dissonant affective encounters overlaying and juxtaposing the familiar with the disturbing (e.g. *Shadows from Another Place: San Francisco-Baghdad* 2004; O'Rourke 2013:181). She observes that empathic dialogues emerge as visitors to her artworks process their responses to the 'spatial' dissonance produced (Levine 2014:140). I improvise from these approaches towards hosting participatory somatic experiences generating empathic dialogues, described below, as an element in an iteration of *walking-with*.

engaging discomfort and dissonance

An emotional engagement underpins the social justice experience in my practice. A body of literature underlines the significance of emotion and affect specifically in museum and heritage learning (e.g. Smith, Wetherall et al 2018; Tolia-Kelly, Waterton et al 2017; Witcomb 2013, 2015). Tolia-Kelly commends the creative intervention that 'jolts' us out of old habits of seeing and feeling towards new feelings and understandings (2016:899). Zembylas, developing the idea of 'pedagogies of discomfort', argues that, 'at the heart of pedagogy is the provocation of emotion and affect' (2016:540). Ahmed's work on emotion and politics appears to support this; she argues that emotions are relational and do things, aligning individuals with communities, bodily space with social space (2014). Her discussion on the 'stickiness' of emotions and affect (2010), how good or bad feelings attached to past events/objects manifest in the present, further informs the disturbances in heritage discussed in this paper. In the context of education through art, I argue that the approach used in *Sweet Waters*, set out below, offers a contribution to 'pedagogies of discomfort',

Discomforting feelings can be the point of departure to challenge dominant beliefs, social habits and normative practices that sustain social inequities, thus creating openings for individual and social transformation.
(Zembylas 2018:93)

Sweet Waters sought to use moments of surprise or discomfort and the processes of resolving dissonance towards stimulating other ways of knowing. The value of the discomforting provocation in knowledge production has been widely discussed (e.g. Bennett 2005; Benjamin 1999). Referencing Benjamin's idea of voluntary and involuntary memory (1999), Witcomb refers to the affective shocks and jolts of museum, heritage and art that 'bring the past into radical tension with the present' (Witcomb 2013:29). Zembylas and Boler propose that pedagogies of discomfort support emancipatory education as they recognize and reveal 'the emotional investments that underlie ideological commitments' (2002:2). Rather than the possibly alienating shock and jolts Witcomb experienced in the museums of southern Australia (2013), or the deliberate insertion of unmediated tripping points of *Stolpersteine* (Demnig undated), *Sweet Waters* set out to produce equally thoughtful and uncomfortable moments, through the collective and individual experiences of a performative and collaborative walking (Cutcher, Rousell and Cutter-Mackenzie, A. 2015). As discussed below, a hosted, slower and corporeal process emerged in which 'messy materiality seeps into cerebral knowledge' (Longhurst 2001:135).

emotion, affect and heritage: making the return

Emotion and affect are widely recognised as significant, if problematic, ways of knowing (e.g. Thrift 2008; Gregg and Seigworth 2010; Ahmed 2014). This commentary is informed by a working understanding of affect as a pre-cognitive experience (Zembylas 2018), as part of an embodied and broader knowing that gives value to things and binds subjects together into collectivities. In working with this view, I acknowledge concerns regarding universalising accounts of affect and affective experience (e.g. Wilderson 2013; Tolia Kelly 2006, 2016); this commentary refers to a particular cycle of walks and offers selected materialisations of moments from those walks, filtered through my own sectional, partial perspective.

Fundamental to creative practice, emotion and affect have, until recently, been largely overlooked by heritage scholars (Wetherell et al 2018; Smith and Campbell 2016). This work contributes to the opening of critical heritage to other ways of knowing through creative practice. Ahmed refers to the significance of affect in connecting ideas, values and objects (2010:29), introducing 'affect aliens', she suggests that a refusal to comply or participate in an affective consensus may be a strategy for revealing concealed injustices,

Affect aliens can do things...by refusing to put bad feelings to one side in the hope that we can 'just get along'. A concern with histories that hurt is not then a backward orientation: to move on you must make the return.
(Ahmed 2010:50)

Ahmed's concern is that injustice lives on if it is not addressed, to bring about change, to begin the repair work, we must 'make the return'. This is explored further in her work on the 'feminist killjoy' (e.g. Ahmed and Schmitz 2014:102); in the context of this somatic engagement with heritage I suggest the possibility of walkers as *heritage* affect aliens. 'Bad feelings' Ahmed argues, should not be forgotten, as to do so would allow 'historical forms of injustice to disappear' (2010:50); to simply forget would be an act of complicity in the persistence of injustice. As I set out below the experience of the *Sweet Waters* walks facilitated the development of a critical agency with regard to the authorised heritage of Bath and the persistence of the injustices of the British slave economy.

heritage: legacies of slave-ownership

Bath is a UNESCO World Heritage site, a status derived in part from its unique Roman and Eighteenth-century architectural heritage. The authorised heritage narrative of the city, whilst romancing the historic Roman slave economy, maintains a pervasive silence on the source of the wealth that funded the city's extraordinary growth at the height of the Atlantic Slave Trade. *Sweet Waters* was presented in June 2017, ten years after the bicentennial of the abolition of the slave trade, the so-called 'Wilberfest' (Cubitt 2012:164). Whilst there was some participation by the Bath heritage institutions in the

2007 commemoration, there was scant acknowledgement of the contribution made to the development of the city by the wealth generated by the trade, the slave economy or the lasting legacies of slave-ownership. The UK-wide events were criticised for ignoring the memories and interests of the descendants of those captured and enslaved (e.g. Cubitt 2012; Rice 2012; Otele 2018). Ten years later, concerns on structural racism and its origins were manifested in the UK by decolonisation campaigns (e.g. Countering Colston undated; Rhodes Must Fall 2016; Decolonising SOAS 2019) and current affairs (e.g. Grenfell Action Group undated; Guardian 2020; Gentleman 2019). Countering Colston and related interventions has opened difficult conversations in Bristol, the former sea port down river from Bath; legacies of slave-ownership manifested in Bath, however, remain largely unaddressed, obscured by the amnesiac and seductive enchantments of its authorised heritage (Del Mármol, Morell and Chalcoft 2015; Martin 2013).

Bath: legacies of slave-ownership obscured and silenced

The evidence and entangled legacies of slave-ownership, although embodied in the institutions and fabric of the city and the relics of industry along the River Avon, are absent, or euphemised in the official narratives. The Atlantic slave trade and its connection with Bristol, are well documented (e.g. Richardson 1991, 1996, 2005; Dresser 2007), other less developed accounts refer to Bath (e.g. Knight 1978; Parker 2012; Perry 2013). Little has changed since Jane Austen, a resident in Bath, described in *Mansfield Park* (2010, first published in 1814) how a conversation on slavery was closed down in a 'dead silence'.

The history and legacies of an economy founded on the trade in captured and enslaved African people and their labour continue to be matters of shame, pain and discomfort, the lasting injustices of racialisation and empire. In this context I refer to this as 'reluctant heritage' (Tomory 1999) with all the resonances of affective discomfort that implies. Referencing research on local manufacturing activity for the slave trade (e.g. Coverdale and Day 2012; Buchanan 1996) and research on the Atlantic Slave Trade (e.g. Eltis and Richardson 1997; Chambers 1997; Araujo 2012; Draper 2014; Morgan 1997, 2000), *Sweet Waters* walked with, through and amongst the entanglements of lives, flesh, sugar, water, blood and brass. In the spirit of Hammond's work in Bath (2012) and

Deller's work in Orgreave it was about 'energising recognition and confronting still-to-be-resolved conflicts and traumas' (Juliff 2018:99).

methods and approaches:

research-creation

Sweet Waters extends a speculative thinking-making-doing approach to walking art and social justice. An earlier walking arts project this research-creation approach, *Honouring Esther* (**redacted** website 2017) had juxtaposed registers of walking, from a Nazi Death March to a countryside walk in England, *Sweet Waters* speculated with a similar provocation, the juxtaposition of the forced migration of the Atlantic Slave Trade with a scenic walk in the city and along the river. Citing Deleuze and Guattari (2013), Springgay and Truman refer to such speculative processes as producing new knowledge and new approaches to generating knowledge, 'You are not there to report on what you find or what you seek, but to activate thought. To agitate it.' (2018a:206).

Loveless (2015) recalls over 30 years of debate on the relationship between creative practice and knowledge production. Schroeder notes that even terms such as 'research' and 'knowledge' are themselves problematic (2015: 344) and urges us to be more resolute in claiming 'Practice Research' as the way through the *practice-as*, *practice-led*, and *practice-based* minefield (345). Loveless states that, 'to do research...is not simply to ask questions, it is to tell stories-that-matter. It is in recognising this...that a truly ethical research practice emerges' (Loveless 2015:54); she offers a manifesto for research-creation as way of embracing the work of artist-researchers, developing new research, new methods, new literacies and outputs. Research-creation is a widely accepted research approach notably in Canada (e.g. SSHRC 2019), used in walking arts work (WalkingLab 2020) and in exploring walking as a pedagogical strategy (Springgay and Truman 2019b). I associate my own walking arts practice in this context as research-creation, the descriptor attends to the work of both artistic practice and research methods as well as the ethical practice I aspire to.

walking-with

'Preguntando caminamos', asking questions we walk, or *walking-with*, is one of the core processes of the Zapatista indigenous peoples' liberation movement in Mexico (Jeffries

2010; Holloway 2011; Sundberg 2013; Springgay and Truman 2018b). Drawing on nonmodern ways of knowing and a social justice ethic, *walking-with* attends to shared and embodied experience. Acknowledging myself as a white European and alert to concerns on cultural appropriation, but also walking a path to social justice, I offer this research-creation approach as an iteration of *walking-with*. This is a somatic and material questioning; walking and asking questions, involving movement, sensing, making worlds and a becoming with the world (de la Cadena, M. and Blaser, M. 2018). Sundberg (2013) referencing the Indigenous liberation struggle it emerged from, presents *walking-with* in the context of decolonising cultural geographies. Here I take it to the practices of heritage. Building alertness to humans and non-humans and the power of things (Bennett 2010) through a reflective embodied criticality, *walking-with* articulates and enacts accountability. As Springgay and Truman note, 'Walking-with is a form of solidarity, unlearning, and critical engagement with situated knowledges' (2018b:11)

Sweet Waters, informed by Sundberg's schema (2013), developed as a three phase iteration of *walking-with*. The process begins with an opening 'homework' phase, advance briefings, attunement exercises and introductions prefacing the core live phase of walking, listening, questioning and making, performative interventions and end of day discussion. Each opening reflective 'homework' activity was clustered around an invocation of Haraway's key question on embodied vision, 'with whose blood were my eyes crafted?' (1988:585). The question resonates with regard to the agency of matter, ideas of embodiment, perception and gaze as well as legacies of patriarchy and empire. A third extended phase refers to resonances from live social media postings and their aggregation which, along with the field recordings and archive material, form the basis of exhibition/site specific installations.

Sweet Waters, a walking arts project

development

For most of 2016 I hosted public participatory walks building up a series of routes, establishing an informal community of walkers who contributed local knowledge, personal stories and with whom I developed ideas, explored and tested protocols. For example, using the UCL/Legacies of British Slave-ownership (UCL/LBS 2016) database I

geo-located former residences of slave-owners along the route of the then recently launched National Trust trail in Bath, *Walk to the View* (National Trust: 2016). The published heritage trail made no reference to slave-ownership or even the residences of prominent anti-slavery campaigners along the route. The UCL/LBS database evidences and enables discussion of the relationships between slave-ownership and the development of modern capitalism (e.g. Morgan, K. 2000; Hill, Hall et al 2014:7); it underpins commentary on the links between slave-ownership and the new aesthetics emerging in Europe and manifested in Bath in the eighteenth century as well as other connections into the cultural life of the period consolidating race as a hierarchical category (Draper 2014; Perry 2013; Otele 2018). These commentaries informed the developing critique of the authorised heritage narrative of Bath, and the map (see Figure 5) of geo-located former slave-owners' residences and other period relics became the nodes around which the Bath stages of *Sweet Waters* were located. I drew on documents from local archives, poetry, images and other materials to curate interventions/provocations at these and other places where obscured heritages poked through the authorised version.

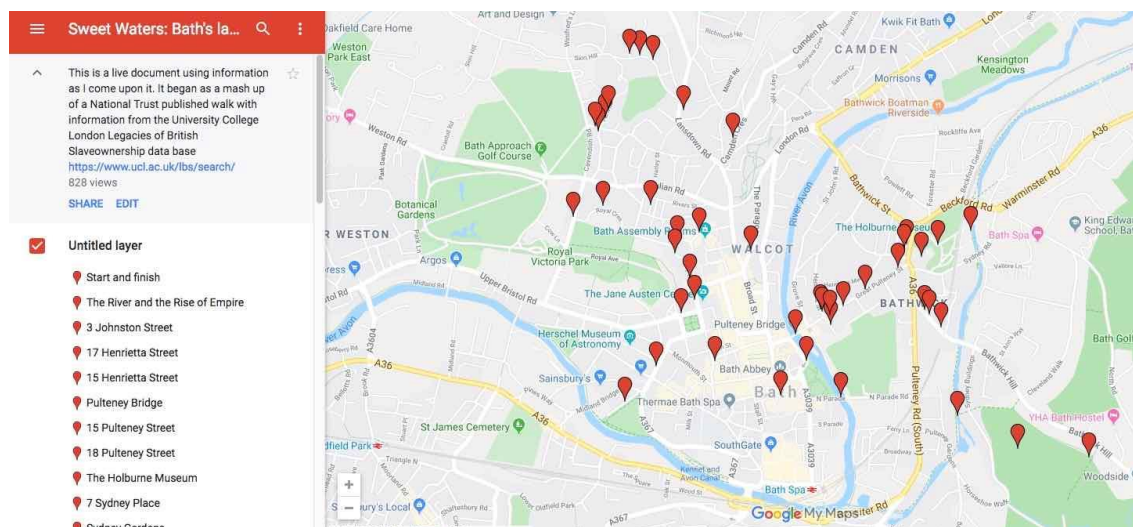


Figure 5: *Bath's Last Legal Slave-owners*, 2019. Screen grab. Map data ©2019 Google. Each red tag links to a statement regarding the location linked to a UCL/LBS (2016) database entry.

I further hosted walks exploring and testing strategies including listening walks and sensory walks focussing on attuning to and recording sensory experience as short tweeted statements in the style of *Haiku in the Park* (Museum of Walking 2018). Conscious sensing in this way developed tactics alerting 'other sites of thinking' (Thrift

2008:166), this included walking and tweeting/note-taking, drawing, walking together in silence, listening and touching, questioning through and with the body (see Figure 6).



Figure 6: *note taking on a sensory walk*, 2016. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

conduct of the walk

Sweet Waters was presented in 2017 as part of three overlapping international arts and nature festivals in Bath. The cycle involved a total of twenty walkers and a number of active networked users over six all-day walks covering ninety-seven miles; the online engagement via the website and blog peaked at over two thousand. Over fifty other walkers took part in the shorter walks during the development period; these shorter weekend walks were well attended with fifteen to twenty attendees on each. With an age range of mid-twenties to mid-sixties, the walkers were almost entirely white and resident in the Bristol/Bath area. Walkers were recruited through festival marketing and wider longer-term engagement via networking and my regular participatory walking arts practice.

interventions and curated content

Planned dissonant interventions using curated content stimulated involuntary thought towards seeding and renewing ongoing social justice conversations. Evoking other presences and traces these were moments of disruption and dislocation to the enchantment of fine period architecture or a summer riverside walk. I performed short provocations at slave-owners' former residencies on the route, presented readings of a

slave-owner's writings and set up other sensory interventions derived from the research including sampling chocolate without sugar, sugar mint cake and experiencing the high tide at sunrise on the River Avon.

The walks in Bath included a performative posting of an imagined Georgian gentleman's calling card (see Figures 7 and 8) through the letterboxes of former slave-owners residences. Prior to each posting I performed a reading of a formal structured statement, drawn from the UCL/LBS database entry, stating:

- name of slave-owner;
- number of enslaved people owned;
- name, parish and island of the plantation;
- amount in pounds of compensation received;

and always with the same repetitive concluding statement, 'Those released from slavery received no compensation'. Performed at many locations on the walk through the city, walkers responded to the beat of the phrase, repeating the statement with me.

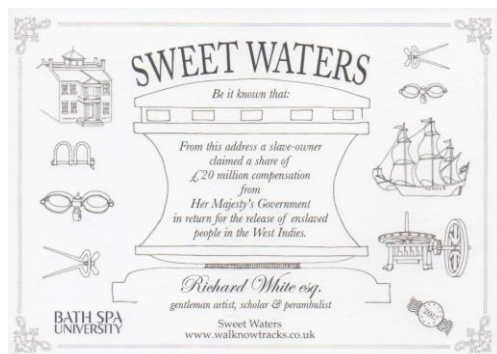


Figure 7: *imagined gentleman's calling card*, 2017. Courtesy of author. Delivered as part of the *Sweet Waters* walk.



Figure 8: *delivery of calling card to former slave-owner residence in Bath as part of performance /intervention on Sweet Waters, 2017.* Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

fragments and resonances: shared notebooks

Walkers were equipped with a shared notebook and invited to use their own smart device to make social media postings. Attunement exercises at the outset activated sensory alertness and generated a first use of notebook/smart device. Walkers were invited to record thoughts and sketches in analogue as well as using digital/social media forms (See Figures 9 - 11). Rather than a personalised notebook, an *exquisite corpse* technique was used to further disrupt the walking experience, notebooks were randomly rotated to different walkers on each walk. This destabilising of the solitary walker's sense of notebook ownership invited messy improvised making and thought of all kinds, thereby developing an ongoing public/private conversation between notebook users over successive walks. The notebooks offer traces of reflection in multiple voices, thoughts in progress, record keeping, lists; over the cycle of walks speculative, empathic dialogues emerged in fractured prose, instant poems, rubbings, pressed flowers and mark making with found materials.

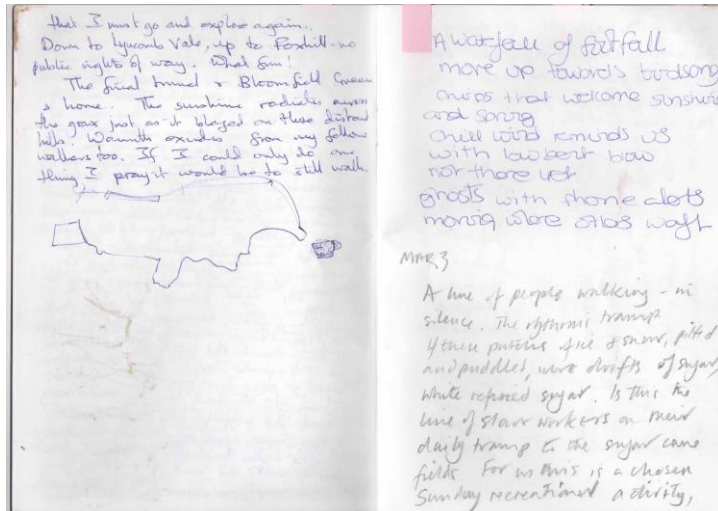


Figure 9: *three different 'voices' recording sensations and thoughts at different moments on a walk, 2017.* Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author. The image shows three different handwritings and a line drawing or map. Content includes descriptive poetic notes, sounds and impressions; one notes the contrasts between 'the daily tramp to the sugarcane field' and their 'chosen Sunday recreational activity'.

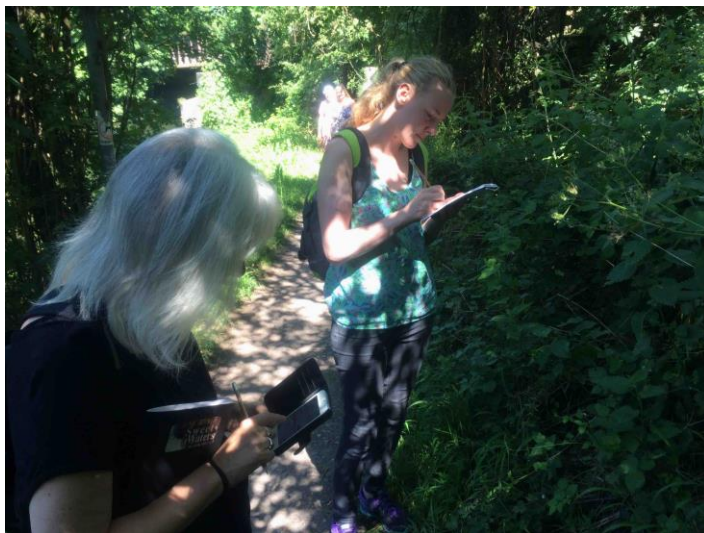


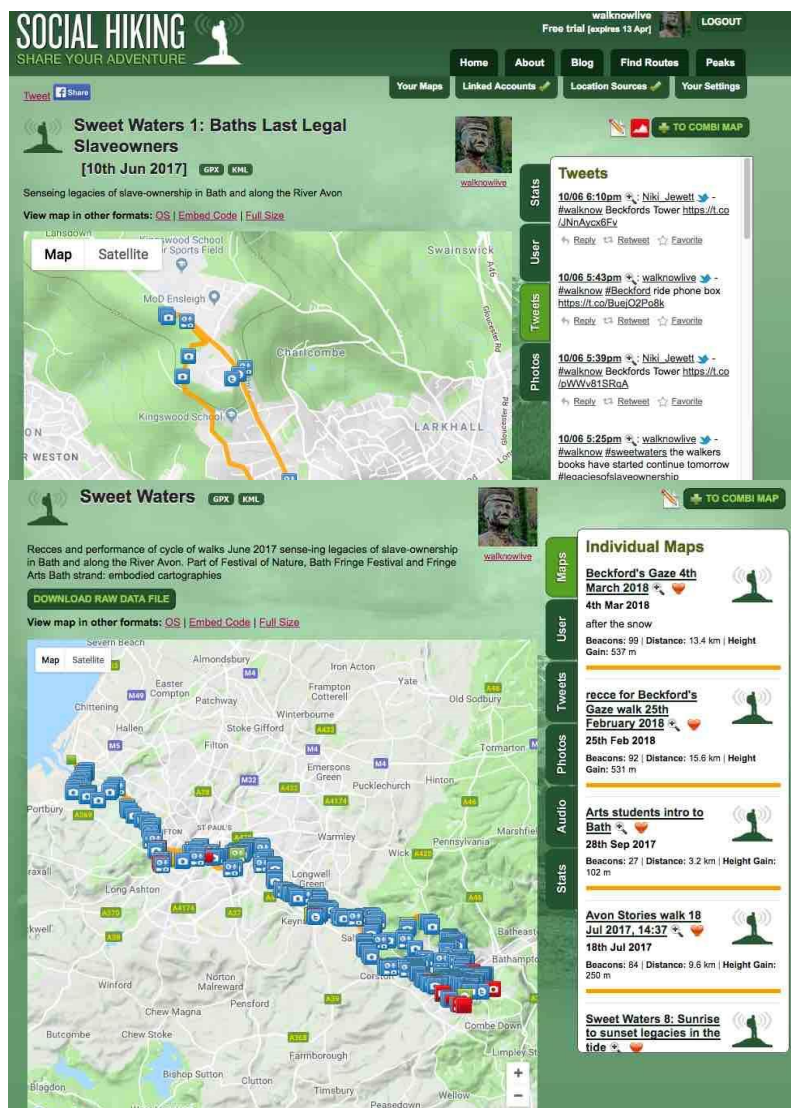
Figure 10: *walkers recording thoughts and observations in project note-books and as tweets, 2017.* Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.



Figure 11: *selection of project notebooks, 2017.* Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

social media trails

Social media trails aggregated from walkers' social media posts were published live generating a further improvised set of reflections and glimpses of process (see Figures 12 and 13). This had potential for other more extended networked engagement, but consisted largely of monitoring progress, 'liking' rather than active participation. The aggregated routes and links from *Sweet Waters* appear as a 'great arrow', referred to in a performance prose piece presented as part of the closing event. Media from the project is archived in the collection at <https://doi.org/10.17870/bathspa.c.4728512.v1>



closing event/multimedia installation

Following the walks, I accessed walkers' shared digital archives, project note-books, field recordings, and archive material to produce installation media and website content. This was presented as the installation, *Sweet Waters: Soundings* at Saltford Brass Mill (see Figure 14); the Mill had been one of the stations of the cycle of walks, where brass goods had been made to trade for captured people in West Africa (see Figure 17). The audio and moving image work I authored was installed and projected onto working heritage machinery producing an immersive sonic environment. Walking in the space generated a personalised mix of sounds from the walk, the water-powered machinery and visitors' voices, backed by the pulse of the working water wheel.

Conversations were renewed and new ones with visitors begun; these exchanges strengthened bonds generated on the walk and re-affirmed shared memories of the walk themes and content. Following the installation, a walker reflected on the experience,

....this was a rich experience. The knowledge in the walking group was clearly immense, and was freely, and gently, shared. There is 'something' about standing at the front doors of the former residents who took their vast shares in a government payout for the release of their slaves - I soaked up the stories told, and then retold to family and retold to friends, and they told their stories and knowledge in return, and so it goes on, resonating...

(*Sweet Waters*, walker instant feedback using web form 2017)



Figure 14: *Sweet Waters Soundings: installation at Saltford Brass Mill, Saltford 2017*. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

porous layers and flows of wealth, trade and matter

The forced movement of captured people, often on foot along the course of a river to the slave ports of West Africa, was a significant stage in the forced migration of captured and enslaved Africans, with a further journey on foot for those who survived the crossing (Eltis and Richardson 1997; Morgan, P. 1997; UNESCO The Slave Route 2017). *Sweet Waters* abstracted and transposed this journey, layering it onto the River Avon, along which goods were made and shipped to West Africa via Bristol, to be traded for captured and enslaved people (Morgan, K 1993; Dresser 2007). Walkers thus experienced juxtaposed registers of forced and unforced walking in addition to a series of curated tripping points, disrupting and dislocating time and space, the collective and the separate. Walking for pleasure along an English river was folded into the forced migration of the Atlantic Slave Trade. Considering the loss of life and human matter washed into the sea and the source of the weather in Western Europe, walkers were invited to imagine the shape of that flow of goods, humans and extracted wealth folded into the water cycle (see Figure 15).

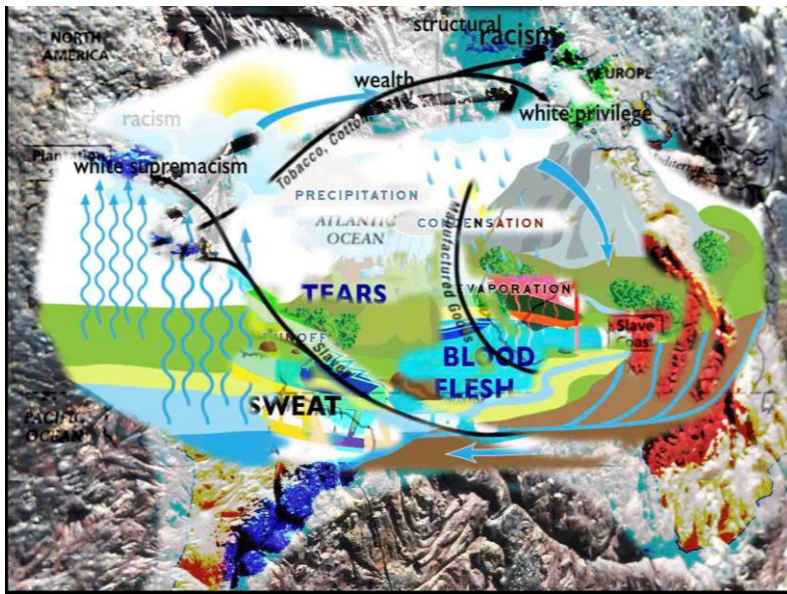


Figure 15: *Cycles of Water, Trade and Life*, 2017. Digital bricolage. Courtesy of author.

process: sampling *Sweet Waters*

Informed by Ahmed's view (2010) that injustice lives on if it is not addressed, the project offered an opening to 'make the return' through a messy embodied engagement in the reluctant heritage of slave-ownership and the slave economy and thence towards repair. This emergent practice with the corporeal experience of walking at its core involved a series of affective and empathic encounters, generating embodied learning experiences and new knowing of self and place. I continue with some observations sampling key moments in the process.

brass mills and memory stones, material encounters

Walking along the riverside, I drew attention to legacies of slave-ownership in sugar, water, brass and copper. We passed re-purposed brass mills where manillas (see Figure 16), the portable wealth and currency of the slave trade (Chambers 1997:80), and other brass goods were made. A visit and a moment at one brass mill, restored as heritage monument, is recorded photographically and in a notebook (see Figures 17 and 18)



Figure 16: *Brass manilla*, date unknown. Courtesy Saltford Brass Mill Project. Image shows item of wearable currency, made of brass produced at Keynsham Brass Mill, now a pub.



Figure 17: walkers viewing display of brass goods at Saltford Brass Mill, 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

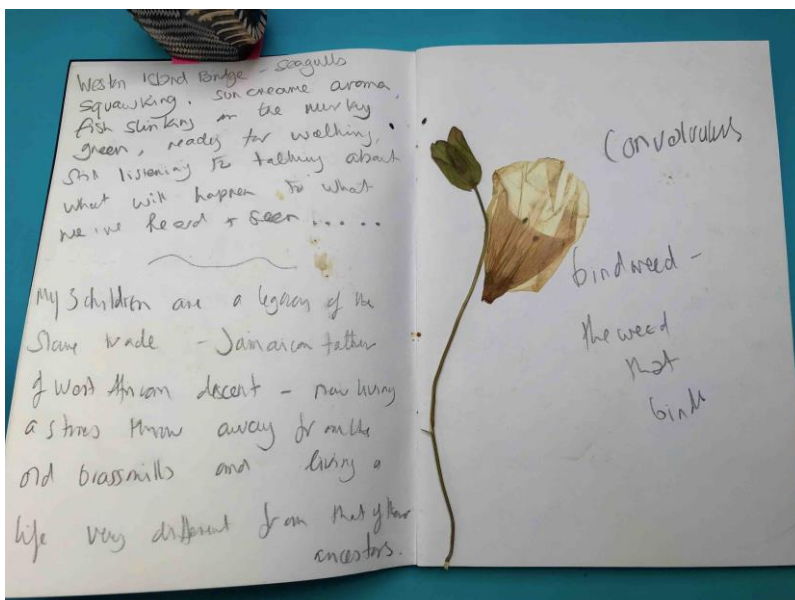


Figure 18: *bindweed and note on children thoughts and reflections near the brass mill, 2017*. Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author. The image shows two, possibly three entries and a pressed bindweed stem and flower. One entry reads, 'My children are a legacy of the Slave trade - Jamaican father of West African descent - now living a stones throw away from the old brassmills and living a life very different from that of their ancestors'.

\At the peak of the slave trade from Bristol, copper, a key constituent of brass, was being produced in such quantities along the river that a venture to dispose of the slag involved casting it into building materials. The blocks are a palimpsest of the slave economy and slave-ownership embedded in the built environment, each stone a hard, black, congealed, tarry mass. Walkers stopped to feel, photograph and draw them (see Figure 19), the stones were 'sticky'; the affective encounter enhanced by the corporeal effort of walking and the haptic experience of making a rubbing generated embodied memory and a desire to share, recalled in this feedback comment,

I think about it a lot - and ever since the walk I not only see the memory stones everywhere, but I'm still telling my friends about them, and sharing things I learned. (Respondent 1: *Sweet Waters* walker survey 2017)



Figure 19: a walker makes a rubbing of a 'memory stone', 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

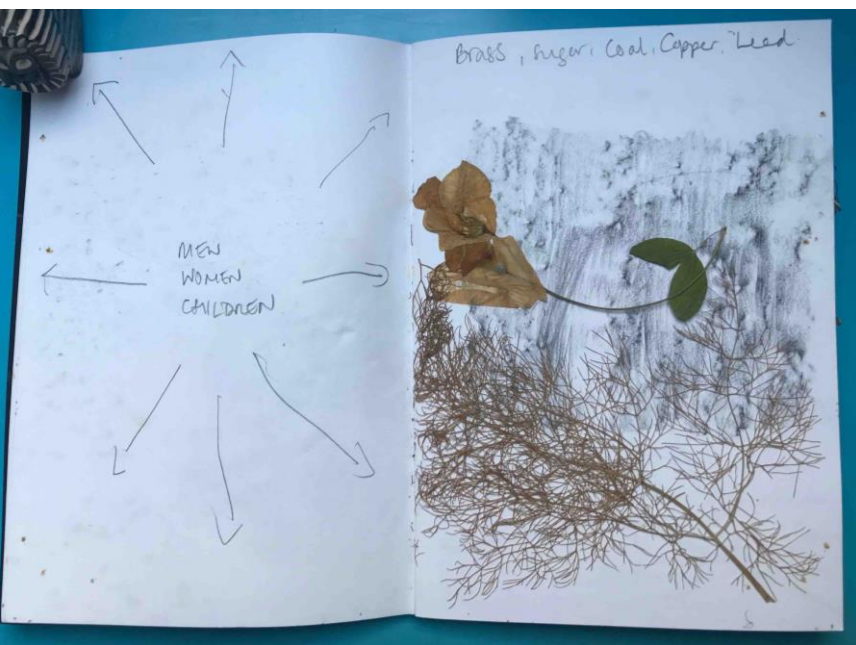


Figure 20: assemblage of rubbing, text and pressed leaves, 2017.

Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.

The image shows pressed fennel plant and a flower on a page of rubbing from a copper slag block. Text reads on the left hand page *men women and children* with arrows possibly indicating diaspora and on the right, the names of materials, *Brass, Sugar, Coal, Copper, Lead*

latent knowledge: with whose voice do I speak?

Seeking to explore my connection as someone racialised as white, I chose to read some of the curated archive

material aloud. In giving the slave traders and owners my voice and hearing it in my body and later my recorded voice I vocally interpreted the 'latent knowledge' McCosh (2013:136) describes as being present in materials. In this case, embodied in the signatures and hand-written documents of investors and slave ship owners found in the archives. The flourish of a signature or the wording of a contract contained a voice of privilege and authority that I sought to embody in my voice and articulate in the short films I made. The last day's walking began on Avonmouth Bridge (see Figure 21) where I read out instructions from owners and investors to a slave-ship's captain as we overlooked the river at dawn, stilled by the tide, imagining the craft passing below us.

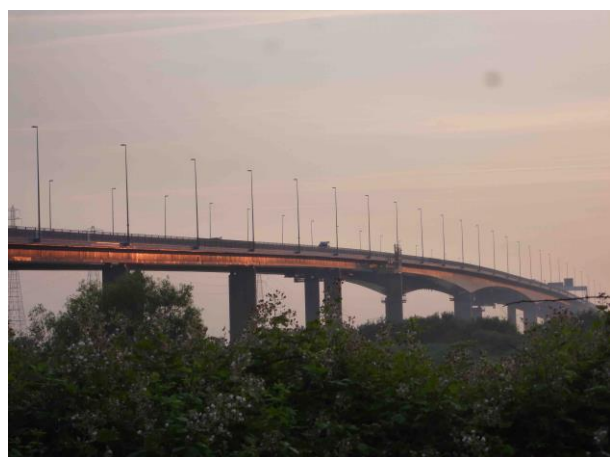


Figure 21: Avonmouth bridge shortly after dawn, *Midsummer's Day*, 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.

Entries from walkers' notebooks, offer traces of the moment above the river:

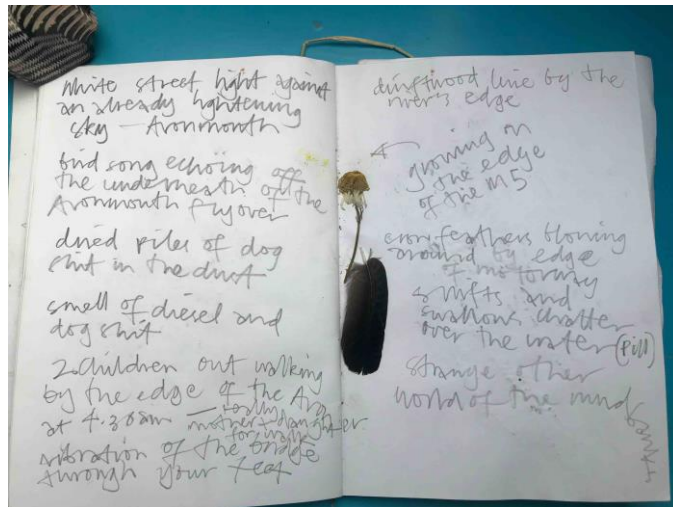


Figure 22: *assemblage of rubbing, text, feather and pressed flower, 2017.* Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author. Image shows a series of handwritten statements and observations, a small feather and a pressed flower. An arrow to the flower indicates it was growing on the edge of the M5 motorway. Text lists sensory observations, 'strange other world of the mind'



Figure 23: *River Avon mud smeared, 2017.* Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author. Image shows two pages, the left smeared with mud the right its printed mirror and same small pressed leaves. Text reads, 'Clifton Gorge'

catalysing involuntary thought

In developing this iteration of *walking-with*, I experimented with catalysing moments of affect, triggers of involuntary thought and processes of reflective thought. I sought to provoke and facilitate the emergence of the empathic dialogues Levine describes (2014). As outlined above, these are the moments of experience and discomfort immanent of new knowing and understandings (Bennett 2006; Benjamin 1999; Zembylas 2018; Witcomb 2013). Materialised as traces in notebooks and resonances on social media and more reflectively in the end of walk feedback, walkers carried their experience with them, many choosing to share widely as we began to formulate it in words.

emerging capacities: affect aliens and story carriers

Attending to perpetrator silence and issues of white privilege, acknowledging harm and injustice, is, I believe, part of the postcolonial re-evaluation essential for social repair, *Sweet Waters* was an attempt to respond to that challenge. The ongoing step-by-step effort to articulate and share our sensing of, and responses to, past injustices manifested in the present found many forms of live expression. Traces and fragments survive in the analogue and online forms sampled in this article (e.g. Figure 24).

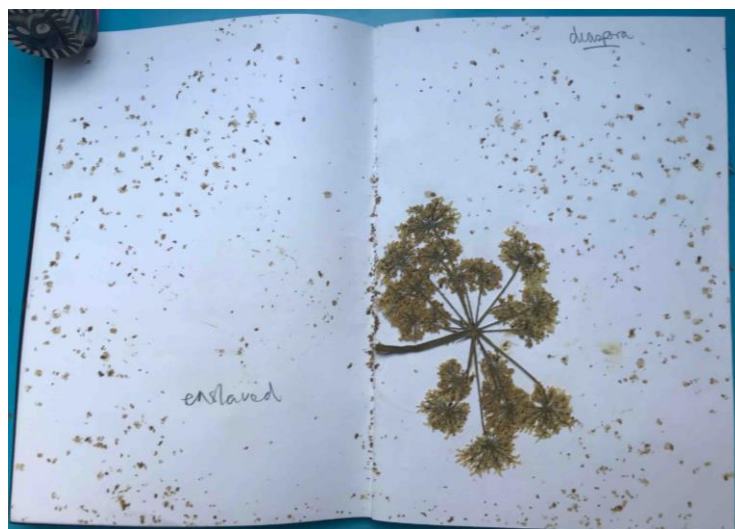


Figure 24: *cow parsley scatter*, 2017. Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author. Image shows pressed cow parsley flower in the folds of a notebook. The florets are dispersed leaving small pollen stains across the two pages. On the left the word *enslaved* is written and on the right, *diaspora*.

In concluding this article, I refer to two capacities manifested in the conversations and noted in subsequent walker feedback. In addition to building a vital somatic awareness and alertness, as part of a developing response-ability two capacities of significance emerge through this 'pedagogy of discomfort', walkers become story carriers and experiencing solidarity, building confidence and knowledge they can become heritage affect aliens. Telling the stories, bearing witness and questioning the official version becomes connected through the affective encounters of this walking arts practice.

contributing to a long chain of memory: walkers becoming story carriers

Sweet Waters sought to generate an embodied awareness of slave-ownership as integral to the story of Bath and the River Avon, invoking a 'remembering that serves to illuminate and transform the present' (Massey 1994: 171). As I have described, *walking-*

with involves a live, embodied and social production of knowledge, materialised in notebooks, documentary materials and field recordings. Harrison and Rose (2010:250) refer to collective memory, albeit in non-European ethnography, as part of a 'long chain of memory' connecting the present re-tellers with the original actors' performances. *Sweet Waters* mobilised that knowledge through a performance of witness in a chain of memory. The creative work, both in its live corporeal form and in its digital and analogue traces, energised links of memory and empathic imagining. Walkers wanted to share their experience with others, to pass on their story of their walk.

In this project *walking-with* generates and reinforces affective resonances, revealing obscured accounts of past harm and white complicity, towards a commitment to carry and critically question those partial accounts. Levine notes that the activity of, 'bringing hidden stories and stories of place to the surface... transform[s] participants into story bearers' (2014:144). The mutual trust and solidarity built *walking-with*, established a supportive space for questioning heritage narratives and responding to instances of white fragility. In this way, through new insights and ways of seeing, walkers acquired agency and took ownership of the narrative, as co-created intangible cultural heritage. Walkers became story carriers.

challenging the official version: walkers becoming affect aliens

Ahmed (2010) refers to an affect alien as someone who, at a family gathering, might challenge the normalisation of patriarchy, here I suggest walkers becoming *heritage* affect aliens. A heritage affect alien might ask difficult questions challenging the hegemonic premise of an authorised heritage narrative. *Sweet Waters* activity, attending to legacies of slave-ownership, physically making the connections by walking between the historic wealth of the city and the relics of the mills that manufactured the currency of the slave trade, were heritage affect alien actions. There were several occasions the performance generated encounters in which we were told it was time to 'get over it', echoing an authorised view to 'forgive and forget' and a former authorised heritage perspective on the 'civilising effects' of empire and in one case to defend slavery. These and other encounters resonated with DiAngelo's observation on the fragility of white people when confronted with the internalisation of the message of white superiority (2011:63). Without exception these people were white, as were most of the walkers, the

experience was raw, emotional and messy but amongst those involved *walking-with* an empathic dialogue emerged acknowledging past injustice. Empathy may not be sufficient alone to motivate towards the social action necessary for change but in the context of this somatic, thinking-making-doing, process the affective embodied acknowledgement of past injustice by a group of white walkers becomes a significant opening.

This creative work embraces Ahmed's view that to 'let go' of past injustice and 'get along' would be to keep those histories and injustices in the present (2010); these actions form part of a pedagogy of discomfort attending to past injustice beginning a process towards social repair. Considering Deleuze's commentary on voluntary thought and truth referenced by Jill Bennett (2006) I suggest that for those racialised as white their internalised understanding of white superiority is not often visited voluntarily. Curated dissonant content for *Sweet Waters* generated a 'squirm' of involuntary thought (Bennett 2006:37), leading towards more profound thought on racialisation as much for myself as for other white walkers; this was a heritage affect alien action, modelling the possibility of participants becoming affect aliens themselves.

conclusion

Sweet Waters offers a speculative contribution to heritage learning engaging the body, emotion and affect through a walking arts process. This iteration of *walking-with* involves unsettling the apparent certainties of time and space, breaking silences and revealing what is obscured in a particular authorised heritage account. The rich and complex process described offers an opening for further development by heritage and education practitioners particularly with regard to the move from affect to action and changed behaviour. I offer this as a contribution towards accountability in heritage, generating embodied experiences, making new heritage accounts, manifesting new understandings and diverse articulations on social justice issues. *Walking-with*, although not outcome driven, alerts and develops significant affects, somatic skills and response-abilities of which I have identified two: becoming story carriers and affect aliens. Walkers become agents in subaltern heritage accounts and, with the dignity and

solidarity borne of the process are able to continue the questioning of authorised narratives. This is a contribution to informal learning and heritage practices through walking art.

With this project I offer an iteration of *walking-with* as a speculative ambulatory approach to critical creative inquiry, an approach that may be of value in opening up conversations on other dissonant and, for some, reluctant, heritages. At a time of deep dislocation in the UK and as an ugly romance with empire and white supremacy seems to be emerging, I believe that these acts of walking, questioning and making the return are essential steps on the path towards social repair and a just and sustainable future.

acknowledgements

All photographs and artworks are copyright of the author except where noted in the caption. I claim 'fair use' of Google data and Social Hiking maps, this is agreed with the latter. Permissions was obtained from individuals photographed, as part of project registration as was an understanding that co-created note-books would become part of the extended presence of the project. Additional walker comments are drawn from a survey immediately after the walks conducted by the author for PhD research, comments are anonymised for publication as agreed with the participants.

appendix

Table of image descriptions

Figure	Caption info	Description/ additional info	Approx Page
1	<i>soil and water</i> , 2017. Scanned walker's notebook. Courtesy of author.	Image shows marks made with mud and water folded and dried in a note book. Text reads ' <i>soil paint from Lansdown molehill. Beckford dug tunnels (or was it slave labour) as did this mole</i> '	2
2	<i>rubbing and end notes</i> , 2017. Scanned walker's notebook. Courtesy of author.	Image shows hand written text, drawing of an ammonite and a rubbing of a piece of copper slag.	2

		Text refers to the source of the slag, remains of the metal industry, overheard conversations, and provides descriptions of the sensory experience ' <i>waves of heat coming off the grass</i> ', ' <i>silence of the suburbs</i> ' and the start of an intervention involving ' <i>throwing sugar back into the water</i> '.	
3	<i>irony or provocation</i> , 2017. Scanned walkers notebook. Courtesy of author.	Image shows writing in pencil on the left and a blank page to the right. The text refers to an oil painting viewed in the museum, ' <i>African Chiefs who made vast fortunes from selling their <u>own</u> people into slavery</i> ' and, referencing the pleasure gardens where we walked, <i>thank goodness for plantation owners...or we wouldn't have the Delights of Bath</i> '.	3
4	<i>Sweet Waters</i> , promotional postcard 2017. Courtesy of author.		4
5	<i>Bath's Last Legal Slave-owners</i> , 2019. Screen grab of author's Googlemap. Map data ©2019 Google.	Each red tag links to a statement regarding the location linked to a UCL/LBS (2016) database entry.	11
6	<i>note taking on a sensory walk</i> , 2016. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		12
7	<i>imagined gentleman's calling card</i> , 2017. Courtesy of author. Delivered as part of the Sweet Waters walk		13
8	<i>delivery of calling card to former slave-owner residence in Bath as part of performance /intervention on Sweet Waters</i> , 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		13
9	<i>three different 'voices' recording sensations and</i>	The image shows three different handwritings and a line drawing	14

	<i>thoughts at different moments on a walk</i> , 2017. Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.	or map. Content includes descriptive poetic notes, sounds and impressions; one notes the contrasts between ' <i>the daily tramp to the sugarcane field</i> ' and their ' <i>chosen Sunday recreational activity</i> '.	
10	<i>walkers recording thoughts and observations in project note books and as tweets</i> , 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		14
11	<i>selection of project notebooks</i> , 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author		15
12	<i>Single social media trail</i> , 2017. Social Hiking platform. Screen grab. Map data ©2019 Google	Each blue icon represents a geo-located social media posting.	15
13	<i>Sweet Waters aggregated social media trails</i> , 2018. Social Hiking platform. Screen grab. Map data ©2019 Google		15
14	<i>Sweet Waters Soundings: installation at Saltford Brass Mill, Saltford</i> 2017. Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		17
15	<i>Cycles of Water, Trade and Life</i> , 2017. Digital bricolage. Courtesy of author.		18
16	<i>Brass manilla</i> , date unknown. Courtesy Saltford Brass Mill Project.	Image shows item of wearable currency, made of brass produced at Keynsham Brass Mill, now a pub.	19
17	<i>walkers viewing display of brass goods at Saltford Brass Mill</i> , 2017 Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		19
18	<i>bindweed and note on children thoughts and reflections near the brass mill</i> , 2017. Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.	The image shows two, possibly three entries and a pressed bindweed stem and flower. One entry reads, ' <i>My children are a legacy of the Slave trade – Jamaican father of West African</i>	19

		<i>descent – now living a stones throw away from the old brassmills and living a life very different from that of their ancestors’.</i>	
19	<i>a walker makes a rubbing of a ‘memory stone’, 2017.</i> Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		20
20	<i>assemblage of rubbing, text and pressed leaves, 2017.</i> Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.	The image shows pressed fennel plant and a flower on a page of rubbing from a copper slag block. Text reads on the left hand page <i>men women and children</i> with arrows possibly indicating diaspora and on the right, the names of materials, <i>Brass, Sugar, Coal, Copper, Lead</i>	20
21	<i>Avonmouth bridge shortly after dawn, Midsummer’s Day, 2017.</i> Documentary photograph. Courtesy of author.		21
22	<i>assemblage of rubbing, text, feather and pressed flower, 2017.</i> Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.	Image shows a series of handwritten statements and observations, a small feather and a pressed flower. An arrow to the flower indicates it was growing on the edge of the M5 motorway. Text lists sensory observations, <i>‘strange other world of the mind’</i>	21
23	<i>River Avon mud smeared, 2017.</i> Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.	Image shows two pages, the left smeared with mud the right its printed mirror and same small pressed leaves. Text reads, <i>‘Clifton Gorge’</i>	22
24	<i>cow parsley scatter, 2017.</i> Scanned notebook. Courtesy of author.	Image shows pressed cow parsley flower in the folds of a notebook. The florets are dispersed leaving small pollen stains across the two pages. On the left the word <i>enslaved</i> is written and on the right, <i>diaspora</i> .	23

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