

ESTHER BRANDEAU / JACQUES LA FARGUE:
PERFORMING A READING OF AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MULTICROSSER

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ESTHER BRANDEAU / JACQUES LA FARGUE:
HET PERFORMATIEF LEZEN VAN EEN 18E-EEUWSE *MULTICROSSER*

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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To my grandparents and great grandparents,
whose stories led me here.

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Introduction

First encounters

In 2005, while a graduate student in Diane Roberts' Cultural Production Workshop at York University in Toronto, I read something that would alter the course of my life, mapping the next decade of my personal, creative, scholarly and community work. I was doing research for an assignment Roberts had given us in her performance course, "Testimony, Autobiography and Performance." We were to choose an ancestor of ours at least two generations removed, into whose shoes we would step in the studio as an exercise in intercultural, transtemporal witness with our peers. We were to research over a short period of time, in whatever ways we could—books, public and private archives, oral history interviews, Wikipedia, hearsay, maps, music, newspapers, photos, intuition and dreams—regardless of how much or how little, usually little—we knew about the chosen ancestor. I had chosen my great-great grandmother, a Jew from Belarus who had purportedly left the widower to whom she was betrothed not long after my Dad's grandfather was born, and who had later followed her son to Canada after he had settled t/here alone as a youngster. I was with my cousins reading an original 1926 edition of *The Jew in Canada*, a heavy book with gold-edged pages that had been my grandparents', the blue on its weathered cover coming off on my fingers. My grandmother had passed a few years before, my grandfather more than a decade before, and the book was in my eldest cousin's possession. I read the following on page three of this first written history of Jews in Canada:

Mention of the Jews who set foot on Canadian soil as Jews is made for the first time in connection with two very strange occurrences, one of which reads like a fairy tale and the other is reminiscent of the times of the Inquisition.

The first story concerns a Jewish girl who arrived in Quebec at the beginning of September, 1738, on the ship "*St. Michel*," disguised as a boy under the name of "Jacques La Fargue". The startling discovery was made that this handsome, gay and refined young "man" was in reality not a man, but a woman, and that her name was not "Jacques" but Esther—Esther Brandeau (Sack 1926, 3).

I didn't make it to the second story, about a Dutch Jew who converted in 1752 having also sailed to Quebec.

This dissertation stems from the fact of that life accounted for, and from the feelings it unleashed in me in the moment of reading. I was, to say the least, dumbstruck. It was the first time I had ever felt such resonance with an historical figure. As a Jew-ish queer child of one Catholic and one Jewish parent and a rare out queer in my lineages, it wasn't just the queer act of passing from female to male, but the queer act of passing from Jewish female to Christian male that accounted for suddenly feeling like I might have a history in what I recognized then tongue-in-cheek as a "double-crosser." But just as quickly as I felt the earth shake under the exciting force of that

recognition, I felt something else. *How is it that I do not know this story? That I have never heard tell of this story? How would it have been if I'd known this story all along?* As it turned out, when I started asking around, I discovered that I was not alone in my not knowing.

Around five years later, after research trips to France, Portugal and Spain, I premiered my theatre piece *ribcage: this wide passage* based on the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue and my encounter with it, at a Montreal theatre, Le MAI (Montréal Arts Interculturels), with the above instructor Diane Roberts as its director (Hermant 2010b). I have since performed the show in French, and I marked the latter part of my dissertation work with an eight-show run at Vancouver's Firehall Arts Centre in 2015 (Hermant 2015). I knew before that premiere in 2010 that I could never present all that my research had uncovered—however little that was relative to what I know now—nor address all that I still wanted to learn and to say about this story in a single 70-minute solo performance. After all, we had cut huge swaths of text from my original script! A theatre piece, *perhaps*, has intentions different than scholarly research.

Introducing the research

I ask the following central question in this dissertation:

How can cultural analysis, archival research and performance perform telling Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue in a queer, feminist and decolonial way, and how do these genres of research practice speak to each other?

This question foregrounds the project of this dissertation as a commitment to queer, feminist and decolonial world-making, marks intersectionality as a key concept, and interdisciplinarity as a key practice, as we will see. To explore this question, I structure my investigation around three drastically different approaches in terms of methodology, and in terms of form or genre of outcome, making for what is an unconventional dissertation on a number of fronts. To introduce the research, the ways in which it is unconventional and the contributions I make to scholarship through my investigation of this question, I begin (again) with the story at hand.

So it goes that according to a third person voice testimony in the French colonial archive, in 1738 a Jewish woman, Esther Brandeau, journeys from France to New France passing as a Christian man, Jacques La Fargue (ANF 1738a). They become, allegedly, among the first Jews if not the first Jew in what we now know as Canada, and certainly the first Jewish female, at a time when Jews are at once barred from French colonies and active, like non-Jews, in Atlantic trade.¹ There before colonial authorities, s/he recounts having worked as a male labourer in

¹ Tulchinsky notes that a Dutch Jewish trader was granted the territory of Labrador by England's King William III in 1697, and that in 1732 a young Jew had been an apprentice with the Hudson's Bay company. These are both men. Tulchinsky goes on to note the possibility that there were Marrano [*Converso*/New Christian] traders in Quebec during the colonial period (Tulchinsky 1992, 14).

various trades on land and on sea across France and possibly beyond for five years prior to embarking for Québec at La Rochelle, five years after having been sent to family in Amsterdam on a ship that is purported to have wrecked before reaching that destination, our protagonist saved (ANF 1738a). Brandeau / La Fargue is said to be twenty years old when outed as female and Jewish at or en route to Québec—by whom and how on either count, we do not know. S/he is held under house arrest at a convent in Québec City and various private houses for a year, and is ultimately deported for refusing to convert to Christianity. The deportation is arranged as a barter between King Louis XV and a captain; in exchange for removing her back to France, the captain's required quota of white indentured labourers was to be reduced on his next journey to the colony (ANF 1740a, b). It remains unknown whether the deportation order was carried out and whether s/he indeed returned to France, for they subsequently disappear from the archival record, as far as we know to date.

A testimony they gave to a male colonial official scribed in third person voice, along with correspondence between the colonial Intendant, various officials in France and the King, and brief mention in the records of a nun, together inscribe traces of a life-story that was a collision on colonial shores of multiple and simultaneous crossings, and an embodiment of the webs of relations that characterized the colonial era. Land under colonial invasion is the setting for the unravelling of what had been until then multiple successful passings across geographies rural, metropolitan, colonial and waterways between; across gender; across religion and/or ethnicity; across class; across language; and possibly across age. The story too leaves open, through omission, the possibility of transgression of heterosexuality.

This is a story of multiple migrations that begin before Esther Brandeau's childhood in, and departure from, a quarter opposite the French city of Bayonne where Jews settled, Saint-Esprit. This Jewish quarter itself is built of the physical migrations of exiled Jews and converted Jews (*Conversos* or New Christians) of Inquisition-era Portugal as well as Spain. This exile fuels a diaspora that stretches across Europe and its colonial holdings, across several centuries. The story is a departure into the raced and gendered movements of labour within Europe and toward the colonies in the colonial period. It is a story of migrations across the psychic, intellectual and emotional geographies that these physical migrations both entailed and caused to be enacted.

The story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue is indeed a rich "Canadian foundation tale." But it is not widely known and it is, in my estimation, under-examined, even though as this dissertation will demonstrate, it has been told with frequency. This might be partly because it is a complex and difficult story that challenges for instance, foundation myths, such as the pure white Catholic settler origins of Québec and the assumed heteronormativity of foundational Jewish presence in Canada and Canadian settler presence more broadly.² It might also be difficult for the resonance to be found between a foundational practice of policing national belonging against Others, and contemporary manifestations of such border policing. Nowadays it is also difficult to tell a

² But following Richard Menkis, any counter-claim that Jews are foundational in early New France, a "myth of profound Jewish roots in French-Canadian society" falls into "the intellectual steeplechase to prove longevity in the land," which Menkis claims is a commonplace in Jewish historiography and ethnic historiography in general (Menkis 1991, 28).

Canadian Jewish settler tale through a decolonial lens without awareness of links made between Palestinian sovereignty in the face of European Jewish settlement post World War II into the present, and First Nations sovereignty in the face of settler colonialism in Canada into the present, as different as those contexts might be. This is the case particularly of a queer approach, in the face of emerging scholarship at the intersection of queer settler colonialism, homonationalism, and queer Indigenous studies (Morgensen 2012).

In this life story there is to be contended with the underbelly of what would become Canada, in its emergence: the enslavement of Africans and Indigenous people, colonization of Indigenous people (including Indigenous Africans), the indenture of white Europeans, and the implication of Jews in the project of colonization, a people long-persecuted and violently exiled in the very moment that Columbus claimed the so-called "New World" for the Spanish Crown. A close look at the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue reveals the masculinist, exclusionary project of nation-building through the deportation of a "non-compliant person", a person that even as we might be inclined to claim in resistance to all of this, also foregrounds the imperial Atlantic as having been one opportunity for those who transgressed the givens of sex, gender, ethnicity, "race," religion and/or class, as in the case of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue.

What has never factored into tellings of Esther Brandeau is an account of the Indigenous territory into which Brandeau / La Fargue arrived. S/he arrived to Nionwentsïo, traditional territory of the Wendat and of many Iroquoian Indigenous peoples historically.³ The settlement the French called Quebec, in New France, was originally an Indigenous settlement and capital called Stadaconé (Stadacona). The first French explorers' encounters with Indigenous peoples near Stadaconé yields the name of the current country Canada, which derives from the word *kanata*, a word for "village," recorded by French explorers as the word given when referring to Stadaconé. We might call the place of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's arrival Wendat territory, where Wendat people encountered visiting and trading Innu, Abenaki, Atikamekw and Algonquin peoples, as well as Europeans. The Wendat settlement of Roreke, about twelve kilometres from Quebec City, had been founded in 1697 by exiles from Wendake in the southern part of present-day province of Ontario, seat of the once-powerful Wendat confederacy, whose roots stretched from there back up into Quebec and the Saint Lawrence River valley. The five nation Wendat confederacy collapsed at the hands of epidemics and war with the Haudenosaunee.⁴

3 Georges Sioui is founding Coordinator of the Aboriginal Studies program at the University of Ottawa. His writings have helped me construct the brief and surely incomplete history I give here. I thank Dr. Sioui for pointing me to Dr. Dalie Giroux of the University of Ottawa, who in turn I thank for clarification on First Nations history of Quebec City. I thank Wendat sociologist, artist, critic and curator Dr. Guy Sioui Durand Tsiebei 8enho8en, for his perspective on this history, and Émilie Monnet for recommending I speak with him. There are inconsistencies across the diverse sources I use to compile this overview. All may be true depending on framing. My summary is an incomplete attempt at accounting for the long history of overlapping First Nations' usages and understandings of ancestral relationships across millennia, which make pinpointing, for instance, Stadaconé, more complex than a Wendat capital, or Roreke as the traditional home of the Wendat. Other than the Wendat, I do not give above, for instance, the political and trade relationships and land use dynamics between the diverse nations that frequented what we now know as Quebec City, over time, nor the history of the Iroquoian peoples that inhabited the region long before the French arrived, and before the Wendat nation founded Roreke. The intention is to name Brandeau's arrival into a territory as already named, governed, stewarded and used by First Nations long before European arrival and not ceded to colonial authority.

4 Sioui (1999, 5-11) contests the extent and intensity of this warring relationship.

Wendat historian Georges Sioui notes that early French explorers would have first encountered Indigenous life, trade and governance systems most strongly through the powerful reach and extensive networks of which the Wendat were at the top of a hierarchy, and whose sphere of influence stretched from the heart of Wendake in eastern Ontario to Quebec, through trade to the north and to the south across the eastern continent. The Wendat language was the *lingua franca* of vast trading networks in what Sioui calls a Wendat hegemony (Sioui 1999, 5-11). The Wendat who were exiled to Roreke had returned to Nionwentsio, to the Saint Lawrence river valley of central Quebec from where they had origins, and while reduced in numbers compared to at the height of Wendake, still maintained a central role and influence across nations as guardians of order (10).

Roreke at the time of Brandeau / La Fargue's arrival was being heavily Christianised courtesy of the Jesuits, and the Wendat territory surrounding Roreke was consistently being partitioned for settlers. That Brandeau violated prohibitions against non-Catholics on New France territory made by the French crown, and failed to deliver on attempts at her forced conversion cannot be seen as separate from the Christianization underway at Roreke and the disbursement of Wendat lands to Christian settlers. It was Wendat territory Brandeau / La Fargue arrived to, was held at, and was deported from for her supposed failure to assimilate to the French conversion mission.⁵

Among the reasons why the story of Brandeau / La Fargue may not have been attended to in scholarship beyond repetitions of the original record, and/or under-analyzed as I have suggested, is the logistical difficulty, which this dissertation tackles head on, of the labour required to corroborate evidence in the testimony that gives us the tale of Brandeau / La Fargue in the first place, if one chooses to doubt its contents while embracing its value as a testament to a particular life lived. Brandeau's testimony names ten locales spread across a sizable swath of France, from the southernmost starting point of Bayonne at one extreme, to Saint-Malo many hundreds of kilometres due north at the other. Visits to each of these locales and work in local archives is a daunting task.

While the story of Brandeau / La Fargue figures in Jewish histories of Canada, in French and in English, it is there largely as a necessary and remarkable curiosity. It appears in early histories of Canada, including the first report of Canada's first archivist. In more analytical takings-up within Jewish scholarship, it is usually told foregrounding the (anti-)Jewish angle, without any special attention to the gender aspect. While the story is to be found in Jewish women's history, it is not found in scholarship on women, gender and sexuality of the colonial period or beyond, and I have found no mention beyond my own work in queer scholarship or scholarship on passing. It seems it only recently appeared in the Wikipedia entry "Timeline on Canadian LGBT History," in 2014.⁶

5 The Treaty of 1760 between the British and the Wendat, made after the fall of New France from the French to the British, currently governs the territory where Brandeau arrived to. It recognizes Wendat rights to unencumbered practice of religion, movement and commerce, and use of land according to traditional usage (Beaudoin 2006; R. v. Sioui 1990). This Treaty, without explicitly naming geographic limitations, names Wendat territory. It was not recognized by Canada until two hundred and twenty-four years later, when a 1984 Supreme Court ruling was made that has proven to be precedent setting for First Nations land claims across the country (ibid). The Supreme Court challenge was spearheaded by historian Sioui noted above, along with his brothers.

6 In December 2014, I was at the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives researching for a performance I created called *queer slow dance with radical thought*, adapted site-specifically to the CLGA with Alvis Parsley for Rhubarb Festival, February 2015, in which I

Only in the early 21st century in Canada have novels been published based on the story, one in French and two in English (Lasry 2000; McKay 2004; Glickman 2012). The story had not until then entered the broader public imagination in Canada, though it has long since been present in Jewish histories of Canada. No concerted, substantive scholarly archival research has been published that pursues the story beyond what is found in the original French colonial records, though surely the many people who have been interested in the story and have produced work from it have their own archival findings pertaining to it. An array of absence and presence is as much the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as is the life story as it can be known from the archival fragments available. It is into this array, and into a contemporary demand for decolonization, that this dissertation inserts itself.

This dissertation, then, is the first that I know of to centre this historical figure as a doctoral subject, a scholarly effort to trace the claims made in the French colonial archival records that goes extensively beyond those primary sources in search of others in order to situate, corroborate, analyse and expand our knowledge of the story. I have undertaken archival work in Canada, France and The Netherlands in municipal, regional and national archives (with peripheral site visits in Portugal, Spain and Belgium). I have visited all but one of the ten locales named in the testimony,⁷ and I have worked in archives in seven of these named places in addition to archives and libraries in Paris.⁸ Further, alongside the archival work of digging into and expanding beyond existing archival evidence, mine is the first substantive scholarly attempt to gather and lay out a record of how this story has travelled from its first inscription in the cultural archive; to document the many efforts made to repeat or produce from the story; and to track analytically representations of the story through a queer, feminist, decolonial lens, a set of lenses upon which I will elaborate in due course.

This research offers to the growing record of colonial-era gender crossers a new member, and in doing so I raise the question as to why so few documented gender crossers crossed, or have been seen or read to have crossed, across more than one axis concurrently. This may compel a re-read of materials gathered thus far. It is difficult to assess whether any of these documented crossers may have been Jews or *Conversos* passing as Old Christians, but the suggestion of the possibility merits consideration, as the case of Brandeau / La Fargue compels. More particular to Jewish, Sephardic and *Converso*/New Christian diaspora studies, and to Atlantic studies, I offer a focus on *female* life, with attention to gender through a queer lens, which is sparse if not absent in some of these literatures, and thus offers an opportunity for the necessary work of bridging across disciplines.⁹

performed Brandeau / La Fargue as one of the catalogue items in this live archive performance. Brandeau was among the materials we brought into the CLGA, which we felt were missing from the collections. While researching at the CLGA, I shared the story of Brandeau / La Fargue with folks there. This may or may not be connected to the appearance of the story for the first time on December 14, 2014 on the Wikipedia Canadian LGBT History Timeline.

7 One location is still unclear, a locale named as Noisel in the record. I have consulted by distance with departmental archives in France pertaining to the region that includes a locale named Noisiel outside of Paris, but archivists there have found no trace of any of the names by which Brandeau travelled. It is not clear if Noisiel is indeed the location.

8 I worked in archives in Amsterdam, Bayonne, Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Nantes, Saint-Malo, Rennes and Vitré, and visited Quebec City, Clisson and Biarritz.

9 In the case of early modern Jewish communities of southwestern France, Julia K. Lieberman compiles essays on Sephardi life

Importantly, my research is conducted through a methodological approach that leverages the fact that I am an artist-scholar. My own artistic work, produced since 2005 is part of the cultural archive about Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. My creative methods and outputs stand on equal footing with what we might construe as more conventional scholarly methods and outputs. The very fact that their collaboration has been vital to the work you will find herein is a central concern of the dissertation itself, as we will see.

Dissertation Overview

This dissertation is structured in three Parts, prefaced by a contextual overview entitled “Context: An Introduction to Brandeau / La Fargue's eighteenth century.” This serves as an extended introduction that grounds the remainder of the dissertation. The three Parts make up the dissertation's core. The dissertation is unconventional in its scholarly structure for two main reasons: first, each Part is dramatically different from the others in style, form, voice and methodology. Second, my approach to integrating the literature is distinct in each of the three parts. In Part I: Eruptions Into Knowability, the relevant literature is woven throughout. In Part II: Archival Sense, the relevant literature comes largely at the end of an autoethnographic undertaking. In Part III: Becoming Archive, the relevant literature is placed beneath a performance staged on the page, in a Subtext that occupies the bottom half of the page. I will elaborate now on the concerns and structure of each of these Parts.

Part I: Eruptions Into Knowability

Part I of the dissertation is entitled Eruptions Into Knowability. I begin to address the overarching question of the dissertation through an investigation of the following questions: How has Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue entered knowability? How has this figure been inscribed in the first colonial archival record? How has the story travelled from this first inscription into what I call the colonial present? And through these travels of the story across time and across genres, have the ways in which Brandeau / La Fargue was first inscribed travelled and changed, and if so, how? In Eruptions Into Knowability I engage in an intersectional narratological analysis of the original colonial archival record that brings us the story, and I engage in an analysis of two creative works produced in the present century that are based on the story. I pay particular attention to gender, “race,” religion, ethnicity, class, movement and the colonial context as I undertake this analysis. As such, Part I: Eruptions Into Knowability takes a Cultural Studies approach to the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, to analyse whether and how tellings of the story to date have done queer, feminist and/or decolonial work.

The two contemporary works that I analyse are an English-language novel for young readers entitled *Esther* by Sharon E. McKay, which imagines the life of Esther Brandeau from her town of origin through to her stay in Quebec City; and a French-language documentary by Shelley Tepperman entitled *Les Juifs de Québec : Une*

through the lens of the family, as a means to centre women in the domestic sphere (Lieberman 2011). Tirtsah Levie Bernfeld attends to the lives of Jewish women in early modern Amsterdam in her exhaustive study of poverty and welfare in that city (Bernfeld 2011).

histoire à raconter, in which a fictional character Esther who passes as a young photographer named Rosie facilitates delivery of documentary material about the Jewish history of Quebec City. Through my critical analysis of these two works, I articulate the concept of “multicrossing” and characterize Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as a “multicrosser”: someone who simultaneously passed across multiple co-inscribing axes. I draw on Marjorie Garber’s notion of a “transvestite effect,” where cultural fixations on cross-dressers are a reflection of a “category crisis” often deflected onto the axis of gender (Garber 1992). This has some relationship to what Anne McClintock described in the colonial period as the “crisis in male identity at the boundaries of empire” (McClintock 1995) and what Ann Laura Stoler calls “epistemic anxieties” of imperial governance (Stoler 2009). Outside the colonial metropole, category slippages and uncertainties emerge that throw into question taken for granted notions of for instance masculinity. I work with two attentions—to the colonial world and to contemporary culture—as I investigate the travels of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, in their own era, and in cultural production since.

My contribution in *Eruptions Into Knowability* is to offer a case of a “multicrosser” who arrived to a boundary of empire; to show how that “multicrosser” as *multicrosser* rattled anxieties; and to show how the transvestite effect functions in relation to the multicrosser in contemporary Canadian culture. In doing so, I enter this figure into histories of crossers of the early modern period, which can in effect recast existing case studies of, for example, Catalina De Erauso and Eleno/a De Céspedes, as multicrossers (Bullough and Bullough 1993; Burshatin 1999; Erauso 1996, 2002; Perry 1999; Velasco 2000). Erauso was known as the “Lieutenant Nun,” and served as a soldier in colonial wars in South America. De Céspedes occupied positions ranging from enslaved African woman to mother, husband, Old Christian soldier, New Christian outlaw, and surgeon in 16th century Iberia. The notion of multicrosser also compels revisiting histories of passers compiled from archival records in The Netherlands, France and Britain, among others, to evaluate whether there may have been overlooked *multicrossing* (Dekker and Van de Pol 1989; Steinberg 2001; Wheelwright 1989). Just as multicrossers may have slipped from view as multicrossers in such literature, I investigate in my analysis of the two contemporary works whether and how the multicrosser as multicrosser slips from view in contemporary representation.

My analysis of Sharon E. McKay’s *Esther* also allows me to contribute to the scholarship on children’s literature, by putting forward a rare case of crossing that takes up more than one axis of crossing, as well as the framework of multicrossing through which to conceive of, represent and read crossing more complexly. I am able to attend to the absence of protagonists in children’s literature who cross across more than one axis, and I am able to address the limited scholarly analysis of children’s literature featuring passing across more than one axis concurrently (Flanagan 2008). I also offer insight into literature for children in settler colonial contexts, by contributing to the conversation about how children’s authors, particularly those who write historical fiction, negotiate settler colonial contexts. Scholarly work at the intersection of passing and negotiating the settler colonial context is limited (Bradford 2007, 2004). Analyses of settler colonial literature for children, which take account of Indigenous-settler positionings, sometimes fall short on foregrounding of gender and sexuality.

Finally, I also contribute to the emerging scholarship in Literary Studies on “literary Sephardism,” or the use of Sephardic experience as a literary or analytical device to think contemporary issues of freedom and belonging (Casteel 2012; Halevi-Wise 2012; Kandiyoti 2012). I read through a queer intersectional lens representations of Brandeau / La Fargue—a real figure indeed connected to real Sephardic and *Converso* history—for the ways in which such representations use this tale as a commentary on national identity, belonging, difference and gender discourses in Canada. While scholars of literary Sephardism have put themselves in conversation with Indigenous studies in so far as some have centred 1492 and the Atlantic as an intersection of histories, I go a step further to foreground gender and sexuality, and I propose putting literary Sephardism in conversation with queer Indigenous studies and queer studies of settler colonialism. This I do as a means of analysis of representations of the Brandeau / La Fargue story toward a *decolonial* reading. This move, I hope, might provoke new scholarly interdisciplinarity, analytical orientations and cultural production in a settler colonial context.

Part II: Archival Sense

Part II of the dissertation is entitled Archival Sense. I address this principal question: How can we know about Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue through archival research? This requires me to begin by asking: What do we know about Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue from the original archival documents? And from here, can we corroborate these original records through archival research? In Archival Sense, I trace my archival research in order to gather existing evidence and to produce new evidence. By confronting the question of what constitutes evidence, I trouble the archival research process itself. I do so through an autoethnographic account of my archival research on Brandeau / La Fargue, with particular attentiveness to the body of the researcher in the research process. In Archival Sense, I bring the same intersectional approach to the search, as well as to the account of the search. Archival Sense then is an undertaking in the practice of History, which seeks a methodology of historical research practice in the absence of an abundance of inscribed historical evidence, one which aims to produce new facts as well as to challenge what constitutes acceptable historical practice. As such, its feminist, decolonial and queer intentions manifest most strongly through methodology. As a consequence, the scholarly voice in Archival Sense marks a dramatic shift in style from that of Part I: Eruptions Into Knowability. I move from a practice of reading at a certain analytical distance in Part I, to entering more closely into the frame in Part II: Archival Sense.

The main impulse behind the archival research and its telling in Archival Sense is to gather a sense of what M. Jacqui Alexander calls “the texture of [the historical figure's] living” (Alexander 2005, 295). The question is how. Historians have been concerned for some time now—particularly feminist historians and scholars contesting colonial histories—with the nature of archives, the power dynamics that structure them, the positionalities of those doing the research and those gate-keeping archival access, and with how these can conspire toward silencing in

the telling of histories (Burton 2005; Trouillot 1995). I go beyond practices of disclosure of scholarly positionality, which aims to bring to light the limitations and privileged access that a particular scholar can bring to bear on a subject, and I go beyond acknowledgement of the limitations produced by the structures of the archives consulted. I enter into what Arlette Farge calls “the allure of the archives” (Farge 2013 [1989]), and from there I push the limits of disclosure by not making the “discoveries” themselves the sole focus of the outcome. I bring out from the footnotes everything that would typically reside either there or not at all in an historical (re)telling: the process, the embarrassments, the attachments and desires and hauntings that compel the search.

In doing so, I centre a tug between doubt and desire in historical research, and foreground my practice as in line with queer historiography. Queer historiography is grounded in radical attachment to the subject researched, and troubles the separation between past and present. As Carolyn Dinshaw argues, the queerness of queer historiography is in its queering of temporality (Dinshaw 2012). Rather than being wed to a Cartesian dualism that would separate the past from the present, and the rational mind from the affective pulls of the body in the research process, queer historiography leverages the erotic, desire, amateur practices and the insistence through which the past presses upon us as a “haunting,” difficult to define or to capture (Dinshaw 2012; Freccero 2006, 2001; Freeman 2010, 2007, 2005; Gordon 2008 [1997]). Central to my presentation of a queer historiography in process is performance studies scholar José Esteban Muñoz’ notion of “disidentification.” Disidentification is a term through which Muñoz elaborates queer of colour cultural practices of occupying and appropriating contemporary culture to ends of critique, and service to marginalized communities.¹⁰ He defines disidentification as follows:

The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the encoded message’s universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recircuits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications. Thus, disidentification is a step further than cracking open the code of the majority; it proceeds to use this code as raw material for representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture (Muñoz 1999 Introduction, *Performing Disidentifications* para 10).¹¹

While Muñoz’s deployment of “disidentification” and his definition explicitly relate to popular culture and queer artists’ strategies within mainstream culture, I make use of the stance and strategy inherent in his definition, *vis-à-vis* historical research practice. I elaborate a queer historiography that works through sustained commitment to

¹⁰ Judith Butler also explicitly made links between queer practice and disidentification when she asked, in a different vein than Muñoz’s deployment, “What are the possibilities of politicizing disidentification, this experience of misrecognition, this uneasy sense of standing under a sign to which one does and does not belong?” (Butler 1993, 219 cited in Alexander and Rhodes 2012).

¹¹ Many texts I cite from in this dissertation are Kindle or Bluefire digital editions. Not all give page numbers that correspond with the print edition. Typically, I cite the name of the chapter, followed by the paragraph in that chapter, unless there are subsections within the chapter, in which case I give the subsection name as well, with paragraph counted from the beginning of the subsection.

the archival record coupled with deep attention to what Muñoz and others call affective evidence, or ephemera—evidence that travels through bodily sense rather than through that which is written or otherwise inscribed (Muñoz 2009, 1999; Gordon 2008 [1997], Freccero 2006). My deployment of “disidentification” aims at maintaining a position of standing simultaneously within and without the conventions of historical practice. In doing so, I elaborate an historical research practice driven by an erotics of desired proximity to the subject, which I name an *historiographics of probable proximity*. This is a practice which does not aim to pin the research subject down, to “discover” my subject, to “capture” them, but to move with and toward them in an erotically driven approach toward proximity. Erotic here I understand, in concert with Audre Lorde, as far greater than a sexual understanding. Lorde understands the erotic as a nurturer of knowledge rooted in feeling, that which connects the political, spiritual, mental, emotional and physical through the sensual, and thereby serves as a source of power containing the energy for change (Lorde 1984, 54-56). I propose that an approach driven by an erotics of desired proximity can serve as a decolonial, feminist and queer means of doing historical practice.

Importantly, I argue against rejection of archival inscription. This is often an inclination when confronting the colonial record, especially from a subaltern position, but it is a move that I would suggest would reify a clear and competing distinction between inscribed and affective types of evidence. Instead, my major contribution is in my close narration of a process in practice that is explicitly predicated on a collaboration between affective and inscribed forms of evidence, and which, as a consequence, suggests that haunting, desire and the workings of affect are actually constitutive of the process of accessing and navigating archives. Rare are the accounts of archival research and its enacting affective registers, rare are accounts which demonstrate on the ground the workings of transtemporal affect through haunting in historical research. This is perhaps because to be in haunting, to be in transtemporal desire are quite damning places to be from certain understandings of “good historical practice.” For that reason, I champion here what I characterize as a *heretic methodology*.

I present research of the years of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's movement, labour and dwelling in Europe prior to departure for the so-called New World. My archival research takes place in numerous locales, and yields some tentative new archival findings and many speculative possibilities regarding the story that may destabilize both the original archival records that bring us the story and the new proposals I put forth. For this dissertation, I have honed in especially on my archival work on Saint-Malo and Rennes. Future work will attend to the remainder of my archival research done to date.

Part III: Becoming Archive

Performance practice forms the ground beneath this dissertation. I began working with the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as a poet and performer, doing research in body in studio with director Diane Roberts long before I considered the possibility of a doctoral project. With Part III, I end as it were at this vital foundation. If Part II: Archival Sense begins to address the relationship between the ways one comes to know, and

what it is that comes to be known through positing the value of so-called “other” forms of evidence, Part III furthers consideration of the body in/as evidence by examining my own performance practice reenacting Brandeau / La Fargue. Part III is entitled Becoming Archive. Here, I delve more deeply into the concern, “What constitutes evidence?” by working with a set of questions: What is an archive? Can performance remember? What can performing the archive on stage tell about time, the body, remembering, and telling an eighteenth century multicrosser? What might be the relationship between a performance practice that engages with historical reenactment, and the performative nature of historical research? Becoming Archive situates itself in Performance Studies and Performance Practice as Research through engagement with ideas about memory, performance and body.

Two very different kinds of writing occupy Part III. Performance on the page occupies the Supertext across the top half of a horizontally split page. This top of the page serves as a stage for (re)performance of two of my performance works, a one-to-one durational performance, and an excerpt from a mainstage interdisciplinary theatre production in which gesture serves as archival translation.¹² This (re)performance in the Supertext has visual/spatial intentions to direct a different process, rhythm and spatial experience of reading. Placing this creative rendering in the dominant position in Part III serves as an argument for and a means of presenting performance as theory in terms approximate to the spirit of performance itself, while at the same time performing the impossibility of translating performance to discourse. Below the Supertext is a Subtext that elaborates more conventional scholarly grounding and analysis regarding historical memory, performance and the body.

The Supertext and Subtext are not intended to resolve each other, but rather to expand, trouble and return to each other through overlap, repeat and echo. However, they should be read with facing pages, rather than one page at a time.¹³ The staging on the page is intended to immerse the reader into performance with me. Further, Subtext and Supertext together attempt a materialization of the experience of “multigenre,” a practice of multiple simultaneous immersions in distinct yet entwined, research methodologies, or genres of research practice. Thus, Part III elaborates how “multigenre” might allow us to dwell in and reveal the contingency of knowledge itself, while producing new knowledge through the partialities of different practices of knowledge production.

I conceive of these performance practices as forms of historical reenactment, in conversation with performance theorist Rebecca Schneider's studies of U.S. Civil War reenactment and re-performance of performance art (Schneider 2011). First, I consider my solo interdisciplinary theatre piece *ribcage: this wide passage* and its French translation by Nadine Desrochers, *thorax : une cage en éclats*, and in particular, one scene in which I deliver verbatim archival text from the original Brandeau / La Fargue testimony while simultaneously translating this phonetically into gesture. The one-to-one performance work under consideration is

12 In one-to-one, one audience member at a time experiences a performance. In durational performance, time is an artistic medium.

Interdisciplinary theatre integrates multiple artistic disciplines, and in my case this includes spoken word, poetry, archival narration, live-mixed video installation, live music, song, and physical movement/choreography, the integration realized as a theatre production.

13 If reading this as PDF in Adobe Acrobat, please select “View”, then “Page Display,” then “Two-Up Continuous” and select “Show Title Page”. Becoming Archive is laid out as a book. Facing pages have spatial effects integral to the overall expression of meaning.

entitled *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738* where a single audience member at a time participates actively with me in staging the interrogation of Brandeau / La Fargue, myself as interrogatee and the audience member as interrogator. Audience feedback on this latter performance is incorporated into its re-staging on the page.

In the Subtext, I begin by asking, What is an archive? I am asking how different systems of remembering function, and in particular how the body performs remembering and engages in different systems of remembering. I work with Diana Taylor's important concepts of "archive" and "repertoire" as distinct but related systems of remembering (Taylor 2003). For Taylor, the "archive" consists of objects, documents, photographs and so on, and the "repertoire" is found in performance; it is where cultural memory is enacted through performance (xvii, 20). Further I work with Taylor's framework of the "scenario" as a way of tracing how ideas, institutions and ways of thinking travel through performed memory. For Taylor, "scenarios" are sedimented in culture and through reiteration over time recirculate social relations and structures of domination through relations between bodies. Scenarios recirculate through the repertoire. They offer sites of critical intervention through the repertoire and allow us to attend to bodies outside of the discursive or analytic modes in the circulation of historical memory (13, 28, 54-55). I couch my performances of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as historical reenactments that attempt to critically reiterate sedimented colonial scenarios of discovery and banishment, drawing on Rebecca Schneider's work at the forefront of recent and growing interest in reenactment in the field of Performance Studies (Schneider 2011). Schneider's aim is to show how reenactment reveals the living body in performance as enabling the past to erupt into the present; and the body as having the capacity to record through performance. I build on both Taylor's and Schneider's works on memory, performance, time and the (re)circulation of structures of domination, through the example of my engagement between inscribed archival evidence and affective or ephemeral evidence with the story of Brandeau / La Fargue, taken to the realm of performance practice. Importantly, my unique contribution is as a scholar who *does reenactment herself*.

To do so I return to the work of Paul Connerton (1989), and his articulations of inscribing practices (like Taylor's archive) and incorporating practices (something different than "performance" or "repertoire") in order to attend to the interplay between the micro scale of the body and the macro scale of the social. Connerton's "incorporating practices" are vital for me, for he posits how repetition of gesture in body through the everyday, through ritual and through ceremony functions as mnemonic system. His notion of incorporation and the sedimentation of memory in body through repetitive practice grounds my entire undertaking in *Becoming Archive's* Subtext, and ultimately comes to bear on the sedimentation of genres of scholarly practice at a macro scale.

In thinking with Connerton, Taylor and Schneider, I propose a methodology I call "becoming archive" in performance: a set of performance-based techniques I have developed through performing Brandeau / La Fargue that include the joint apparatuses of repetition in reenactment; what I call ingesting the archival record; and extreme physical labour. The key concepts of incorporation, repetition and reenactment allow me to attend to the mechanisms of performance in historical reenactment. Understanding what I do in my performances through these

concepts will allow me to then theorize a possible relationship between “becoming archive” as one research strategy and “heretic methodology” as another. This in turn feeds elaboration on the promise of the overarching research approach of the dissertation, which I have called “multigenre,” where concurrent genres of doing are undertaken together, despite and because of their incongruities, enabled by their interanimations, which is to say, their mutually animating capacity and presence one in the other (Schneider 2011, 20-21; 21fn21; 207). Multigenre enables a discussion about how intersectionality might be served by taking up the plane of genre.

Terminology as intervention

Overview

In framing my overarching research question by linking “queer,” “feminist” and “decolonial,” my intention is to be inspired by particular genealogies of feminist scholarship, and to delve into whether and how each of these terms I have linked can be lived up to in the project at hand.¹⁴ To link these terms is to underscore the importance of intersectionality, a stance and research strategy that takes account of interlocking systems of oppression and how no subject position can be reduced to a single axis of signification, but rather emerges at the intersection of many axes. I will now foreground key choices in terminology that are deployed broadly throughout the dissertation, and offer a logic behind such choices. These terms relate to gender and pronouns, passing and crossing, “race” and ethnicity, feminist, queer and decolonial. I will also attend to the term genre in the concept of multigenre. Some of the above words are paired, but it should be said that they are interrelated more complexly. A Contextual chapter follows, which serves as a preamble to the three Parts of the dissertation. Entitled “Context: An introduction to Brandeau / La Fargue's eighteenth century,” it gives an intersectional attention to the eighteenth century context, and makes apparent the challenges of doing historical work through the lenses and terminology I have chosen—anachronistic if applied to the eighteenth century itself, but productive in the making of new knowledge. We might understand anachronism as a necessity if, as Adrienne Rich famously wrote, for feminists “[r]e-vision – the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction – is for woman more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival” (Rich 1979, 35).

14 This genealogy embraces feminist standpoint theory (Harding 2003, 1986); feminist of colour work (Lorde 1984; Hill Collins 1990; Matsuda 1991; among many others) that gives us intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989, 2012); queer theory that looks at gender as socially and culturally constructed and an effect of repeating bodily practice (Butler 1990); work that is what Ruth Frankenberg would call “race”-cognizant and entangled with the politics of location (Rich 1986; Frankenberg 1993); and Indigenous scholarship that tackles ontological questions about the coloniality of Power, Being and Knowing and epistemological strategies that unlink from colonial structures (Lugones 2010; Maldonado-Torres 2007; Mignolo 2007; Simpson and Smith 2014; Tuhiwai-Smith 2012 [1999]; Wynter 2003, 1995). These link second wave feminism, its holding to account by feminists of colour, anti-racist movement, the first wave of gay liberation, and before and through all of these, Indigenous resistances to colonization and colonialism. Queer of colour critiques of homonationalism and neoliberalism (Puar 2007; Haritaworn 2015a, 2015b, 2012; Haritaworn et al 2014, and others); queer critical disability studies (McRuer 2006; and others); and queer Indigenous studies (Driskill et al. 2011) represent current radical movements at the interface between grassroots and academic activism emanating from these trajectories.

Naming the historical subject: Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue

I choose to refer to the story as that of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. I am alone among those who have produced from this story—in newspapers, history texts, reports, reviews, novels and other fictions—in doing so. This inclination derives from my own queer positioning, and makes explicit my 21st century imposition on an 18th century tale. The choice is multifold. It is a gesture toward expanding readings of the story to include the possibility that the male identities of our historical figure, which is to say the masculinities they performed, may not have been exclusively ruses—means to other ends—but authentic, lived, felt, desired, chosen modes of being, and these—ruse and not—not mutually exclusive. There was in fact more than one male identity that this figure claimed, the other known male identity being Pierre Mausiette (sometimes interpreted as Alansiette). There could have been others, not inscribed. I choose Jacques La Fargue first because this identity erupted this person into knowability for us, and second, as a means to avoid the bulk of three names or the confusion of switching intermittently between La Fargue and Mausiette.

The forward slash, however, is not intended to signal a division between binaries. To embed the complexity of crossings *entwined with gender* in my *naming* the multicrosser is challenging. Other crossings are signalled in the two names themselves in so far as one might read, for instance, Jewishness into the name Esther, or *Converso*/New Christian, Sephardic or Iberian into the name Brandeau as it was inscribed in New France. One could easily include Brandão / Brandon / Brandam / Brandeau amid the forward slashes, the multiple spellings to be found across languages and archives, which in turn embed distinct geographies and lineages into a name as name and person travel. The non-Jewish name La Fargue sees multiple spellings in French archives. The ways in which such ordinary names—Esther, Jacques, Brandeau, La Fargue and others—spin out into multiple possibilities for the story will be taken up in Part II: Archival Sense. The choice to refer to Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue and to use a forward slash is a compromise intended to signal more than simply a gender switch; it encodes, at least on the surface, a cross from female to male and a cross from Jewish to Christian, though without this explanation this might not be immediately evident to all readers. My naming underscores my assertion that this figure engaged in passings plural, simultaneous, interlaced, interdependent, some more nameable and some more visible—in discursive and visual economies—than others.

Pronouns and gendering

I shift between pronouns when referring to Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue and deliberately resist the universal use of “she.” I play between he and she, s/he and they.¹⁵ “They” as a pronoun that can be used to refer to an individual without gender-identifying them is a contemporary identificatory practice in queer and trans English-speaking circles. It allows individuals to self-name in a mode that resists the sex-gender binary system,

¹⁵ Pierre Lasry, author of *Esther : une juive en Nouvelle-France* self-translated to *Esther: A Jewish Odyssey* in English treats Pierre and Jacques as male identities rather than exclusively concealment of the female identity, by switching from “she” to “he” and sustaining long passages in which the character pronoun is “he” and is referred to by the male name (Lasry 2002).

and which helps to dismantle its violence. Use of “they” also allows those who move from various cultural understandings and namings of gender into English—with its gendered pronouns—to safeguard their identities. This does not mean I attribute a trans identity to Brandeau / La Fargue, just as doing a queer reading does not mean attributing a homosexual identity either. Neither conception as we know them now, existed in Brandeau / La Fargue's time. Surely using “they” might seem an anachronistic move, as are my forward slash above and the terms of my research question.¹⁶ My using s/he and they as pronouns is a gesture in troubling how this historical figure is typically read and told, and how gender conceptions shape and constrain contemporary and historical life. The choice opens the story, I hope, to possibilities more diverse than have been assumed for this figure to date.

Passing and crossing

I use “passing” and “crossing” interchangeably. Passing, according to Amy Robinson, signals deployment of behaviour contravening dominant norms such that, if successful, transgression itself is not (widely) visible, only its effects (Robinson 1993, 1994). The invisibility of the transgression, or the successful pass—which typically refers to a transgression across gender or across race—is an effect. Robinson conceives of passing through an analysis of American fiction featuring gender passing and race passing. Her conceiving of passing distinguishes between visibility and intelligibility, and aims to undermine essentialism. In my usage, passing signals to LGBT histories of gender performance and to histories of race and racism. The term also (and thus) encodes entwined histories of violence and resistance. The threat of outing for instance is signalled as a violence conjured by “passing.”

It should be acknowledged here that passing is “a means through which the violence of assimilation takes place” (Sycamore 2006, 8). While I do not deal with the dynamics of assimilation in depth, assimilation (across multiple axes) certainly haunts the telling. In the case of Brandeau / La Fargue we might see these dynamics as in the least both gender-normative assimilation and assimilation into the dominant Christian position.

I use the word “crossing” often synonymously with “passing” to name movement across. I tend not to use the term “cross-dressing,” though the term figures in much of the scholarship about women who passed as men, and men who passed as women in the eighteenth century and earlier. “Cross-dressing” is the more broadly understood term for referring to such lives as that of Brandeau / La Fargue, who even I have named as a cross-dresser sometimes in press material for my theatre work. But cross-dressing tends to be associated with an assumption of the act of disguise, the ruse that I have troubled above, and posits dress as the only means to the successful pass, though passing is more complicated than that. Cross-dressing as a term also usually does not conjure the category of “race,” nor does it conjure geographical movement. Crossing as a term on its own does, and so does passage.¹⁷ These especially conjure for me the Atlantic and its storied intertwined histories—Black

¹⁶ This is further complicated by the less extensive use of gender-neutral pronouns in French queer and trans circles, such as “os” and “eil” instead of il/elle, which haven't gained the traction that has the use of “they” in English.

¹⁷ In M. Jacqui Alexander's *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory* (2005), “crossing” signals

Atlantic, Red Atlantic, Iberian Atlantic, Jewish Atlantic, and rarely named as such, White Atlantic¹⁸—concurrent with the times of Brandeau / La Fargue. The terms crossing and passing conjure then geographical movement more broadly, not just trans-Atlantic. To use the terms “passing” and “crossing” with no clear distinction throughout the dissertation allows, I hope, for encompassing the resonances these words signal as delineated above.

Ethnicity, “race”

It should not need to be repeated that “race” does not actually exist, but is rather an effect of racism that attributes essentialist characteristics to entire groups of humans. Both race and ethnicity are contemporary terms that did not exist in Brandeau / La Fargue's time, the latter a term whose promise is to account for a broad range of human differences in community affiliation and practice without attributing essentialist differences to bodies. I will elaborate more fully in “Context: An introduction to Brandeau / La Fargue's eighteenth century” how in their time, “race” as a concept and ideology had yet to be named, yet processes of othering were practised in the face of Jewish, Indigenous and Black difference in ways that were both attached and not attached somatically to these bodies and which we would now call essentialist. It was a moment of flux in which gendered racialization was indeed emerging, but in co-existence with non-essentialist modes of human differentiation largely informed by notions of rank and lineage. My dissertation is not concerned with what constitutes and constituted racialization or with what constitutes or constituted Jewishness. However, I do highlight some of the histories, debates and lacuna, in particular in French history, regarding the relationship between religious difference and the eventual emergence of racial ideology (See Context chapter, and Part II: Archival Sense). I also draw a link between Jewishness and the idea of “race” through the term “racialization” as a means to signal to the history of racialization within which a cross from Jewish to Christian in the early 18th century is embedded. I wish to gesture toward the reality that racializations have circulated and circulate still under a host of different contexts across centuries and into the present, under different terminologies, ideologies and forms, and with different effects.

movement across and the Middle Passage.

18 See Jace Weaver on *The Red Atlantic* (2014). He uses the phrase following Paul Gilroy's groundbreaking *The Black Atlantic* (1993) to refer to Indigenous peoples' participation in, and centrality to the Atlantic. Shohat and Stam make conceptual use of “the Red Atlantic” while incompletely citing prior usage of the term, including Weaver's first usage, which predates their own (Weaver 2014, x; Shohat and Stam 2012). Shohat and Stam also refer to the White Atlantic. Historians and analysts addressing Jewish and New Christian participation in and centrality to the Atlantic world have tended to make reference to Jews “in the Atlantic world” rather than to explicitly name a “Jewish Atlantic.” “Iberian Atlantic” is a phrase that is used, not encompassing exclusively Jewish activity. Graizbord makes use of the phrase “Jewish Atlantic” in order to trouble it in a recent anthology titled *Theorising the Ibero-American Atlantic* (Graizbord 2013; Braun and Vollendorf 2013). In his detailed analysis of the difficulties of naming a “Jewish” Atlantic, he cites Schorsch when he writes “[I]t is doubtful that we can speak of a “Jewish Atlantic” ... without serious qualification, since the most basic questions of Jewish identity seem vertiginous for the Nation in the early modern Iberian Atlantic world ...” (Graizbord 2013, 139). Here “The Nation” refers to the Portuguese Jewish and Jewish-descended diaspora that referred to itself as the “nação”, or nation, from which Brandeau is descended. A Jewish Atlantic is complicated by ethnicity, religion, kinship, place of origin, occupation, “race” and gender, he argues. It should be noted that Gilroy's gesture was also to bring Jewish thinkers such as Zygmunt Bauman into conversation with Black Atlantic thinkers (Gilroy 1993, 187-224). Gilroy makes a call for such bridging. Joint consideration of Black and Jewish Atlantics is exemplified in Schorsch (2009a, 2009b).

Feminist, queer, decolonial: Orientations

All three words have such expansive potential meanings that sometimes they can come to mean, seemingly, nothing specific at all. Worse, as Heather Love warns of the term “queer” for instance, it can come to signal a false universalism (Love 2011, *Queer Is, Queer Ain't* para 4). Queer in its (least offensive) etymology means, quite simply, strange. Queer's relationship to strange I can take to mean both strange relative to convention and, more importantly, the *act of making strange*. Decolonial is not even in online dictionaries, though decolonize, de-colonize and other verbs are. Decolonial when it exists as an adjective, asserts an intention that can characterize a gesture, action, way of being, or condition. It takes us beyond an understanding of decolonial in terms only of processes of decolonization as nation states free themselves from colonial governance. Feminist in its simplest definition affirms equality between women and men. Feminist, for me, as an orientation against misogyny, should necessarily attend to both the queer and the decolonial. If “queer” might typically signal a particular landscape of sexualities, and “feminist” particular genderings, decolonial underscores the inseparability of bodies, sexualities, and land as they relate to power. Taken together, “queer,” “feminist” and “decolonial” invoke particular orientations to power as it plays out across bodies, lands, communities, knowledge and aesthetics. Together these entail response, action.¹⁹ I deploy “queer,” “feminist” and “decolonial” first and foremost as orientations. While they may not always be concurrent in aim or effect, I use them together to set as an aspiration, exploring interconnections and incompatibilities, grounded in a belief that scholarship can be a means to investigate and articulate an ethics. Feminist, queer and decolonial orientations can be applied to social, cultural, spiritual, political, academic, economic and other realms. In this dissertation, I apply them to the ways in which I practice reading, to the frames I create for reading, and to the ways in which I produce outcomes. Together these terms describe an intersectional feminist approach.

What (who?) is queer?

The scholarship that falls under the umbrella “queer” is by now massive. My deployment draws on these general meanings: minoritarian sexual positionality and an attendant anti-normative stance; a way of being and doing things; and a relationship to temporality. Sara Ahmed insists “that queer describes a sexual as well as political orientation, and that to lose sight of the sexual specificity of queer would be to “overlook” how compulsory heterosexuality shapes what coheres as given, and the effects of this coherence on those who refuse to be compelled” (Ahmed 2006, 172). In other words, “queer” is not just about sexuality, because compulsory heterosexuality is also about gender normativity, and how these normativities are in turn entwined with raced and gendered hierarchies.

¹⁹ Taking them together is also to remember the foundational colonising act of Europeans in the co-called New World: to queer—to make strange—the peoples encountered. See Andrea Smith (2011, 42) on heteronormativity, settler colonialism and the queering of native peoples and Justice for an example of foundational colonial slaughter of Indigenous peoples for gender and sexual difference from European norms, such acts demonstrating desire as a terrain through which colonisation is operationalised (Justice et al 2010, 9).

Heather Love notes that the “semantic flexibility of queer—its weird ability to touch almost everything—is one of the most exciting things about it. Despite its uptake into any number of banal and commoditized contexts, the word still maintains its ability to move, to stay outside, and to object to the world as it is given” (2011, *Queer Is, Queer Ain't* para 1). An objection to the world as it is given marks a distinction from a sexual minority stance that works toward its normalization into a heteronormative mainstream. Love notes that queer “was meant to designate a form of intersectional critique grounded in a politics of anti-normativity” (para 4). From the perspective of Indigenous studies, in his book *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism*, Craig Womack calls “queer” an “anti-assimilationist term” (quoted in Schneider 2011, para 3). The term signals for him anti-assimilation into heteronormativity as well as into the settler-colonial world, and thus resists Eurocentric understandings of queerness. It reminds us that “queer” emerges from the English language, and while it has been taken up broadly, its dissemination can carry colonialist undertones.²⁰

Teresa de Lauretis hailed queer as a “discursive horizon” (quoted in Schneider 2011, para 3). José Muñoz also conceives of queer's entwinement with the not-yet, its futurity, and conceived of queerness as a utopian formation based on desire (Muñoz 2009, chap 1 para 12). He writes, “Queerness can be thought of as a temporal arrangement in which the past is a field of possibility in which subjects can act in the present in the service of a new futurity” (Introduction para 23). Muñoz explicitly links queer, feminist and anti-racist orientations. He also suggests that we frame feminism, queerness and even race “as affective taxonomies—as shared ways of looking and feeling that offer us a different sense of the world” (Muñoz 2011, para 13). In signalling a certain orientation (often overlapping others) as grounded in structures of feeling, Muñoz suggests how these orientations can move, can open up to heretofore unknown and contingent ways of doing and being (para 13-14).

More recent scholarship in historiography and queer theory has opened up the term “queer” to denote a relationship to or constitution through practices of temporality. This emerges from what we might call a temporal turn in queer theory, particularly important to my deployment of queer in Part II: Archival Sense. Elizabeth Freeman, in *Time Binds*, has written about “chrononormativity,” which foregrounds “the interlocking temporal schemes necessary for genealogies of descent and for the mundane workings of domestic life” (Freeman 2010, xxii). She argues that “temporality is a mode of implantation through which institutional forces come to seem like somatic facts” (Freeman 2007, 160). There is a temporal quality to heteronormativity, she says, related to productivity. Freeman contributes the term “temporal drag” as “a stubborn identification with a set of social coordinates that exceed one's own historical moment” (quoted in Halberstam 2005, 179), and as a “temporal transitivity that does not leave ... so-called anachronisms behind” (Freeman 2010, 63). Temporal drag functions through a visceral pull of the past on the present, which is “not simply performative or citational but physical and even erotic” (Freeman 2010, 93). Thus Freeman pairs how heteronormativity places queer as out of time, with

²⁰ Gregory Hucheson notes that in titling his co-edited volume *Queer Iberia*, he has been criticized for imposing the term in a Spanish language context, and an Iberian context, a move some interpret as consistent with Anglo-American gay movement imperialism. He reviews the reception of the book and its title in Spain, and the difficulties with translating the title to Spanish (Hucheson 2001).

queer affective practices of dragging time, making time strange and living time strangely. She articulates an “erotohistoriography,” which “admits the flesh, that would avow that history is written on and felt with the body, and that would let eroticism into the notion of historical thought itself” (Freeman 2007, 164). Here queer as method, queer as stance and queer as temporality converge in articulating a way of knowing the past that leverages the affective and the erotic. Carolyn Dinshaw and others call this “touching the past,” or “transtemporal touch”, at the heart of a queer practice of “[d]eveloping queer history through the concept of affective connection—a touch across time—and through the intentional collapse of conventional historical time” (Dinshaw 2001, 203). The temporal otherness of queer, and the queering of history through queer historiography, are delved into in Part II: Archival Sense.

What is decolonial practice?

Decolonial thought is also in large part grounded in an attention to temporality, for its main focus is in dismantling the imperial project of modernity, which produces some people as “behind” progress toward civilization and enlightened, progressive being, progress itself produced through the marginalizing and dehumanizing of racialized others. It is important here to distinguish between the term decolonisation and the term decolonial as it is deployed in decolonial thought and as it is used in this dissertation. Decolonisation typically refers to the process through which the end of colonial rule and the acquisition of national independence are/were sought, leading to a postcolonial condition. This is not what is meant by decolonial here. Decolonial in decolonial thought confronts coloniality, which outlives colonial occupation of states and the European colonial period of which the story of Brandeau / La Fargue is a part. Walter Dignolo defines coloniality as “modernity's shadow,” simultaneously its hidden face and “the condition of its possibility” (Dignolo 2000, 772). Coloniality is a system that organizes and disseminates “epistemic, material, and aesthetic resources in ways that reproduce modernity's imperial project” (Andreotti et al. 2015). Coloniality as a system, according to Maldonado-Torres, “represents the spatiality (expansionist control of lands), ontoepistemic racism (elimination and subjugation of difference) and geopolitics of knowledge production (epistemic violence) that are constitutive of modernity” (quoted in Andreotti et al. 2015, 23). Decoloniality requires attention to how colonialism defines “culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production” and the gendering operations of racism within modernity (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 243).

Maldonado-Torres identifies a decolonial turn as involving “interventions at the level of power, knowledge and being through varied actions of decolonization and *desgener-acción*” (ibid). The latter indicates an attention to active intervention into and dismantling of colonial gender conceptions and operations, and compels what María Lugones calls “decolonial feminism” (Lugones 2010, 747). Decolonial practice aims to “make visible the invisible” and “analyz[e] the mechanisms that produce such invisibility or distorted visibility in light of a large stock of ideas that must necessarily include critical reflection of the ‘invisible’ people themselves but also a fundamental shift in perspective” (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 262). This clearly goes beyond decolonisation as national independence.

Decolonial practice confronts the circulation of colonialism by material, aesthetic, epistemological, ontological, sociopolitical means.

Much of what has been called “decolonial thought” within the Academy has come from Latin American and Caribbean theorists, many based in the U.S., drawing on the legacy of scholars like Frantz Fanon, and having everything to do with the Atlantic. Much feminist and queer of colour thought, while it may not call or have called itself “decolonial” explicitly, attends precisely to what a decolonial turn envisions. Decolonial practice and orientation finds its roots in Indigenous and subaltern resistance, resistance from those most marginalized by coloniality’s power. First and foremost decolonial practice affirms what Leanne Simpson and Taiake Alfred call “resurgence” of Indigenous peoples through “flourishment” of cultural, spiritual, social and political practices “from the inside” of Indigenous nations (Simpson 2011, 16-17).²¹ Decolonial practice happens foremost on the ground, in Indigenous communities, and across Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Decolonial practice can foster convergence of artists, activists and scholars around and in support of Indigenous resurgence, multiple perspectives and engagements necessary for production of decolonial worlds.²²

I choose to include the term “decolonial” specifically in order to attend to and encourage what I see as the needs of my own context, Canada as a settler colonial state, and myself as a white settler scholar. My positionality, and my scholarship based in the Academy naturally limit the scope of decolonial practice that I can be engaged in. My intention in deploying these terms together is to operate according to an ethics of reading and telling “history”, and analysing its representations, through the histories and agencies, the bodies, that encounter each other t/here in the contexts of the story’s unfolding, so as to have impact through reading and telling in the present. This is a present I take to be colonial.

“Genre” and “multi”

Multigenre is the methodological offering of the dissertation. Both the research process and the form of outcome, or presentation of knowledge emergent from the diverse methods, are central to multigenre. Why “genre”? Genre’s most basic definition refers to genus, kind, sort, style, or category. It bears some relation to words like “discipline,” “form” and “medium.” Dictionary definitions of “genre” refer principally to artistic practice, such as “a particular style or category of works of art; esp. a type of literary work characterized by a particular

21 This resurgence erupted into an unprecedented visibility in the Canadian context through the Idle No More movement, catalysed by three Indigenous women and one white settler ally woman beginning in late 2012 (Idle No More; Kino-nda-niimi Collective 2014). INM responded to a proposed bill by the Conservative government that dramatically reduced the number of lakes and rivers protected by environmental legislation in Canada, without consultation with Indigenous peoples. INM manifested in public practices like round dances in shopping malls; energized Indigenous communities especially through digital/virtual networking and teach-ins; made Indigenous resurgence visible to non-Indigenous Canadians; and has strengthened global Indigenous and solidarity networks.

22 Important to underscore, decolonial thought does not emerge first from the Academy. Writes Simpson, “Western theory, whether based in post-colonial, critical or even liberatory strains of thought, has been exceptional at diagnosing, revealing and even interrogating colonialism ... Yet Western theories of liberation have for the most part failed to resonate with the vast majority of Indigenous Peoples, scholars or artists” (2011, 31). We must not collapse Indigenous resurgence into an academic turn, despite overlap.

form, style, or purpose” (OED). I am partial to “genre” for several reasons: it finds at its root the action of generating; it signals in popular usage toward artistic language and production; and in several of the languages I work in, but not in English, “genre” is a synonym for gender. I want “multigenre” to carry these associations. Even as “inter” would signal to the between, or the interaction between practices, I choose “*multigenre*” rather than “*intergenre*” because in “multi” there is resonance with the verb “to multiply,” which harkens back if only subtly to ideas of repetition and reenactment central to Part III: Becoming Archive. There is a certain uncontainability that multiplication can imply. As the dissertation unfolds, the pairing of “multi” and “genre” to describe the methodological strategy will become more clear.

Context:

An Introduction to Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's Eighteenth Century

Overview

This dissertation confronts the reality that we are speaking in the 21st century about a life that transpired in the early- to mid-eighteenth century. We must navigate sizable differences between how we understand personhood and society today relative to how these were understood in the eighteenth century in the European metropolitan, rural and colonial contexts in which the story unfolded. Experiences and/or understandings of various concepts we take for granted now to hold particular meanings, were quite different three centuries ago. A non-exhaustive list would include concepts such as community, religion, relationship to God, nation, masculinity, femininity, sexuality, class, work, “race”, desire, otherness, and “identity” itself. These were not similarly described, understood and enacted or even identified in the contexts that Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue knew. Categorizations of people according to their lived experiences, their networks and relations, their means of communication, their access to and relations in and with rural and urban settings, their status and skill all played into understandings and deployments of personhood. In what follows, I provide an overview of the eighteenth century contexts that I see as relevant to the story and the arguments of the dissertation. This will allow an appreciation of what might be entailed in navigating across centuries and contexts, through the anachronisms posed by the terms upon which the overarching question of the dissertation rests: queer, feminist and decolonial. Further, this background will enrich the analysis of cultural representations of the story undertaken in Part I, and will inform the pursuit of a texture of living in Part II.

In laying out this context, I demonstrate that slow shifts were underway in the early eighteenth century around moves toward secularity, toward the idea of nation-state, and away from Galenic medicine's notion of the gradient of humours through which gender was understood and toward binary notions of gender and biological sex. I attend to the predominance of rank, status and lineage as structuring principles in society, and how this thinking shaped the evolution of what would come to be known later as “race” ideology. In addressing “race,” I pay attention to the role of Jewish difference entwined with Indigenous, Black and female difference within colonial expansion. Finally, I address what exactly constitutes “Jewishness.”

Historicising and slow shifts

The scholarly literature offers examples of historicizing concepts among those named above, demonstrating how understandings of personhood and communities of people have changed over time. For instance, Dror Wahrman has shown how positive perceptions of women passing as men in early eighteenth century England were tied to an idealization of “the Amazonian woman,” but that this positive perception shifted dramatically in the late eighteenth century through the foregrounding of a natural womanhood that centred on mothering, such that deviations from or violations of this so-called natural femininity came to be vilified (Wahrman 2004). In the early eighteenth century, the idea of self-hood as internal fixedness had not yet become an emergent practice, nor had the idea of individual choice in relation to God and faith (Wahrman 2004; Mak 2012). Bell argues

that in France, not unlike the rest of Europe, the early 18th century marked the beginnings of a major shift in which people were coming to be understood as radically separate from God. The idea of a nation-state had not yet become conceivable, but would emerge as the concepts of nation—understood then as a group of people sharing certain binding qualities—and *patrie* or fatherland, came to take on increasing weight as the century progressed (Bell 2001, 7). One could understand the time of Brandeau / La Fargue as marked by slow concurrent shifts.

Another of these shifts concerns gender and biological sex. The time period Sylvie Steinberg covers in her survey of what she calls transvestism—cross-dressing—in France from the Renaissance to the French Revolution follows a shift, she says, from the 16th and 17th centuries when sexes were understood along a gradient of “humours” between male as hot and dry and female as wet and cold, to a more fixed binary understanding in the second half of the 18th century (Steinberg 2001, 183). The humours were part of Galenic medicine, which was then prevalent (Van Eyck 2001). Galenic medicine was based in an understanding of bodies as inextricable from and deeply influenced by environment, and thus characteristics of bodies were seen to be mutable. An understanding grounded in the humours thus took account of characteristics of bodies and behaviours as derived from temperaments and not from sex, writes Steinberg. A person could participate in one gender or the other—though the word “gender” itself was not in usage—as a function of temperament. “Gender” was both physical and spiritual, from the perspective of the leading physiognomists of the day (Steinberg 2001, 183). Along the spectrum of humours, women who were closer to the supposedly male end of the spectrum and vice versa did not automatically cause them to be understood as homosexual or tending to homosexuality. The physiognomists saw a distinction between sexual orientation and “gender” (187). Steinberg points to a drastic shift beginning in the mid-18th century, one where the humours spectrum gave way to binary entrenchment, as physiology and anatomy of men and women came to be defined as fundamentally different (197). Julie Wheelwright makes the same claim about this period in England (Wheelwright 1989, 15). In France we move from a society founded in blood and nobility to one where, post-French Revolution, “progress” to equality among men is established actually as a dual affirmation: natural equality among men, and radical difference between men and women (Steinberg 2001, 212). We will address more deeply the question of nobility and blood in due course.

In Brandeau / La Fargue's time, these shifts noted above were beginning. France was peopled by speakers of seven languages, the two dominant of which—Occitan and French—consisted of six and nine dialects respectively (Bell 2001, 16). Poverty was a vast phenomenon across Europe. French sense of place was for most people tied first to the local and less so to the regional, and these far more than to the notion of “Frenchness” (Hufton 2000). And people were on the move, including women passing as men.

Migration

France was in Brandeau / La Fargue's time characterized by migration on a vast scale, as Leslie Choquette demonstrates in her argument that New France was populated not by peasants but by skilled people

whose migrations to the colony were a secondary effect of a preexisting, entrenched tradition of interurban movement, predominantly among young men, distinguished in specifically regional ways according to such factors as regional trade practices and level of adherence to traditional religious and social orthodoxies (Choquette 1997). When zeroing in on female migration patterns, Choquette highlights that the south of France generally, including the region from which Brandeau originated, was one marked by almost non-existent female migration, whereas overseas migration for men was largely a southern French affair. She notes a particular phenomenon in southwestern France of traditional gender roles serving to exclude women's participation in what she calls "the burgeoning *vie de relations* characteristic of the region in the century before the Revolution" (46-48), including the emergent networks of social relations characterized by this swell of overseas migration by men.

Choquette, however, does not note the specificity of the Jewish communities of southwest France, nor address differences between migration patterns for Jewish vs Christian women. But the Sephardic and *Converso* diasporic networks long-since in existence by Brandeau / La Fargue's lifetime suggest a difference. A transnational Sephardic and *Converso* diasporic network linked communities from the Iberian peninsula from which Jews were exiled and *Conversos* fled, to communities in southwest France, The Netherlands with Amsterdam as the key centre, London, Hamburg, Italy and elsewhere, and of course the colonies. Migration followed through these networked locales, making this community a thoroughly transnational one where movement between locales was common. Some locales named above factored in Brandeau's purported familial ties.²³

Very few scholars of Jewish southwest France have specifically addressed gender and women's lives in this period.²⁴ Tirtsah Levie Bernfeld's exhaustive study of poverty and welfare in Amsterdam's Jewish population in the early modern period is an exception, and instructive as to the question of mobility and gender (Bernfeld 2011). She notes that female Jewish migration was common in the early modern period (53). By necessity, Jewish / *Converso* women fleeing from persecution in Spain and Portugal often travelled alone to Amsterdam, with or without children. As a rule, Bernfeld says, non-Jewish women who travelled to Amsterdam did not travel as great distances as did Jewish women of the period (311fn372). Jewish women who travelled to Amsterdam did so for various reasons—political, personal, social, economic, religious or a combination of these—and were sometimes following already established family migration chains (53-55). Widows and orphaned girls arrived to Amsterdam from the Iberian peninsula in the late 17th century in such numbers that their poverty was noticeable. This stream of migration from the Iberian peninsula often via the southwest French Jewish communities, continued well into the 18th century. There was also a back and forth dynamic between Amsterdam and French Jewish communities. Such migrant women formed a large demographic of the Amsterdam Jewish community's poor.²⁵ There were often

23 For a comparative consideration of different diasporas operating at the time, please see chapters 5 (Studnicki-Gizbert 2009) and 6 (Trivellato 2009) in Kagan and Morgan (2009).

24 Julia Lieberman's collection of essays entitled *Sephardi Family Life in the Early Modern Diaspora* is one example of an explicit focus on the lives of women (2011). See for example Bodian on the Dotar (1987).

25 One means through which the Amsterdam community supported its poor, and those of the broader Sephardic network—the vast

disputes between the Amsterdam community and other Jewish communities over its difficulty caring for its poor, and efforts to keep the poor from abroad from being encouraged to travel to Amsterdam. French Jewish communities were frequently the targets of such complaint. London's Jewish community in turn complained of Amsterdam sending its poor on.²⁶ Later in the eighteenth century, the tide would turn and France's Jewish communities would have the same complaints against the Amsterdam community (51).²⁷ These communities were linked in a self-conscious network driven by a desire to keep its own problems, its own poor, in check and far from the glare of the surrounding Christian communities and their authorities.

“Cross-dressing”: an eighteenth century tradition

Female Jewish migration was common in this period. We also know that in early modern Europe, gender passing could be construed as practically a tradition, but only when speaking of female to male crossing (Dekker and van de Pol 1989; Wheelwright 1989; Steinberg 2001).²⁸ Three surveys, which take up “cross-dressing” in The Netherlands, England and France, demonstrate that most frequently women who passed as men did so for sustained periods driven principally by economic need in a European context characterized by widespread poverty. Passing as male opened the world of male work to women, and thus its comparative economic advantages. These surveys show that passing as male depended on dress and behaviour, and took place facilitated by work in the trades and in the military, and especially at sea. The abundance of cases in confined male spaces, such as the navy and the military, show how possible it was for women to pass as men. The ample evidence of women passing as men during the 18th century also shows that colonial economies offered avenues for migrant labour, and labourers could be fed not just into transatlantic movement but into the kind of *cabotage*, or inter-coastal shipping, that moved colonial goods within Europe.

Wheelwright notes that typically women who passed in the military and the navy excelled in the masculine sphere but if discovered, they were not seen to present a real threat to the established order. She claims that the stories of so many cases of women passing as men should not be understood in terms of a nascent feminism, because the position of women socially was so precarious to begin with that they could hardly be expected to challenge entire institutions (Wheelwright 1989, 10-11).

In France, of the more than 300 cases of gender passing Steinberg uncovers, only sixteen were cases of men passing as women (Steinberg 2001, ix). She argues, as have others, that the proliferation of female to male

majority of Jews/*Conversos* in this network were poor—was the *Dotar* charitable society. The *Dotar* society supported marriages of poor young women. As Bodian highlights, it served as an institutional expression of uniting the *Converso* diaspora irrespective of political or religious affiliation, even supporting those who were not re-Judaized, across Europe and the “New World,” so long as they were tied to the Sephardic diaspora or were converts within Christian lands such as Iberia (Bodian 1997, 134-138).

26 Both the Amsterdam and London communities came up with plans to ship their poor to the colonies. See Oliel-Grausz in Brasz and Kaplan (2001, 41-58). See Bodian (1997) for a picture of the founding of the Amsterdam community and its ties through the diaspora.

27 In Brandeau's time, France ranked third in the preferred destinations of Amsterdam's emigrating Jews, according to Bernfeld, after the so-called New World and London (Bernfeld 2011, 51).

28 The title of Dekker and Van de Pol's study is *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*. Less attention has been given to concurrence of other forms of passing with gender passing.

passing was a consequence of a social order that privileged maleness. The case studies also reveal the poverty that characterized where these passers tended to come from. Steinberg highlights the gain in rank as a consequence of entering the male domain (16-17), such that we can understand many of the cases of female to male passing as a crossing in rank or status (87-88). Of Steinberg's 300 cases, 250 of them were from the 18th century. The vast majority were single women. Of these, of the 139 for whom duration of passing is known, twenty-five spent an average of three years and seven months passing. Steinberg also shows that many of the passers were teenagers when they began to pass. The typical starting age was between sixteen and twenty, and many were orphans. However, Steinberg and others also show many cases where women were much older than the men they became.

Dekker and van de Pol argue that one of the reasons why women passing as men was such a phenomenon in the early modern period was that sexual intimacy between women was only possible if one woman passed as a man. They make that argument from gathered cases in which women passed as men in order to marry or share intimacy with women. They further describe the history of cross-dressing in early modern Europe as "an important stage in the development of female homosexuality," and posit an emergence of greater openness to homosexuality in the 19th century in The Netherlands as one reason why we see a decrease in the number of cases of women passing as men from the late eighteenth century onwards. By then, they say, the practice for the purpose of same-sex intimacy "became anachronistic" (100-102). This genealogy is problematic because it disregards the many women only spaces in which intimacy could be shared, under the radar, and because it affirms a progress narrative toward modernity, linking homosexuality to that progress. Nevertheless, it is clear from the abundant cases gathered that same-sex sexuality was to be policed and punished in Brandeau / La Fargue's time, which gives us a sense of the dangers involved in such undertakings.

Wheelwright raises the difficulty of sources when trying to understand and interpret cases. This is relevant to establishing the context of Brandeau / La Fargue. We often know stories because they are given to us in the third person. In those cases where we have autobiographical accounts, these are strongly coloured by expectation and the need to secure acceptability. Trial testimonies are coloured by a desire for lesser punishment. Representations in fiction or by historians or biographers were often, at the time, tinged with intent to titillate (male) readers. Thus, parsing the context of eighteenth century practices of gender crossing as a tradition requires negotiation around sources, a negotiation that can in turn tell us much about the context.

Illustrative is the example of the seventeenth century Spanish noblewoman Catalina de Erauso.²⁹ Otherwise known as the Lieutenant Nun, Erauso is an example of female to male passing in the military and the colonial context, whose recounting in autobiography is strongly coloured by a desire for acceptability, a pension

²⁹ See Velasco for a study of how the story of Erauso has travelled through culture in various settings across time, as evidence for how transgender lives become spectacle, and how narratives about them "expose and manipulate spectators' fears and desires" (Velasco 2000). See a Spanish language edition of the autobiography of Erauso edited by Angel Esteban (Erauso 2002) and an English translation by Stepto and Stepto with a foreword by Marjorie Garber (Erauso 1996). See also Mary Elizabeth Perry (1999). Velasco characterises De Erauso's as a "transgender life."

and the right to live as a man, rights he was ultimately granted (Velasco 2000). De Erauso became several different men including a brawling and womanizing soldier in colonial South America, who boasted of military feats murdering Indigenous people, and prided himself on seduction skills. Whenever trouble hit for him, he sought refuge in convents and churches, ultimately was discovered and deported back to Spain after more than twenty years of living as a man.

This life was made possible by colonial projects and geographic mobility, as were other lives of passers. Survival of outing was possible for Erauso by falling back on the heroism of participating as a lieutenant in colonial conquest. Framing passing within a discourse of religious, imperial/national heroism characterizes this testimony. Though a quite different case, this is resonant in France with the case of Joan of Arc in terms of religious/national heroism. After securing a military pension and permission to resume life as man, Erauso was last known to be in Mexico where he became a slave-owning travelling merchant. This example shows us that attention to the dynamics of religion, imperialism, gender(ed) expectations and limitations, status and so on enable us to understand how a story comes to be knowable. At the same time, this example shows what a story made available can tell us about its context.

While De Erauso's story dates to before the eighteenth century and takes place between Spain and the "New World," Dekker and van de Pol argue that the north-west of Europe was where the majority of women passing as men lived and worked in early modern Europe, and they came there from further afield (Dekker and van de Pol 1989, 102). They attribute this to the later expected age of marrying in north-west Europe, greater freedom afforded young women there and typical female migration patterns, all of which together put young lower-class women at risk of becoming destitute far from home. Holland in particular had the seafaring economy that could absorb needs for employment not just by migrants, and this points to the fact that colonial economies opened possibilities of labour for women who passed as men, as noted above.

Evident throughout these surveys is that women as well as those whose bodies were neither clearly male nor female and who were found to be living as men tended to be treated harshly and negatively, driven in particular by a fear of any evidence of tribadism, or sexual relations between women, even as popular culture might have glossed this fact. In fact, stories and songs, plays, autobiographies and adaptations of various kinds circulated, through word of mouth, performance and print in the period during which Brandeau / La Fargue's story unfolded. Such stories would have made a life through passing thinkable, as did the fact that people may have known of others who were passing as men. It seems *moving* was key to success, overland, on sea, changing contexts.

Policing mobility, or not

Vincent Denis has devoted attention to the emergence of the concept of and policing of "mobility" in 18th century France, and notes that while the early 18th century was marked by a new but haphazard attention to

tracking and controlling migrant populations—principally beggars, vagabonds and military deserters, and in the case of epidemics, the ill—only one brief period between 1719-1722 was marked by concerted efforts around the issuing and requiring of paperwork for these migrant groups (Denis 2006, 359-377). While the technologies were being developed in the 18th century, driven by local or regional crisis or perceived immediate need, it was not until the French Revolution that documenting and policing through required identification came to be a systematic practice, says Denis. There was—and this is his main interest—no intellectual recognition for the notion of populations on the move, or a mobile demographic, nor for the porousness between migrant groups within such geographic mobility. Thus, women who passed as men in France at the time Brandeau / La Fargue did, did so within this non-coordination of policing of migrants, even as it was common knowledge that many people were on the move.³⁰ In a time when individual identity was very much determined by being within a community, being known from birth through adulthood, crossers or others on the move did not have this identity as they travelled through contexts (Caplan and Torpey 2001).³¹

Status, rank, lineage and “race”

In surveys of gender passing in early modern Europe, we have seen how increase in social rank could accrue to women who passed as men, simply by acquiring access to the work that might allow higher standards of living. While these surveys deal overwhelmingly with poor women, Steinberg also covers many examples of noble women who passed as male warriors, thereby also accruing greater status in the process (Steinberg 2001, 213-240). It is useful to think here, again, of how crossings from female to male might be concurrent with a rank or status crossing, since France was a society so deeply structured around notions of rank, status and lineage. In this sense, one might think of a crossing from Jewish to Christian as more complicated than merely a religion cross, but also as possibly an improvement in status.

I want now to come at the preeminence of status and rank in this period via its catalytic effects—through notions of purity of lineage among the nobility—on the emergence of “race” as a concept and ideology that some have argued occurred in the nineteenth century, and others, the 18th century. I want to lay out in this trajectory the relationship of Jewish difference alongside other differences within colonial expansion. My central preoccupation is not to argue whether and when race was race and whether and when Jews or others were considered “races,” but rather to get at the dynamic praxis around difference, hierarchy, exclusion and bodies that shaped (categories of) living at the time. I am hoping that my approach allows for a sense of the fraughtness of the moment of flux—these slow shifts—that I have referred to.

³⁰ Dekker and van de Pol point to an increased policing of individuals beginning in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, through requirement of identification via Civil Registration, and the army's requirement of a medical examination. These made it more difficult for women to travel and pass as men, and hence the decline in cases later in the century. They also point to the collapse of Dutch colonial enterprise, eliminating a major avenue for survival in the Dutch East India Company and the navy. These are developments that have not yet hit during Brandeau / La Fargue's time (Dekker and van de Pol 1989, 102-103).

³¹ Mak has shown how discourses of core, fixed identity in understanding female masculinity and women who passed as men did not come to be until much later than Brandeau / La Fargue's time (2004).

The concept of "race" as we know it today did not in fact exist in Brandeau / La Fargue's time, though certainly strategies akin to, or precursors to, what we might read today as racialized othering were far from absent. Understanding genealogies of "race" ideology requires taking up the pervasive structuring role of status or rank in eighteenth century French and broader Western European cultures, and the interplay between colonial expansion, practices of slavery and discourses of status, rank and lineage. What was to become "race" as a concept was emergent inseparable from and contingent upon the dynamics of colonisation and the slave trade, traceable to the Middle Ages and inseparable from notions of nobility and lineage understood as transmitted through blood.³² Jewish difference is part of the genealogies of "race," in ways that are worth parsing, particularly since we will be analyzing the key archival document that brings us the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue in terms of how Jewish difference and female difference among others are inscribed there.

Writes scholar of race and racism David Theo Goldberg,

In the latter part of [the Middle Ages] race was emergent rather than fully formed, incipiently invoked to fashion nation formation in the early moments of national elaboration as racial consciousness began to emerge out of—and later can be said to have taken over if not to have replaced—the mix of public religious constitution, the symbolics and architectonics of blood, the naturalizing disposition—the metaphysics—of hierarchical chains of being, and the ontological orderings in terms of supposedly heritable rationalities (Goldberg 2008, 2).

Historian of French racism Pierre Boule adds to this argument that "race" practices predated the emergence of "race" ideology per se and notes the centrality of Jewish experience in Iberia in this argument:

Racism—which, unlike cultural prejudice, ascribes fixed, physically inscribed characteristics to real or imagined human groups—did not emerge only with the modern meaning of the term *race*. It is difficult to accept, for instance, that the discrimination the so-called New Christians suffered in Spain from the late fifteenth century to well beyond the eighteenth was purely the result of a suspicion that they

³² The bibliography on "race" is enormous. For overviews on genealogies of "race" as a concept, see for example Goldberg (2008); Essed and Goldberg (2002); Frederickson (2003). For analysis of contemporary race and racism in the U.S., see for example Gregory and Sanjek (1994). For analysis of contemporary Dutch racism see Essed and Hoving (2014) and Wekker (2015). For analysis of France, see Boule (2007; 2005), Peabody and Stovall (2003) and Pluchon (1984). See Schorsch on ways in which what he calls Afroiberian, Amerindian and Judeoiberian people viewed each other, and thus how "race" and racialization circulated and were practised in multiple directions on many levels of colonial hierarchy (Schorsch, 2009a, 2009b, 2005). See Martinez on the relationship between "limpieza de sangre" and the colonial "casta" system for an account that takes *gender* seriously in these discussions (Martínez 2008). See Gilman for consideration of the entwining of "race" with gender, sexuality and class and the relationships between Blackness and Jewishness, though he considers the 19th century (Gilman 1985). See Stam and Shohat for a recent consideration of the circulation of "race" in relation to the Atlantic (Stam and Shohat 2012). See Back and Solomos (2000) for an overview anthology on race and racism. See Razack et al (2010) for attention to feminist thought, race and racism.

remained crypto-Jews. Rather, the precept of “purity of the blood” (*limpieza de sangre*) marked a striking shift from medieval anti-Judaism, one objective of which had been to encourage conversion. Now a converted Jew remained a Jew by his [sic] very essence (Boulle 2005, para 7).

The timing of the expulsions of Jews from the Iberian peninsula coincident with the so-called discovery of the Americas and subsequent colonization project is highly significant. The “limpieza de sangre” [blood purity] ideology underwriting the Inquisition performed a kind of race ideology, *avant la lettre*, through the rejection/eviction of Jews and Muslims, and predated colonization per se as the originary moment of race ideology (Mariscal 1998). Blood purity as it was espoused among the nobility in France plays centrally in this trajectory of ideological emergence.

Scholars of French history point to the mid-eighteenth century as the moment when more malleable understandings of bodies and difference shifted to what we would now understand as “race” ideology.³³ The presence of race ideology among French intellectuals however dates to as early as the 17th century (Boulle 2007, 2005, 2003; Peabody and Stovall 2003). Boulle marks as no coincidence that the moment when “universalist religious explanations began to lose their power, and when a more secular view of history and a more scientific approach to nature began to emerge” coincides with expression by some colonial travellers of polygenesis in the early eighteenth century, with its notions of essential differences across so-called black and white races (Boulle 2005: para 4). Here we see a concurrence between a slow shift toward secularism, and solidifying notions of human difference. Boulle argues that the modern concept of race was fully developed in France by the mid-eighteenth century only among the elite, and that the lower classes did not bear the same attitudes and practices of exclusion toward for instance Blacks (Boulle 2005, para 12), a thesis he elaborates in detail in his study of race and slavery in France (Boulle 2007).

Religious difference is not so easily teased from notions of immutable difference. Asks Pierre Pluchon, who produced the first attempt at comparative analysis of racism in France through attention to Jews and Blacks, “But where does anti-Judaism end and anti-Semitism begin? We don't know” (Pluchon 1984, 77 my translation). Pluchon demonstrates a colonial and metropolitan “ambient anti-Semitism” throughout the period, and documents a co-existence at times between policies of total exclusion, regular practices of overlooking Jewish presence—particularly in colonies where Jews were contributing to economic wealth through plantations and merchant practices—and consistent demonstrations among colonial bureaucrats and elites of a discourse of differentiating

33 Most scholars of French race and racism have used as a central case study of analysis the Mendès affair, which dates to the 1770s, to discuss intersections of racisms against Jews and Blacks, in this famous case of a Jewish slave-owner who wished, against French law at the time, to keep his slaves enslaved on French metropolitan territory. This story is at the heart of Pierre Pluchon's study of Jews and Blacks in 18th century France (Pluchon 1984). The other frequently analyzed case is that of the abolitionist Abbé Grégoire, and the entwining of his abolitionist mission with a civilizing and conversionist mission for both Jews and Africans (Sepinwall 2003). These cases come after our story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue unfolds.

tropes about Jews.³⁴

Peabody and Stovall note in *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France*, that “[u]ntil the 18th century, religion served as a far more important marker of inclusion or exclusion than national or racial boundaries...” (Peabody and Stovall 2003, 2) But importantly, they note that a lacuna in scholarship continues to prevail in considering the relationship between religious minorities (Jews, Protestants and Muslims) and the construction of the ideology of race in French history (8). In France, there are vitally important relationships between the emergence of what would become known as race ideology and the belief that rank was transmissible, initially confined to a “blood purity” obsession among the nobility—a term echoing that of *limpieza de sangre*—but applying thus far in France only to the nobility. (In other words, Jews were not considered as a group according to blood purity, nor were other groups beyond the nobility.)

The nobility's obsession with rank and purity of lineage was expressed through discourses of the heredity of pedigree, of morality, and so on. This was a discourse contained within the noble classes concerned with the transmission of morals, status, behaviour, qualities that were transmissible via lineage, and the old nobility's commitment to maintaining and keeping the bounds around access to rank strictly guarded. The characteristics inherited by nobility could be construed as racialized in the sense that whiteness, fairness, and other particular physical qualities were valued, but these were considered shaped by environment and education too, and so were both physically acquired through blood, and taught. Thus, there was an understanding that some aspects of noble quality could be learned. Boule writes:

Race replaced more neutral terms describing noble lineage, such as *maison* (household) or *famille*, precisely because it distinguished between good breeding and the absence of breeding. Gentility and other traits inherited through birth came to differentiate *gentilshomme* (that is, the well-bred) from mere nobles, who could be manufactured by the king. From the first therefore, the term focused on natural—what we would now call biological—differences and placed great value on the possession of inherited characteristics (Boule 2003, 12).

There is an argument to be made here with Boule in that social position is what is acquired through familiar lineage, but suffice it to say that lineage and the passing on of good breeding through families offered a logic that would feed the emergence of race ideology to come.

At the time, there was a concerted attention to mixed marriage. The *élite* were concerned with degeneration, and *mésalliance* or cross-rank marriage, literally translated as mis-alliance, was considered to threaten the integrity, or “blood purity,” of the best families of the kingdom, which were understood as races

³⁴ The colonies Pluchon refers to are exclusively Antillean, with no reference to the New France that Brandeau / La Faruge entered.

(Aubert 2004, 5). Colonial administrators in turn were concerned with assimilation of colonised peoples, and drew on the élite metropolitan concerns around *mésalliance* and lineage when considering Indigenous populations in New France, where intermarriage was proposed as a means of “improving” Indigenous people physically, culturally and morally. Intermarriage as applied in early New France was gendered in that it was believed that better blood could be achieved by mixing French male blood with Indigenous female blood, not the other way around. Seventeenth century assimilation policy in New France, argues Aubert, “ambiguously combined a cultural conception of Indians with a quasi-biological one stemming directly from French metropolitan ideas of race” (Aubert 2004, 453). Aubert draws attention to the interplay between colony and metropole, and the seepage of rank and lineage discourse, into discourses of difference between bodies. Pluchon shows how *mésalliance* and its outcomes of *métissage* catapulted imperial France toward a gendered racist hierarchical ranking of colonial populations (1984).

Importantly, Aubert argues that historians of Spanish and British colonialism have often suggested that France's colonies never developed racial ideologies to the extent seen in Spanish and British spheres, or have characterized racial ideology in French colonial history as underdeveloped. Besides the problematics of trying to compare degrees of practice, Aubert argues that such claims have been based on a lack of deep consideration of French colonial historiography and archival sources (2004, 441-442). Writes Aubert, “Hierarchical and segregationist notions pervaded the early modern French ethos” (442). He argues that during the early half of the eighteenth century, “the language of race previously confined to the preservation of the purity of blood of the highest ranks of French society was being extended to the French population as a whole” (442). He goes on to write that, “The language of race that emerged from the construction of absolutism during the early modern era ... was first and foremost a language of class. Until the beginning of the eighteenth century, such a language was only rarely used in relation to regional populations or large cultural groups” (449). But here is what is particularly important for our purposes in exploring the connection between race, lineage and class, and religious difference. Aubert then writes in a footnote that early modern French representations of Jews were the exception to this rule (449fn23). This footnoting speaks again to the lacuna Peabody and Stovall note regarding attention to religious difference in evolutions of exclusionary discourse and practice in France that would congeal into race ideology.

What about regulations regarding Jews en route to and in New France? During the colonial period, anyone boarding a ship bound for New France was required to prove themselves Catholic. More specifically, the records are abundant with the qualifier "Old" before "Catholic": "ancien catholique" (ADG, 47-48).³⁵ The distinction "Old Catholic" has to do with the Black Code, which excluded not just Jews from French colonies, but also

³⁵ Captains were required to confirm religion, which they may not have strictly observed. They were also required to bring to New France "engagés", white indentured labourers the number of which was correlated with size of ship. Captains were responsible for meeting this requirement, though many resisted its imposition, and often falsified logs. Writes historian Peter Moogk, "Whoever attempts to reconstruct the history of emigration from French ports during the 1700s from embarkation lists, ship's rolls and notarial deeds, as though they were firm evidence, is walking into quicksand" (Moogk 2000, 104).

Protestants.³⁶ The Protestant diaspora however did not carry this same Iberian history of racialization as did Jews and *Conversos*, though in the time of Brandeau / La Fargue in New France, both were associated in the popular imagination with witchcraft, the devil and a willingness to desecrate religious symbols (Menkis 1992, 12-17). The ecclesiastical literature and teaching that predominated in New France at the time characterized Jews in particular as evil and as an example against which Catholics should compare themselves (ibid). Menkis notes that the Black Code had not been registered in Quebec (as in Louisiana). Nevertheless, he says, it was influential nonetheless, as the Brandeau case illustrates: “[T]he one attempt by a professing Jew to remain in the colony was met with expulsion. The policy that Jews were not allowed was scarcely tested” (17). Further, he writes that Protestants did manage to settle in Quebec despite the ban, owing to their economic value (12-17). In France and its colonies, the requirement of the declaration of religion reflected a desire to secure a French Catholic imperial expansion, distinguishing converts from "originals" in a proselytizing mission. The above affirms that the prevailing French preoccupation with Jews had to do entirely with religious difference.

Two studies in particular, however, will help us to understand in more detail how Jews in the early eighteenth century were perceived, represented and self-represented. These studies take up the contexts of the metropole and the colony, and place more specifically Jewish difference and perceptions thereof into focus in dialogue with representations of Black, Indigenous and female difference. These complicate perceptions of difference as purely religious. First I will consider Ronald Schechter's work on the period 1715-1815 specific to France (Schechter 2003, 1998), and then I will consider Jonathan Schorsch's work on conceptions and representations of Jews and Blacks, a study that centres on the Sephardic diaspora with particular attention to Amsterdam (Schorsch 2009a, 2009b, 2005). Schechter's work, importantly, pays particular attention to gender.

(Gendered) difference, opacity and darkness

Ronald Schechter has given vital attention to French Gentile representations of Jews and French Jewish self-representations from 1715-1815 (Schechter 2003; 1998). He shows how French writers, politicians, administrators and intellectuals over the century showed a veritable obsession with Jewish difference, a remarkable attention for a population that accounted for less than 0.2% of the overall French population (Schechter 1998, 85). Schechter draws a linkage between characteristics that were attached to women and those that were attached to Jews. Writes Schechter,

Jews and women were depicted as strange, inscrutable, indecipherable. Indeed, it was precisely the opacity of both groups, moralized as dissimulation, that most distinctively marked them as familiar. What was apparently best known about both

³⁶ The French crown did not openly recognize Jews as Jews in its own lands until 1723 (Hyman 1998, 3), when Brandeau was five years old. France was not free from a history of Inquisition; expulsion edicts were issued repeatedly from the 12th century onwards.

“others” was that they were unknowable. Finally, the location of women and Jews at the crossroads of familiarity and strangeness, their unstable association with the known and the unknown, helps to account for the obsessive repetitiveness with which they were problematized and theorized (Schechter 2003, 239).

Thus, women and Jews “contained the paradox of strangeness and familiarity” (2003, 245). Of the Jews in particular he writes, “indeed their strangeness, their inscrutability, was among the features that made them so eminently recognizable” (2003, 8). He also notes that “the perceived characteristics of women appear in the feminization of Jewish men” (2003, 16).³⁷ Importantly, Schechter notes that Jewish women in particular did not factor at all in representation in the period he studies, neither in the writings and discourse of Gentiles, nor of Jews, and that the exoticized, beautiful “Jewess” trope does not enter representation until the nineteenth century.³⁸ So we assume his usage of “women” to refer to white Gentile women. Schechter further notes that while characteristics that were attributed to (this particular understanding of) women carried what we would now understand as essentialist tones—characteristics deemed permanent and unchangeable—similar characteristics attributed to Jews, which means almost exclusively Jewish men, were not seen along biologically essentialized lines in the period he studies (2003, 245).

While Schechter applies a *tabulae scriptae* framing device to perceptions and representations of Jews and women, this is to be differentiated from what he calls the *tabula rasa* that characterizes perceptions and representations of Indigenous peoples of the so-called New World in the same period, a tablet onto whom all sorts of preoccupations were projected (Schechter 2003, 245). Schechter addresses the ways in which Indigenous peoples were often seen to be a lost tribe of Jews, both by Gentile and Jewish intellectuals and writers, colonials and missionaries. He suggests that this placing of Indigenous peoples could in fact be taken as a means to comfort colonials in the midst of encounters with Indigenous peoples, a strategy of “comforting visitors to the New World and armchair tourists alike, of familiarization” (239). This is familiarization with the strange as at once strange *and* familiar, the paradox through which Schechter argues women and Jews were then cast in discourse.

Schechter shows the ways in which “others” were used to think questions of difference, perfectibility, nationhood and so on in the era leading up to the consolidation of race ideology, and how Jews were central to this in dynamic interplay with other “Others.” For instance, in the quest for perfectibility, while the “noble savage” was seen to be ignorant and full of possibility of returning to lost innocence, Jews were seen as corrupted. Peasants, Indigenous people, Africans and Jews were perceived as dark in this period. Darkness is sometimes

37 For an attention to how feminization of the Jewish male played out in 19th century psychoanalysis, and the role of the “Jew” in the emergence of discourse on homosexuality, see Boyarin et al (2003); Garber (1992); and Gilman (1985).

38 Pluchon gives particular attention to the ways in which in the late eighteenth century, mixed-race people of colour descended from African women and white European men (“mulâtres”) came to be desirable in ways not unlike how Jewish women came to be desirable, and as such incorporation / assimilation was highly gendered, not to mention sexualized; Black men, mixed-race men and Jewish men were the objects of disdain (Pluchon 1984, 205-207). He further notes that “petits-blancs,” or non-landowning white European men in the colonies were rolled into the category of “mulâtres” (226).

attributed to mean knowable and readable on bodies, sometimes as a referent to moral and/or intellectual character, sometimes both. As Peabody and Stovall note, metropolitan characterizations of French peasants as savage and uncivilized sometimes blurred distinctions between rural France and the colonies (2003, 2), each differentiated from the metropole. This finds echoes in what feminist scholars like Anne McClintock have shown in terms of how working-class women were often cast in likeness to African women, both fetishized through racializing exoticism by men of rank, and perceived as sexually available to them (McClintock 1995, 108, 113-114).

Schechter's study attempts to confront the lacuna in scholarship, asking whether, how and why Jews actually mattered to the French, and he shows unequivocally that they most certainly did, disproportionate to their demographic size and power, and that this attention was a means to craft understandings of humanity, nation and belonging. Further, feminization of the Jewish male and links to other others are part and parcel of Jews as vital to thought experiments playing out in French political and intellectual circles at the time. These thought experiments triangulated through the "others" of the Atlantic world, metropole, rural and colonial, most particularly Africans and Indigenous peoples, and also as noted above, in relation to the peasantry. How Jewish difference was understood and the impacts of that understanding cannot be easily separated from how women, Indigenous people, Africans, and peasants were understood.

Schechter underscores that Jewish difference was perceived and represented as an internal, moral and intellectual corruption, viewed and expressed in terms we might understand as racializing but which were cast through an understanding of changeability. In fact Schechter notes that in his massive survey of publications, he found a striking absence of images, in other words, of visual representations of Jews in his diverse French sources, which range from patriotic liturgy to parliamentary transcripts, popular literature and encyclopedias. He writes,

[In] contrast to later generations, when racism promised its adherents that clues to a person's moral character inhered in his or her physical composition, those who observed (figuratively or literally) the Jews of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries believed very nearly the opposite. They saw the Jews' outward appearance as irrelevant to the more pressing matter of their inner condition. ... Jews were typically associated with *opacity*, deception, dissimulation, and by extension with a radical separation between mental activity and physical appearance. Gentiles repeatedly described them as exhibiting a friendly or ingratiating air while simultaneously plotting the doom of their "victims." This is not to say that some elements that would later characterize racism did not already exist in the eighteenth century. ... Far more frequently, however, Gentiles were impressed by the alleged skill with which Jews could mask their intentions by controlling their appearance (Schechter 2003, 15).

I will now build on Schechter's work with a turn to Jonathan Schorsch's examination of representations and self-representations of Jews of the Sephardic diaspora in concert with representations of Blackness (2009a, 2009b, 2005).

Jewish self-perception

Schorsch draws attention to how Jews negotiated representations of their own alleged differences by distancing themselves, he says, from "Blackness" (Schorsch 2005). Schorsch shows the extent to which racializing terminology, perceptions and ideas have circulated within and without Jewish communities in Europe from the Middle Ages, both in terms of how non-Jewish Western Europeans likened Jewish difference to Blackness and how Jewish communities sought to claim Whiteness driven by this likening to Blackness. Again, this Blackness is sometimes a characterization of moral and intellectual capacity, sometimes a bodily descriptor, and sometimes both. Like Schechter, Schorsch underscores strategic responses to social and political context. Throughout the early modern era, these likenings, Schorsch shows, take on both essentialist racializing tones *and* confusion around changeability. Schorsch himself avoids the use of the term "race," so as to avoid "a retrojected linear history" of the term (167), even as he demonstrates racializing qualities to discourse. His argument aims to demonstrate a long history of racializing discourse both within and without Jewish communities to be found in discourses about Jews and Blacks in the early modern era, including in Brandeau / La Fargue's eighteenth century, when Black people are to be found in France both as free people and as slaves.³⁹ Likewise, Black people comprise an established population in Amsterdam, working sometimes in the homes of Sephardic Jews.⁴⁰ Schorsch echoes others when he demonstrates that racializing ideas and perceptions circulated far earlier than the moment when scientific racism took hold, and he points to the centrality of the Atlantic in this circulation.

Here I have posited a relationship between particular state and imperial policies like the *sistema de castas* and *limpieza de sangre* in Inquisitorial Iberia; policies of colonization and assimilation in imperial France; ideas circulating in intellectual and popular cultural circles; and daily life in Europe's cities, towns, ports, rural regions, colonies, across ranks. None of the exchanges of ideas, perceptions and practices can be said to be certain and even, nor directly measurable. Ordinary people don't often leave their own written records of how they thought and lived. But we might consider the porousness of the Atlantic world at the macro and micro scales. If one looks simply at the movement of those working in *cabotage*—intracoastal trade—in France, between Bayonne and Saint-Malo for instance, one finds in the records that in those ports are often docked at the same time vessels from Rotterdam, London, Hamburg, parts of Scandinavia, Bordeaux, to list a few. In Bordeaux are found ships from Nantes, Porto, Cadiz, and French colonial locales. In Nantes, ships from Saint-Domingue, Amsterdam and

³⁹ See Pluchon (1984) and Boulle (2007) for background on the presumption of an absence of African slaves in France proper.

⁴⁰ See Dienke Hondius (2008) for a history of Blacks in The Netherlands; Hondius et al (2014) for a guide to slavery's connections in Amsterdam; and Hondius (2014) for a history of Blacks in Europe more broadly.

more. Ordinary people found themselves upon transatlantic vessels as sailors, novices, soldiers and whatever other roles to be played at sea. Those plying the coasts circulated colonial goods and found themselves in ports fraternizing with others from other ports across Europe and its colonies. Encounters with the colonies, colonial and imperial ideas and practices, and ideas and practices from other ports and their inlands, were direct and indirect, circulating through networks, reaching into daily life.

What constitutes Jewishness?

While the above has tended to focus on how Gentiles perceived Jews and Jewishness, Schechter and Schorsch have both addressed how Jews perceived themselves, in Schechter's case, primarily intellectual and religious Jews of the French metropole, and in Schorsch's case, the Sephardic diaspora in European centres and in the colonies. Now there must be the consideration of how one looks at the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, and the communities from which and through which s/he moved, and consider what actually constitutes and constituted "Jewishness." For I have not defined this yet, though I have presented Esther Brandeau as "Jewish." Jewish scholarship about the diaspora of which Brandeau was a part covers discussion around who precisely counts as "Jewish," given the seemingly ambiguous position of the *Converso*. There have been extensive debates in Jewish scholarship regarding the relationship between Jewishness and the New Christian phenomenon as a consequence of Iberian Inquisitions.⁴¹ The definitional debate is in terms of whether and to what degree New Christians, also known as *Conversos*, continued to practice Judaism as crypto-Judaizers, or secret practitioners of Judaism; whether New Christians who outwardly practised Catholicism still considered themselves Jewish, even as the Inquisition targeted New Christians precisely for the suspicion that they might be engaged in crypto-Judaism; whether regardless of practice and belief, one was a Jew simply if one's mother was; and how the terms Jewish, New Christian, *Converso*, Marrano and Crypto-Jew should be defined for deployment in scholarship.

Révah calls fashioning of a self-concept of Jewishness regardless of belief and/or practice "potential" rather than "real" Judaism (quoted in Gitlitz 1996, 82-83). While the terms themselves are often used interchangeably, Yerushalmi distinguishes between "Converso" or "New Christian" on the one hand, and "Marrano" or "crypto-Jewish" on the other, the latter two referring to those who actively held onto Jewish loyalties, affiliations or beliefs (Yerushalmi 1981). Ellis Rivkin refers to New Christians as "crypto-individualists" (quoted in Schorsch 2009, 73; 2005, 15). After Yerushalmi, Schorsch uses "Crypto-Jew" or "Marrano" to refer to those who actively and consciously maintained Jewish or crypto-Jewish loyalties and practices, while he uses "Converso" or "New Christian" to refer more generically in a sociological sense to those forcefully or willingly converted Jews, regardless of affiliation or loyalty (Schorsch 2004, 15). In that sense "Converso" and "Marrano" can be seen as sociological umbrella terms. I myself, throughout this dissertation, use "New Christian" and "*Converso*"

⁴¹ For a newcomer's general overview, see Gitlitz (1996, 73-96).

interchangeably. I consider these as part of a broader umbrella of “Jewish” even as I leave ambiguous what “Jewish” actually means. In that sense, I subscribe to a notion of Jewishness by affiliation, and while I consider Esther Brandeau to have been Jewish, I leave undefined what precisely that means. Instead, I use the documents and materials and contexts I consider to speak to this question through my readings of them.

In the case of southwest France, according to Anne Zink, the emigrants from the Iberian peninsula from the 16th century who arrived to Brandeau's home community of Saint-Esprit-Lès-Bayonne in southwest France, were without doubt crypto-Judaizing New Christians (Zink 1995, 42). Zink and Gérard Nahon are the two scholars who have written extensively about the Jewish / New Christian communities in southwest France. Early scholarship tended to assume that New Christians from Iberia automatically reverted to Jewish practice when they arrived in exile in places like Southwest France and The Netherlands, sometimes after generations as New Christians completely removed from access to Jewish knowledge. This view has been challenged by work demonstrating an uneven process along a spectrum including immediate return, slow bumpy return, non-return as in assimilation to Christianity, and indifference to religion. Graizbord shows that the process of judaization of New Christians who arrived to Southwest France was “contingent, rather mundane, and anchored in the sense of kinship that the members of the group in question felt toward their fellows” (Graizbord 2006, 148). Archival records show that Jewish visitors from The Netherlands in the 17th and 18th centuries noted the lack of religious knowledge and discipline among these Jews, including in Bayonne (Graizbord 2006, 153; Nahon 1981).

Yirmiyahu Yovel has written of the *Conversos* as having had a “split identity,” one which he says was key to catalyzing modernity (Yovel 2009). García characterizes the crypto-Judaizing life as a “double life, a split personality” (quoted in Gitlitz 1996, 92). This could be akin to W.E.B. Du Bois' articulation of the “double consciousness” characterizing Black experience, a term he gave to the “sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others,” a “two-ness” (Du Bois 1994 [1903]; Gilroy 1993). Du Bois too, and Paul Gilroy posit the Black experience of the Atlantic as anticipating modernity, a claim Yovel makes about the *Conversos* (1993).⁴² Bodian critiques Yovel's claim, arguing for the need to differentiate between a community experiencing something akin to split personality, which New Christians certainly did, and being *defined by* such conflicted identity, as Yovel posits they were. She argues that such a view, derived from consideration of the privileged male stars of *Converso* history, as Bodian suggests, neglects the wide range of influences, philosophical and intercultural exchanges that fuelled intellectual and religious internal conflict among *Converso* intellectuals (Bodian 2010). Suffice it to say that these debates point to the impossibility of generalizing a Jewish or (or including) a New Christian experience.

As has been noted in the general Introduction of the dissertation, Brandeau / La Fargue's home community, and the network it was a part of was viewed and named as “the Portuguese” or “the Portuguese nation”, understood as Jewish and derived from exiles of the Iberian Inquisitions. This community too named itself

42 See Gilroy on links between Black Atlantic thought and Jewish thought in relation to diaspora (Gilroy 1993, 205-216).

as Portuguese and in France and elsewhere made every effort to distinguish itself as superior to other communities of Jews, in a kind of import of the hierarchies characteristic of Iberia and true to the status and rank obsessions of French culture generally at the time. In Bordeaux, for example, this meant discrimination against the Avignonnais Jews. In Amsterdam, for example, it meant a sense of segregationist superiority in belief and practice vis-à-vis the Ashkenaz population. The debates among scholars that I have outlined above point perhaps to another (self-)definitional flux characteristic of the period during which Brandeau / La Fargue travelled.

Seeing multicrossing's absence

I want to return now to the question of passing, the absence of *multicrossing* cases in various literatures and the seeming absence of such cases in the source material. There are few documented examples of the kind of simultaneous crossings that Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue undertook.⁴³ Examples almost exclusively come to us described and characterized as gender crossing only. One of the most intriguing cases that might be construed as a “multicross” is that of Eleno/a de Céspedes, whose life comes to us through Inquisition records in Spain. Israel Burshatin elegantly delineates the ways in which this figure moved fluidly across, self-fashioned, and was read across shifting, malleable categories of gender and “race,” status, culture and geography in the sixteenth century (Burshatin 1999). This was a person who was born into slavery and physically branded so as a female African in Spain, was released into freedom as a youth, married a man and gave birth to a daughter, and led a life of crossing not only from female to male. They also crossed, as we would understand it today, from Black to white, which may also have been a cross from Muslim to Christian and vice versa. De Céspedes served in the military as a soldier fighting with the Spanish against the Moors, and had also once been arrested as a *Morisco*—Muslim New Christian—outlaw in uprisings fighting against the Old Christian Spanish ordinances targeting Moorish styles of dress policed by the Inquisition, or what Burshatin calls state-mandated transvestism (441).

De Céspedes worked also as a tailor, a farmhand and shepherd, and entered training in the medical profession, acquiring skills to surgically alter their own body. So De Céspedes, who lived as a man for over twenty years, crossed what we would anachronistically name gender, “race” and class as well as regional geographies, and ultimately wound up before the Inquisition accused of marrying a woman while being a woman, thereby debasing the sanctity of marriage. Different teams of doctors came to different conclusions about whether De Céspedes was male or female, suggesting they were perhaps intersex. Bullough and Bullough recount this case as solely one of gender crossing, and make no reference to the “race” and rank crossings, nor geographic crossing in the story, as does Burshatin (Bullough and Bullough 1993, 94-96). Eleno/a leveraged socio-political shifts and flexibilities of identification to slip across categories, proving categories to be malleable and contextual,

43 The most well-known case of a simultaneous “race” and class cross in the U.S. is that of Ellen Craft, an enslaved woman who passed as her husband's owner in order for the two to escape travel north to freedom in 1837. The couple settled in England to become active in the abolitionist movement before returning to the U.S. post-abolition. The story inspires Mojisola Adebayo's *Moj of the Antarctic*, where a Black gender-crossing body based on Craft is on a whaling vessel bound for a white Antarctica (Adebayo 2007).

in order to become a wife, mother, man, husband, soldier, supposed outlaw, and surgeon. Migrant work, geographical movements and the context of internal (re)conquest offered openings for Eleno/a's multicrossing in the late sixteenth century.

None of the cases from Brandeau / La Fargue's time or before in the geographies of relevance that I have come across, other than the above, identify a gender-cross that coincides with (or is facilitated by) a "race" cross, a religion cross, or a culture cross.⁴⁴ I do come across Jeanne Bensac, who hailed from the south of France, and whose story dates to the early 1700s. She is referred to throughout Steinberg's collection. Bensac is the daughter of poor Reformists in the midst of the religion wars unfolding within leagues of her home, being raised by a brother and sister-in-law after her parents' death. She runs away as a young man, purportedly because her brother and sister-in-law treated her badly. She purportedly had the intention of working as a man in Bordeaux—also a site in the Brandeau / La Fargue story—but she is picked up along the way by a soldier and made to work as his valet. Brandeau / La Fargue too would work as a valet (lackey) for a retired soldier. Jeanne Bensac later becomes a soldier herself, before revealing herself to military doctors while sick. But in accounts that give us the story, none of which are her own, it is claimed that Bensac disguised herself as a young man in order to flee from the Reform religion of her home. Motivations behind the telling of the story make it impossible to know whether religion had anything to do with the choice to leave home as a male labourer. The story does suggest that as religious contexts were passed through, identifications might be changed opportunistically, and that many passers knew the repertoires of behaviour required to facilitate shifting religious identifications. It also shows that religion could be a powerful mediating factor in the telling (or not telling) of a crossing tale. The absence of any other reference to other forms of crossing simultaneous with gender crossing in the time of Brandeau / La Fargue in France or elsewhere in the regions that intersect with the story makes this story unique in terms of attention to it as a scholarly endeavour. But it does not mean necessarily that such cases were rare, rather that they were perhaps less detectable. The uniqueness also suggests the need for intersectional attention to stories framed as purely gender crossings. Why is it that possibly more complicated, multiple crossings are reduced to gender crossings? Is this a consequence of the moment of inscription, or (also) to be attributed to subsequent readings of inscriptions? An analysis of the case of Brandeau / La Fargue, I hope, will shed some light on these questions.

Conclusion

I have laid out context for Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's story. I began by noting the challenge of navigating across eras, and the need to historicize concepts that identify humans and their worlds, so as to be able to distinguish the story's era from our own. I outlined key concepts undergoing shifts in the early eighteenth

⁴⁴ Two crossing cases of note occur in what would become Canada. Anne Edmond from L'île d'Orléans near Montreal cross-dressed in 1696 in order to prevent her lover from being called to battle. Troops were being called up, so Edmond dressed as a young man and delivered false news to prevent the advance. A trial ensued upon her outing. See Roy (1904). Isobel Gunn, originally from Orkney Islands, Scotland, began passing in 1806 as John Fubbister, and became a labourer travelling thousands of miles with the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1807, she was found out when she went into labour. See Thomas (2000) for a fictional adaptation of the story.

century, including the shift away from unity between the individual and God; the shift away from the humours as a framing of gender and biological sex; and the shift toward the concept of the nation-state. I characterized France at the time as housing people on the move. I situated Jewish migration and in particular Jewish female migration within patterns of mobility, as well as “cross-dressers” within patterns of mobility. I introduced the practice of crossing from female to male as at the time not uncommon. I noted the prevalence of young single poor women in this population. I gave a specific example of a story—that of Catalina de Erauso—to raise the issue of navigating source material about crossers. I did so also as a suggestion of how through navigating the motivations behind the inscription of source material, one can learn about context.

I then shifted attention to understandings of difference and the relationship between French notions of lineage, rank and status, Jewish, Black and Indigenous difference and the emergence of the notion of “race.” I traced arguments for practices of racializing exclusion predating the emergence of race ideology per se, and I demonstrated the co-existence of discourses of fixed, immutable difference, with discourses of malleability of difference in the period in question, another indication of a shift underway. I highlighted an intersection between tropes of Jewishness and of femaleness. I considered scholars who have attended to how Jews were constructed, and how Jews self-constructed in relation to tropes circulating that linked them to Africans through notions of Blackness. I addressed an underlying question about what constitutes Jewishness, within scholarship and in the period in question. In closing I gestured toward seeing multicrossing within the contexts painted.

This background enables an appreciation of the kinds of navigations one has to make when performing readings across eras, as a kind of dance that triangulates between the period past and the period present, through the anachronies of lenses firmly of the present. It also gives a sense of the navigations our historical subject would have had to make in order to live as a multicrosser. If the overall ambition of the dissertation is to address what might constitute queer, feminist, decolonial engagement with—and production of telling of—Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, then I have begun by attempting to understand the eighteenth century contexts they moved through. In the next section, I will take up how the difference of the eighteenth century has travelled through reiterations of the story into the present day.

Part I
Eruptions Into Knowability

Overview

The story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue first comes to us in a testimonial record in the French colonial archive inscribed in 1738. It travels thereafter across 277 years, across languages, across genres and across contexts of telling, to meet us in the present. *Eruptions Into Knowability* concerns itself with this ordinary record, the travels it has made and what assumptions have travelled with it. I begin with sustained attention to this first record. How does this document inscribe Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue? I pay particular intersectional attention to gender, class (rank), religion and racialization. I call this analysis a “preface to a reading.” How I read this document informs how I will read subsequent iterations of the story across eras, genres and contexts. I therefore give what I call a “genealogy of eruptions” of the story, tracing a path from the first inscription into the present century through a multitude of forms. I address the question, How has this story, and the particular inscriptions of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue found in the first record, travelled with the document across time? What assumptions have migrated, have they changed and if so, how?

The bulk of *Eruptions Into Knowability* is devoted to critical analysis of two selected works by Canadian creators that tell the tale of Brandeau / La Fargue in distinct ways: a widely circulated English language historical fiction novel for young people by Sharon McKay, and a French-language documentary about the Jewish history of Quebec City by Shelley Tepperman entitled *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter*, which has had limited distribution. Through analysis of these two works, I elaborate a practice that I call “multicrossing.” I characterize Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as a “multicrosser,” someone who passed across multiple, simultaneous and co-inscribing axes. Through analysis of these two creative works, I show how the multicrosser falls from view, how they fail to be fully represented as multicrosser, as one crisis of identification is deflected onto another or out-centres another (Garber 1992).

I situate the analysis of McKay's novel for young people within scholarship on children's literature, in particular passing narratives for young people (Flanagan 2008), and literature for young people in settler colonial contexts (Bradford 2007; Reimer 2008). I perform an intersectional narratological analysis of the novel, paying attention to narrational structure, speech and description in order to ask, How do their cumulative effects inscribe a particular kind of Esther in terms of gender, sexuality and religious affiliation? I pay particular attention to moments of passing, doubting and outing in the novel, and how these moments display mechanisms of the protagonist's identity inscription. I foreground the intercultural ideal at the heart of the novel, put this into conversation with the colonial context in which the story unfolds, and point to the settler colonial contemporary Canadian context into which the novel inserts itself.

In taking up Tepperman's documentary, I address the distinctions and similarities between Tepperman's documentary and McKay's novel in terms of genre. Tepperman's documentary offers us the possibility to consider strategies for transtemporality in historical fiction that display an explicit continuity between the past and the present. In Tepperman's film, I too analyse the structure of narration in a documentary that deploys classic

documentary strategies through a fictional backbone, enabled by fictionalized historical characters. I ask, How does the structure of the film enable delivery of potentially controversial claims? How does the film negotiate between the past and the present through its structure and content? I attend to how heteronormativity and settler coloniality factor in the telling of Esther Brandeau in this documentary, and I return to representations of Esther Brandeau in the original testimonial record to ask, How have those representations in the original archival record been recast in this particular 21st century telling? I ground the analysis in scholarship on tropes for femininity and Jewishness as they circulated in Brandeau / La Fargue's 18th century contexts (Schechter 2003). My analysis takes into consideration the film's context of reception and primary intended audience: francophone Quebec.

In taking up these two works together, I also look at how claims to "historical accuracy" factor into or circulate through them. I demonstrate how these two tellings fall short in making the multicrosser fully present as multicrosser, and I end by asking where these tellings also fall short in attending to what I call "intersectionally storied land," shortcomings that may have something to do with one another. I propose putting Indigenous studies, particularly queer Indigenous studies and settler colonial studies (Byrd 2011; Morgensen 2011), into conversation with studies of literary Sephardism and marranism (Casteel 2012; Halevi-Wise 2012; Kandiyoti 2012) as a means to foster imagining decolonial tellings of settler stories through resisting assimilation of queer settler stories into settler colonial imaginaries.

Introduction

The story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue is first recorded in writing in the French colonial archive, in the form of a third person voice collation of a testimony written by the Intendant's controller.⁴⁵ It is catalogued in Correspondence pertaining to Canada in the Fonds des Colonies of the National Archives of France, held in microfiche copy at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa as well as in online scan through Library and Archives Canada. In my translation its three short handwritten pages read as follows:

Today, September 15th, 1738, here before us, Marine Commissariat, in charge of the Navy Police at Quebec City appeared Esther Brandeau, aged about twenty years old, and who boarded at La Rochelle as a passenger in boys' clothes under the name Jacques La Fargue on the ship St. Michel captained by the Sieur Salaberry, and who has declared to us to be named Esther Brandeau, daughter of David Brandeau, Jew by nation, merchant at St-Esprit, diocese of Daxe near Bayonne, and that she is Jewish by religion, and that it was five years ago that her father and mother boarded her at said location on a Dutch ship, captain Geoffroy, to send her to Amsterdam to one of her aunts and her brother, that the ship, having been lost on the sandbar of Bayonne in the moon of April or May, 1733, and that thankfully she was saved to land with one of the members of the crew, that she was pulled out by a widow residing in Biarritz, that fifteen days later she left for Bordeaux dressed as a man, where she embarked as a cook under the name Pierre Mausiette, on a boat commanded by Captain Bernard, destined for Nantes, that she returned on the same ship to Bordeaux, where she embarked once again in the same capacity on a Spanish ship, Captain Antonio, who was leaving for Nantes, and upon arrival in Nantes, she deserted and went to Rennes, where she placed herself as a boy with a certain Augustin, a clothes tailor, where she stayed six months, that from Rennes she went to Clissoy⁴⁶ where she entered into the service of the Recollets as a domestic and to do errands, that she stayed three months in this convent, from which she left without notice to go to St-Malo, where she found refuge⁴⁷ with a baker named Servanne who resided near the big gate, where she stayed five months contributing some services to the said Servanne, that she then went to Vitré to seek work, there she put herself at the service of the Sieur de la Chapelle, the aforementioned a Captain in the regiment of the Queen's Infantry, that she served from ten to eleven months as a lackey, that she left this situation because her health would not permit her to continue to look after the said Sieur de la Chapelle who was always sick. The said demoiselle Esther, returning to Nantes, was taken for a thief a league from Noisel, arrested by the local police and taken to the prisons of said Noisel from which she was released after twenty-four hours because they realized that they were mistaken. She then went to La Rochelle, where having taken the name Jacques La Fargue, she embarked as a passenger on the ship St-Michel, upon which declaration we asked the said Esther Brandeau to tell us what reason she had had to so disguise her sex for five years, upon which she told us that having been saved from the shipwreck that occurred at Bayonne, she fell into the home of Catherine Churiau as it is said above, that she made her eat pork and other meats, the use

45 Jean-Victor Varin de la Marre was appointed chief scrivener of the Marine in Canada in 1729 when he travelled to New France. He also substituted as controller of the Marine at that time. He became a councillor of the Superior Council of Quebec from 1733. In 1734 he was promoted to Commissary and Controller of the Marine in Quebec. From 1736 he was sent to Montreal to become a subdelegate of the Intendant. In 1738 he was in dispute with the Intendant over his desire to return to France to settle family matters, for which the Minister had granted permission, but Hocquart blocked his departure, as he was deemed too valuable to the administration. Varin de la Marre would become, in 1747, commissary of the Marine at Montreal, for which he would later be charged and found guilty for acts of financial misconduct and banished permanently from the Kingdom of France (Lachance). The secretary to the Intendant Hocquart at the time of Brandeau / La Fargue's interrogations was Michel Bénard (or Bernard) (Roy 1935, 74-107).

46 This is probably Clisson, due east of Nantes.

47 One could also read "c'est trouvé agile chez une boulangère" which means "found themselves to be agile or capable" instead of "c'est trouvé azile", which means "found refuge." Choquette chooses "asylum" (Choquette 1997, 138).

of which is forbidden among Jews, and she vowed at that time not to return to her father and her mother, to enjoy the same freedom as Christians. Thus we have compiled this record and the said Esther Brandeau signed with us in Quebec and on the said dates. Collated by Varin. (ANF 1738a)

This document and subsequent correspondence among officials in New France and France will form the basis for retellings of the tale, including this one, into the present day.⁴⁸ When we consider this document, and those other colonial era correspondences between officials that follow it, we should be interested in its content as well as its form, structure, intended audience, effects, and intentions, in short, in what the document *does* and how, as it travels in various ways, under various guises across the centuries. It is precisely that temporal movement and movement across genres that is of interest in Part I of the dissertation, "Eruptions Into Knowability," which unfolds as follows:

- 1) In a "preface to reading," I give a close reading of the initial 1738 document itself—which I characterize as a record of interrogation—that destabilizes its claims to truth, thus suggesting a foundational instability that serves as the "bedrock" of subsequent iterations of the story.
- 2) In a "genealogy of eruptions," I trace the Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue story as it has been reiterated across the centuries into the present day from the initial colonial inscribing analyzed just prior.
- 3) The "preface to reading" and "genealogy of eruptions" will be followed with close readings of two cultural productions produced in the present century that are themselves built on the initial 1738 colonial document as well as the subsequent iterations traced from it. Prior to the analysis I will delineate the methods of analysis that I will undertake. My analysis of the two contemporary cultural productions selected for close reading serves the chapter at hand's main purposes: To investigate what I call "multicrossing," an intersectional understanding of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's story as one of passing across multiple simultaneous axes. How does this simultaneity function, how is it read, and how is it represented across time? How might its analysis within cultural production illuminate the interplay between so-called past and so-called present? How might the various eruptions of the story in the cultural archive at specific periods of time reveal the shifting or not-so-shifting work the story has been made to do? Consideration for these questions will, I hope, move us closer to what this dissertation seeks: How to tell so-called "history" in the present in a manner that is queer, feminist and decolonial?

A preface to reading

Let us cycle back then to consider that brief summary of a life found in a document dated September 15th, 1738. We notice certain things. For instance, the document refers to the questionee as female throughout. Historians', biographers' and journalists' accounts of this story over time have almost exclusively assumed the stability and centrality of the historical figure's female identity, and subsume the male within it as a temporary

⁴⁸ Please see Appendix 1 for original in French, according to my own reading.

mask. I could just as easily name it the Esther Brandeau Pierre Mausiette Jacques La Fargue story; the testimony names not just Jacques La Fargue but also Pierre Mausiette as identities that Brandeau took on, and/or *became*. What of the possibility that both female and male identities were for this subject fully embodied experiences, that the male experience could have been more than a merely instrumental or convenient disguise, and that these gendered identities were not necessarily mutually exclusive, nor clearly and independently defined, nor clearly and independently experienced? First then, I am attentive to what I will show as the disappearing of and/or subsuming of, to use today's terminology, gender queerness of the story in its (re)tellings, beginning with this original record. This assertion by association then also challenges me to read her/their Jewishness and his/their Christianness with a similarly informed attentiveness. I will show that the disappearance of gender transgression, or to be precise, its relegation to a second tier occurs both in the initial interrogation record and in its subsequent iterations.⁴⁹

The document begins in the present tense—"Today, here before us..."—but names itself in the sign-off as collated, meaning that it is ordered, pieced together, gathered by the one who collates. This suggests that it is not the verbatim transcript of an oral communication but a recounting of an "original narrative" that we have no access to. In this sense the document is a retrospective (re?)ordering composed for specific purposes and with a particular audience in mind. This document is among the correspondence received by the Secretary of State, the Minister of the Marine and Colonies in France, whether in the form of letters directly addressed to the Minister, or copies of correspondence among colonial officials and between port and other officials in the colony as well as in the metropole(s). The document in question is a record meant for bureaucrats, and at that, for superiors to the Intendant in a chain of power toward his cousin, the King.

The document is called a "procès-verbal" in the colonial record, which means "statement." It is named so by the archivist(s) who gathered and arranged the colonial records in a series, "Correspondence générale; Canada" within the "Fonds des Colonies, Canada." In my estimation, the document is not simply a statement; first, it could be more precisely called a collation from a statement. But even at that, it records a key question put to her: "... we asked the said Esther Brandeau to tell us ..." Who is present? Who is this we? "Here before us..." The Intendant and the collator? Anyone else? "...what reason she had had to so disguise her sex for five years..." This question suggests that *questioning* drove the telling. If to interrogate is to question across a power divide, under threat abstractly felt or concretely delineated, then in my estimation the document is a record of an interrogation, its intended audience to be found upward along chains of power.⁵⁰

49 Cultural archive here is a general term to refer to a culture's accumulated cultural productions, its output of artifacts and documents beyond those we might traditionally think of as archives, encompassing a range of creative outputs too. This assemblage can say something about a culture's behavioural habits and systems, memory practices, its everyday sense of itself, its means of reproducing or extending itself. Saïd used this phrase when examining European imperialism and Europe's representations of its Others (Saïd 1994). Saïd was interested primarily in literary works, as a key avenue through which imperialism is bolstered and spread. I use the term colonial archive largely to refer to an archival system and its documentary contents created during the colonial period. These terms overlap of course. A greater attention to archives and the nuances of definitions will occupy later parts of the dissertation.

50 It is important to note however that in the same period, interrogation under torture was a practice that appears s/he had the privilege

We can assume this intention as a key "filter" shaping what is made known through the recording accomplished in the act of collating. In turn, we can see the collating as an incomplete account of the events in which any information was extracted about Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. The first person voice of the subject, Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, is absented through translation: the first person voice "Je/I," which we do not hear/see but are made to believe was, is translated via dialogue or questioning that prompts that voice—that questioner's voice itself largely but not entirely absented—into a third person "she". Through these processes of translation, the subject is recast through disappearance. They are further absented in the sense that their body and gender performance/presentation is funneled into "she" only; the "he" is presented as an act of mimicry: "dressed as a man," "in boys' clothes." "She" is seemingly stable(d). Jewish difference is convertible, within that stable(d) she, as I will elaborate below.

There are two key series of events in question. First there is the linear series of events from Brandeau's time of departure from Bayonne to arrival in New France five years later—and there is inconsistency in the archival evidence as to whether Jacques La Fargue arrived, or Esther Brandeau arrived already outed. Then there is the series of events from arrival to the moment of collation of "facts" in the form of what is archived as the "procès-verbal." These two series of events presumably occur one following the other chronologically. The document begins in the second series, and at that it is not clear where in the second series we are. "Today, September 15th, 1738 ... " Are we at the moment of the beginning of the taking of the statement? No, it seems we are on the same day, but recounting an earlier moment in that day when a statement was extracted/given. This collation is, in a sense, a narrative re-enacting the event of testimony, which contains within it a narration that re-enacts the primary series of events, eg. from Bayonne to arrival in New France five years later. Each of these narrations is partial, in the sense of incomplete, as well as in the sense of coloured by the perspective and motivations of the collator and of the Intendant, to whom he answers; and in the sense of possible strategic telling and omission by Brandeau that leads to the collation.

And then, Esther presumably signs, yet she is not present. How and what did she sign, if s/he did not hear the contents now being inscribed, which do not bear her signature? She may still be in the room in the moment of the collator's inscription, but this we cannot know.

I have noted above how the subject is stabilized as "she" in the document. We also notice how Jewishness is named. First, her father is named as "Jewish by nation," while she is named as "Jewish by religion." This can be understood in several ways. The community from which Brandeau / La Fargue journeyed, Saint-Esprit, sits across the river from Bayonne, in southwest France. St-Esprit was settled by Portuguese New Christians, also known as *Conversos*. They were part of a diaspora formed as a consequence of forced

not to experience, unlike Marie-Joseph Angélique, a Portuguese-born enslaved woman originally purchased by a Flemish merchant and who ended up in New France. Angélique was accused of setting a fire that destroyed Montreal. Torture extracted a confession and she was publicly tortured and executed in 1734, four years before Brandeau's arrival. Her fate was determined by many of the same actors. See Cooper (2006) and Gale (2000).

conversions to Christianity in Portugal in 1497. The community was fed by exiles from Iberia from the 1500s onwards (Nahon 2001).⁵¹ In France, this community was known as "les Portugais," or "Portuguese by nation," a code for Jewish exiles of Portugal often named in shorthand as "la nation," by the community itself. "Les Portugais" were referred to, and referred to themselves, as a nation in the sense of what we might term now an ethnic group.⁵² In Esther Brandeau's time this community maintained an outward veneer as Catholic, but upheld Jewish practice. The French crown did not officially recognize Jews until 1723, so Christianity was the accepted religious practice. As "les Portugais"—New Christians—they were generally understood to be Jews, even if outwardly Christian in practice. In Saint-Esprit in Brandeau's time, Jews and Christians did live alongside each other, but Jews were not permitted to do business, own property, or live in Bayonne proper, and were relegated only to wholesale trade.

In the record of interrogation, Esther Brandeau's purported father David Brandeau is named as a merchant and "Jewish by nation." This may be a reflection of an understanding of Jews in the French and French colonial contexts as of this particular diaspora. It may also reflect a broader understanding of Jewishness as Other, as its own nation. Or it could use the term "nation" to denote a community of common interest, a term not necessarily reserved only for Jews. Why a naming of *her* as "Jewish by religion"? This may be intended to mean the same thing as "Jewish by nation," and/or this may reflect an understanding of Jewish difference as first and foremost a difference in religion. A group as other by *religion* might have been denoted or understood as its own *nation* because of that religious difference. But there may also be a particular strategy here in underscoring her difference as one of religion in the context of New France, particularly given the failed efforts that were made to convert her to Christianity subsequent to her outings over the course of the ensuing year before she was deported; if the difference is one of religion only, and this religion is convertible, *and* there is a shortage of women in the colony, then there is impetus for underscoring Jewish difference as convertible religious difference. Hocquart writes in one of his correspondences to the Minister about the matter, after Brandeau has been placed in the Hospitalières convent: "The chaplain of the hospital boasts of a future conversion" (ANF 1738b, 126). This of course would make clear the importance of gender to this figuration of Jewishness; Jewish difference is convertible in the case of a *biological woman*.

In the document, Esther Brandeau arrives to New France in *boys'* clothes in 1738, but begins her gender-changing adventures post-shipwreck five years earlier by departing from Biarritz for Bordeaux dressed as a *man*, and taking the name Pierre Mausiette. S/he then goes to Rennes where s/he works as a *boy* with Augustin,

51 I, like many others, use *Converso* and New Christian interchangeably, and tend not to use the term Marrano, derogatory in origin. I use *Converso* or New Christian as an umbrella term and consider all who fall within it as affiliated, regardless of degree of practice, self-identification or adherence to Jewish practice per se, e.g. to a Jewish or Jewish-descended larger community. I accept a degree of affiliation to Jewishness and the New Christian network in Brandeau, even if that degree is impossible to know definitively.

52 Here, we must be cognizant of the fact that in the early 18th century, the idea of nation was taken as a natural gathering of people with shared language, laws and place, but not a project of political will. In France, throughout the eighteenth century, the concepts of "nation" and of "*patrie*" or fatherland came to take on growing importance, critical to a rather sudden move to *nationalism* only with the approach of and realization of the French Revolution, decades after Brandeau is deported from Quebec (Bell 2001).

according to the procès-verbal. From there s/he holds various positions, and we cannot know without doubt which gender s/he assumed for each of these subsequent positions, except for the job of lackey (valet); "laquais" means male servant. Who has done the naming of their gendered embodiment within this document? That she had arrived in boys' clothes might be viewed as the scribe's or collator's naming, the circumstances of arrival a proximate, recent event in which witnesses from the same ship would be locally available. A body of witnesses knows the so-called boy passenger Jacques La Fargue and "here before us" is a female, Esther Brandeau. In the interim is an outing that connects the two, which is not described in any record, but which nevertheless lives by association in the record, unnamed and undescribed. Did s/he say "I left for Bordeaux dressed as a man?" S/he is the only available witness to this recounted event. This shift from man to boy is perhaps just a casual interchangeability, an unconscious act of the collator, but it could also be viewed as the gendered instability to be tamed by the "she." We can also think of the taming by the "she" as what Mak calls "the she story," a textual undoing where the collator and/or interrogator enacts a discursive undressing as a form of revenge vis-à-vis the female who, by passing, fraudulently usurps male power and fools them all, so to speak (Mak 1997).

I am intrigued by the relationship between what might be a co-relation between a tendency to infantilize and to feminize. Was this co-relation inscribed *by the collator himself*, under instruction, or is it *Esther / Jacques's* strategic rendering? "She placed herself as a boy" with the tailor: infantilization as masculinization, rather than as feminization, if to pass as male one has to embody younger than one's age? "About twenty," says the document. While this suggests a strategy where female masculinity can only ever be adolescent, we recall that earlier, Pierre Mausiette left for Bordeaux a man. This leaves open the possibility that Brandeau lived a range of masculinities, driven perhaps by demands of context. Filtered through the inscribing lens of the collator, we go from "dressed as a man" to arriving "in boys' clothes," and this seems an emasculation through infantilization, which is in turn—or concurrently—feminization.

Constructing a genealogy of eruptions

This document is the earliest record of the story, the means through which Esther Brandeau becomes knowable to us.⁵³ It feeds subsequent correspondence between colonial authorities in New France and in France; and between colonial authorities in New France and local authorities in Bayonne. The last of these

⁵³ But drawing on Robinson's formulation of passing as a transaction of reading (discussed later in Part I), in which a passer is visible to members of their in-group, the latter accessories to successful passing, we distinguish between visibility per se, and written documentary evidence that makes the subject visible *to us* (Robinson 1993, 1994). This dissertation is the first to compile such documentary evidence, as well as reiterations of the story from that evidence, together with original archival research particularly in France and The Netherlands. Part I builds from dossiers found at the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Jewish Public Library in Montreal, and the National Archives in Ottawa, where colonial records are reproduced from originals held in France. Historical texts are also part of this genealogy. I recognize Nathalie Ducharme who began a similar project, it seems, which produced a seven-page summary presented to the ACFAS (Association francophone pour le savoir) in 2004 overviewing where the story has appeared, and how it has been told, primarily through a male lens, save for in the work of Wendy Oberlander (Ducharme 2004). Part II adds original archival research I have conducted in France, Canada and The Netherlands, as well as site visits in these places and in Spain and Portugal.

communications is dated 1740 (ANF 1740b). Concurrent with the time period of Brandeau's stay in New France, there exists brief reference to the story—a single paragraph—in a personal letter from the former Mother Superior of the convent where Brandeau was housed in Quebec City, to a friend of said nun back in France (Duplessis 1926, 234; cited in Moogk 2000, 62).⁵⁴ This letter may contradict the Intendant who would later report to his Minister that Brandeau was outed in some capacity en route to New France (ANF 1738b, 125-126). “Le hazard a fait découvrir son état dans la traversée,” he wrote. By chance her state had been discovered during the crossing, he claimed. He would also write that she was of the disposition of converting to Christianity, and that her biggest worry was that one of her parents might arrive the following year and that she is apprehensive about giving in and going back to France with them (ibid). This was not mentioned in the record of testimony, though perhaps in a later interrogation not recorded.

While Hocquart says Brandeau was outed on the ship, where she was a passenger, Duplessis writes that Brandeau arrived as a sailor, and had been suspected on the ship of being female but that she had refused to admit it, and that later she told the Intendant that she was female. Duplessis' letter also adds information not given in the record of interrogation, nor in any of the correspondence between officials; she writes that Brandeau claimed that she had left her parents because she was not as well liked as her sister. This in turn contradicts the story given in the record of interrogation regarding whose choice it was that determined her departure from Bayonne. The testimony states that she was sent *by her parents* to Amsterdam, while Duplessis' account suggests she left on her own initiative. Duplessis would have been privvy to news within the Hospital run by the religious order of which she was a part, where Brandeau was housed subsequent to her arrival on Hocquart's orders. Additional bits and pieces of the story are to be found within the colonial correspondence between the Intendant and officials in France, but Duplessis' letter in concert with Hocquart's points to multiple versions of the story, an instability which may or may not travel as the story itself travels through the eruptions delineated here.

While an archival review of popular newspapers in France has yet to be undertaken, no further reference is made in official and/or public sources about the story from the time of last of the official correspondences pertaining to Brandeau's fate, dating from 1740, for another 146 years, as far as I know (ANF 1740b). In the earliest comprehensive written histories of the colony of New France dating to 1845, François-Xavier Garneau makes no mention of the case (Garneau 1856).⁵⁵ In 1886, the newly appointed first state archivist of the Dominion of Canada tables a report in English on his study of colonial archives in France and in England. In the report, archivist Brymner singles out what he sees as remarkable stories of the early colonial period, and highlights Brandeau's as one among these (Brymner 1887, xxxiii-xxxv). The contents of the original colonial documents will be the source material for this and later reiterations of the tale in subsequent eras. Secondary iterations will in turn

⁵⁴ This letter was among many Sister Duplessis wrote and received, these found in an archive of a cloth trader in Paris in the 1960s.

⁵⁵ I thank historian Jacques Mathieu for confirming that no mention is made of the story, to the best of his knowledge, between the time of its inscription in the colonial record to the release of the Brymner Report in 1886 (Jacques Mathieu, pers. comm.). Neither Mathieu nor I have found mention of Brandeau in the works of Garneau. I thank Leslie Choquette for pointing me to Jacques Mathieu.

become source material themselves for further iterations.

Scholar of New France Leslie Choquette notes in passing the "legendary status" of the story of Esther Brandeau among historians of New France in her *Frenchman Into Peasants* (1997, 137),⁵⁶ though the story seems to appear primarily in history works concerned specifically with Jewish history, regardless of when the scholars date the onset of Jewish life in what is now Canada.⁵⁷ Some authors repeat the contents of the archival records, others mention the tale in passing. Tulchinsky refers to the story as "probably apocryphal" (1992, 14). In 1891 Édouard Zotique Massicotte publishes in Montreal's *Le monde illustré* and *Bulletin des recherches historiques* an article entitled "Les frasques d'Esther Brandeau"⁵⁸ that transcribes the testimony (Massicotte 1891, also quoted in Ducharme 2004, 3-4). In 1924 a short article appears in Montreal's main French language newspaper, *La Presse*, which reiterates the contents of the colonial archives in reference to Brandeau, preceded by an introduction in which the unnamed author draws attention to the underused richness to be found in the colonial archives, then apparently only pursued by select scholars (*La Presse* 1924). The 1924 *La Presse* article may be the first time the story is broadly shared with a francophone non-Jewish public. A 1926 publication entitled *The Jew in Canada*, by and for the Canadian Jewish community, tells the community's history and gives biographies of its notable figures (Hart 1926).⁵⁹ The story of Esther Brandeau appears on page three, following a recounting of earlier stories of purported "Marranos" who came to New France prior to Esther Brandeau's arrival. The historical introduction given in *The Jew in Canada* was written by Benjamin Sack (Sack 1926; 1945, v).

In 1930, Pierre George Roy summarizes the story in his history of Quebec City under the Ancien Régime, *La Ville de Québec sous le Régime Français*, citing Joseph Marmette in the *Rapport sur les archives Canadiennes de 1886* (Roy 1930, 147-148), otherwise known as the Brymner Report, for which Marmette was credited as the Assistant Archivist. Subsequent to these reiterations, for the next several decades, retellings of the Brandeau story seem to appear primarily if not exclusively within the Jewish community, in journals, newspapers and in Jewish histories of Canada, in Yiddish and in English (Goldstick 1938, n.d.; Berman 1939).⁶⁰ In 1945 journalist Benjamin Sack's *The History of the Jews in Canada: From the Earliest Beginnings to the Present Day*, translated from the Yiddish, is published by the Canadian Jewish Congress (Sack 1945).⁶¹ According to historian

56 I thank Leslie Choquette for clarifying this reference to legendary status among New France scholars. Her characterization was based on responses from senior scholars to Choquette's conversational mention of the story; all knew the story (Leslie Choquette, pers. comm).

57 The bicentennial of Canadian Jewry was celebrated in 1959, though most date first *organized* Jewish life in Canada to 1760. The choice of 1759 for celebration had to do with negotiating that 1960 would mark 200 years since what French Canadians perceive as British Conquest. Quebec Jews would want not to be associated with Conquest, particularly considering the circulating myth that Jews financed the fall of New France, which is part and parcel of a broader myth of international Jewish finance (Menkis 1992, 32).

58 "The Escapades of Esther Brandeau" (my translation).

59 Now and Then Books reissued the book in softcover in 2011. My paternal great-grandfather is included here, an immigrant to New Brunswick then Toronto, as are relatives of my paternal great-grandmother, immigrants to Montreal.

60 These reflect an Ashkenaz dominance. I thank the archivists of the Jewish Public Library in Montreal for assistance with translation. The Berman article along with its citation listed on a cue card and a typed transcript marked in ink with corrections are found in the Esther Brandeau dossier of the Canadian Jewish Archives, Montreal.

61 Tulchinsky notes that the text was originally written in Yiddish and published in 1948 in Montreal. The English version that I have of Vol. I is dated as 1945, with no translator listed. A 1965 edition exists, published by Harvest House, Montreal. Of note, Menkis addresses the circulation of "the intellectual steeplechase to prove longevity in the land" within Sack's texts, and refers to Sack's work

Gerald Tulchinsky, Sack had planned a much more comprehensive study, but working in his spare time without funding, he was unable to complete the project (xiii).⁶² Sack's characterization of the Brandeau story introduces new descriptors to Brandeau, which may be a consequence of translation from Yiddish to French to English. He writes: "This passenger had attracted considerable attention until the remarkable discovery was made that the comely, spirited youth whose manners were so refined was in fact no "Jacques" but "Esther"—Esther Brandeau" (Sack 1945, 22). This is the only record in which I find the words "comely" and "spirited" used to describe Brandeau. You will note that he also refers to Brandeau as a passenger as in the original testimony, not as a sailor as did Duplessis.

There is a small burst of attention given to the story between 1959 and 1963, in Jewish papers (Wisse 1959; Canadian Jewish Congress 1959; The Flash 1960).⁶³ ⁶⁴ In 1968, Quebec historian Denis Vaugeois publishes *Les Juifs et la Nouvelle-France* (Vaugeois 1968). These dates are significant. Contemporary historian of the Canadian Jewish community Gerald Tulchinsky claims 1768 as the beginning of Jewish communal life in Canada with the founding of the first synagogue in Montreal, and opens his history of Canadian Jewry with that date. The publication of Vaugeois' book then falls on the 200th anniversary. But 1759 also serves as a foundational moment of Canadian Jewry, when Jews arrived as openly Jewish—the first time Jews could be so in the colony—with the British army. Vaugeois himself claims the Hart Family of Quebec as the first Jews in North America, and dates the beginnings to 1760 (Vaugeois 2012). French control of the colony of New France would be lost to the British in 1759, and officially ceded in 1763. The year 1959 was celebrated as the "Bicentenary of Canadian Jewry," as stated the subtitle of an issue of a Toronto Jewish Bulletin (*The Flash*).

Betraying a masculinist disciplinarian stance, Vaugeois dismisses the Brandeau story as foundational of a Jewish community in Canada in the following way in his most recent publication about the Hart family of Quebec:

Numerous historians have set out to trace the beginnings of the Jewish presence in New France. The story of Esther Brandeau, a pitiful young woman who fled to Quebec, has been told many times, but for serious scholars, Aaron Hart and Samuel Jacobs were clearly the first (Vaugeois 2012, 31).

as "integrationist apologetic" noting that Sack was "one of the few to attempt to bridge the isolation between Jewish and non-Jewish Québécois" (Menkis 1991, 28-29), pointing to the influence of local politics vis-à-vis Jewish life as they influenced Sack's work.

62 Tulchinsky gives an overview of historical works about Jewish history of Canada in his preface (1992, viii-x).

63 The article published in the Canadian Jewish Congress Bulletin in 1959 is reprinted in Flash, 1960.

64 Notably, a story about Brandeau written by Ruth Wisse in *Le bulletin du cercle juif* (Wisse 1959) is positioned in the newspaper's layout the page after a review of a popular Quebec novel of the day by Yves Thériault titled *Agaguk*, in which the emerging freedoms of secularization and sexual liberation are played out on the land and bodies of *Inuit* people in conflict with white settler society (Thériault 1958). One could argue it as a form of dress-rehearsing sought-for freedoms through the bodies of Indigenous people. *Agaguk* won the Grand Prix of Quebec the year of its publication, was reissued in 1992 and has been translated into many languages. It is the first in Thériault's "Eskimo trilogy." While this chapter takes steps to place representations of the Brandeau / La Fargue story in the context of Indigenous sovereignty, future work is needed analyzing the relationship between timing of eruptions into visibility, agendas of creators of representations of the story, socio-political debates of the time in question and implications for sovereignty debates.

Leaving aside the characterization of “pitiful” which we will see travels over the centuries in various iterations, there is as yet no conclusive evidence that Brandeau “fled” to Quebec.

In 1959, the first article about Brandeau written by a woman appears. Ruth Wisse is its author and the article appears in the francophone *Bulletin du cercle Juif* (Wisse 1959). Like Ducharme who undertook a preliminary gathering of iterations of the story of Esther Brandeau prior to myself, Wisse starts with the story of Shakespeare's Viola from *Twelfth Night*, whose story begins with a shipwreck and who subsequently is disguised as a eunuch. Wisse would go on to develop a Jewish studies program at McGill University, where she received her doctorate in 1969, and to teach Yiddish Literature and Comparative Literature at Harvard. In 1963, the second known woman to contend with the story, Gitelle Goldwater Betnesky also of Montreal, pitches a half hour television adaptation to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which is subsequently rejected (Betnesky 1963-66).⁶⁵ As far as I know, the CBC will not attend to the story until a seven minute radio short it made in 2006 airs in English in 2007 (Bossé 2007).

In the mid 1980s articles appear again here and there in reference to the story, targeted to Jewish audiences and beyond. A 1983 article in the national newspaper *The Globe and Mail*, for example, draws attention to the publication of the first Canadian Jewish Women's Who's Who (*The Globe*). The article quotes the conclusion to the entry on Esther Brandeau as follows: "Clearly there are many hurdles yet to be overcome by Jewish women, both inside their own community and within Canadian society at large. In this difficult and challenging world Canadian Jewish women would do well to emulate Esther Brandeau. A little chutzpah couldn't hurt."⁶⁶ The article notes the consistent absence of women from the pages of biographies published by the Canadian Jewish community since its 1926 edition, *The Jew in Canada*, referenced above. A recent reference to Brandeau appears in a popular history of Jewish Montreal. Author Joe King gives a history of Jews in Canada as the introductory backdrop to his *Fabled City: The Jews of Montreal*, in which he offers a brief summary of the Brandeau tale, with his own spin. "Quite possibly," he writes, "Brandeau had made the hazardous journey to rejoin a (secretly Jewish) boyfriend" (King 2009, 3). There is no evidence for this claim.

In 1983, a Canadian Jewish News article announces the making of a film about the story and the filmmakers' ambitions of premiering it at Cannes Film Festival, but I have found no trace of such a film (Brodie 1983). The article cites Montrealer George Amsellem as co-producer in collaboration with an Israeli studio, Na'im Katan as script-writer and Francis Mankiewicz as director. A short article appears in the *Montreal Gazette* in 1987, the major mainstream English language paper of the city (Schnurmacher 1987). The author refers to Brandeau as "Canada's answer to Yentl," and urges the making of a film about the story, much the same way the author of the 1926 French language article presents the story as waiting for a novel. This article attests to the absence of any

⁶⁵ Gitelle Goldwater Betnesky graduated with a BA from McGill University in 1934, and passed in 2003 (McGill Alumni Quarterly).

⁶⁶ Whether the suggestion is that Brandeau's cunning and courage and/or defense of her Jewishness are to be emulated, or her passing as male is to be emulated, or both, is not entirely clear.

film on the story, despite promises circulated a few years earlier. In a 1986 issue of *Viewpoints*, a newspaper of the Canadian Jewish Congress, a short fiction adapting the story of Esther Brandeau appears, written by then head of the Literature section of the Canada Council for the Arts and prolific Quebec author, the same Naïm Kattan as above (Kattan 1986). He will go on to head up the Canada Council for the Arts. It seems the article in *Viewpoints* comes six years after a 126-page script he wrote, commissioned by the National Film Board of Canada, for a film to be directed by Jacques Bensimon (Kattan 1980). The film is set primarily within the Hospitalières convent and hospital in Quebec City. It blurs eras as it presents a patient who will not reveal her name but who apparently is the victim of domestic violence. She takes on the persona of Esther Brandeau when she comes across the story in the convent library's archives, and steals its pages. This is the hospital where Brandeau was housed after her outings. The character is also in possession of a journal written by Esther Brandeau, and the film intentionally blurs across eras, so that it may well be that the main protagonist is Esther Brandeau. According to scriptwriter Kattan, the project was too expensive for the NFB so they did not pursue it and the film was never made.⁶⁷

Author and radio personality Bill Richardson will introduce Esther as Canada's foundational eccentric in his creative non-fiction gathering of stories of Canadian eccentrics living and dead. His is an overtly queer rendering that finds Esther and a Toronto drag queen filling its early pages, and he solves the mystery of Esther Brandeau's fate by sending her back to France, where she becomes a rabbi (Richardson 1997).⁶⁸ Richardson's inclusion of Brandeau as a foundational Canadian eccentric suggests to me that while the figure of Esther Brandeau does not loom large in the Canadian imagination, if at all, the story does appear more frequently than I had previously thought. Richardson renders comedic and hopeful details from the historical records, and delivers her into older age as a rabbi. He writes for example: "I wonder if Esther might not have been teasing her tribunal with her "give me pork chops or give me death" story..." and "Hocquart and his cronies found her fickle and flighty, for sure, and finally they just gave up and packed her back across the Atlantic ... There is no record of what she wore as a going-away ensemble" (Richardson 1997, 23-24).

It is in 2000 that the first major fictionalization of the story of Esther Brandeau appears, eighty years after that 1924 proposal in *La Presse*, with the publication of Pierre Lasry's award-winning novel *Esther : une juive en Nouvelle-France*, which he self-translated to English under the title *Esther: A Jewish Odyssey* (Lasry 2000, 2002).⁶⁹ In 2001, Esther Brandeau appears in a children's book entitled *Girls Who Rocked The World*, which features short biographies of various Canadian female figures over time, indicating the emerging role of the story as a mentoring tale for girls and young women today (Kyi 2001). In 2003 B.C. video artist Wendy Oberlander

67 Bensimon, who died in 2012, headed the National Film Board from 2001-2006. I thank Naïm Kattan for clarifying this, and for directing me to the NFB project with Bensimon. Kattan says the Amsellem film project did not go anywhere (Naïm Kattan, pers. comm.).

68 Richardson's work is listed in *Gay Canada: A Bibliography and Videography, 1984-2008* (Spence 2009) with special reference to three eccentrics he includes who are either gay or cross-dressers, though Richardson's eccentrics are chosen for all sorts of reasons.

69 Lasry won a J.J. Segal Award in 2003 for the book.

produces an installation called *Translating Esther* at a Jewish cultural institution in Toronto, the Koffler Centre of the Arts, after having produced in 2001 with Sarah Leavitt a small Purim celebration staging of the tale, in which the nuns were played by men in drag (Oberlander 2003; Warland 2003; Ducharme 2004). In 2004, Ontario anglophone children's author Sharon McKay publishes an award-winning novel for teens entitled *Esther*.⁷⁰ In 2008, writer Susan Hughes and graphic artist Willow Dawson publish a short graphic anthology for children called *No Girls Allowed*, about famous cross-dressing women from history (Hughes and Dawson 2008). Among seven illustrated stories across eras and continents is that of Esther Brandeau.⁷¹

In the same year, working with Quebec historian Denis Vaugeois, cited earlier, and anthropologist Pierre Antil, Montreal filmmaker Shelley Tepperman writes and directs a documentary of the Jewish history of Quebec City in which Esther Brandeau figures prominently (Tepperman 2008). It will air in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of Quebec celebrations, on Quebec's Canal D TV. In 2007, I presented my own performance work based on the Brandeau story for the first time publicly in Toronto (Hermant 2007a, 2007b).⁷² In 2010 I performed a gallery installation performance at Tremors Festival, Vancouver and premiered a main-stage production entitled *ribcage: this wide passage* in Montreal at Le MAI (Montréal Arts Interculturels) (Hermant 2010a, 2010b). *ribcage* was adapted to a "one-to-one" performance at Rhubarb Festival, Toronto, in 2012, subsequently presented at the 8th European Feminist Research Conference in Budapest in the same year (Hermant 2012a, Hermant 2012b).⁷³ In August 2012 a third novel based on the story of Esther Brandeau entitled *The Tale-Teller* was published by Toronto poet and fiction writer Susan Glickman (Glickman 2012). In May 2013, I performed the translation of *ribcage* to French by Nadine Desrochers, entitled *thorax : une cage en éclats* at AKI Studio Theatre in Toronto, in a weekend that also included a presentation of the (mostly) English original (Hermant 2013e). *thorax* and *ribcage* are the first touring main stage theatre productions based on the story. *ribcage* was presented by Vancouver's Firehall Arts Centre as part of its 2014-2015 season, in March 2015 (Hermant 2015).

I have constructed a history as a series of eruptions of attention to the story, assembling what we might

70 McKay's awards will be listed when the book comes under deeper analysis later in the chapter.

71 The story is condensed to eleven cartoon pages, beginning with a context of persecuted Jews in France, and the moment of Esther's departure by ship for Amsterdam, through to her outing in Quebec. Details from the archival testimony and narrative choices taken from McKay's novel guide the story, particularly Esther / Jacques' essential desire to be a woman, with Jacques and Pierre as temporary persona and means to an end. A narrator reveals the instability of the archival testimony and its gaps by use of "perhaps" to speculate on the possibilities of Esther's actions. We have a first person voice for Brandeau alongside a narrator's voice, such that an inner life is partially crafted for readers in ways similar to how such a voice is crafted in McKay's novel, as we will see. The black and white illustrations realize an ambiguity of physical markers of gender through stylized drawing of faces, many of which seem interchangeable. Nothing about Esther's face makes her particularly female or Jewish. Jewish difference is underscored through Jewish men's dress. Gender distinctions are achieved through dress, and sometimes through a circular form on the cheek of some female characters. Freedom is the central reason for cross-dressing for "this adventurous young woman" (Hughes and Dawson 2008, 48).

72 At PoetryProcessPerformance, Drake Hotel, Toronto, February 2007, curated by Jill Battson, and at Gibraltar Point International Artist Residency Open House, Toronto Island, June 2007.

73 A one-to-one performance is when a performer performs for one audience member at a time. Rhubarb Festival is hosted by Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, one of the only professional queer theatres in the world. The piece was initially called "Aujourd'hui 15e septembre 1738..." A version entitled *Aujourd'hui / This Day / Hoje / Hoy, 1738* was performed in São Paulo, Brazil in January 2013 (Hermant 2013d).

call a selected genealogy of visibility. There are two key periods in Canada of interest during which eruptions of the story concentrate: the first period centres around 1959-1960, a period which catalyzed major political developments in Canada over the next decade; and the early 21st century. The first eruption in the year 1959, which was marked as the bicentennial of Judaism in Canada, coincides with the introduction of the Bill of Rights by then Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, a statute that heralds the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms enshrined in the Canadian constitution. This was a year before Aboriginal people in Canada were granted the right to vote. Women had won the vote in 1918. The Bill of Rights would be the precursor to the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms enshrined in the Canadian constitution. This would also be concurrent with the “Quiet Revolution” in Quebec, when Quebec's public institutions became unhinged from the churches eg. secularization and Quebec's inscribing of itself as a social democracy.

The second period encompasses the first decade of the 21st century. This period is of course marked by, if not inaugurated by the attacks of September 11th, 2001. We have seen the subsequent turn to anti-terror policy and the rise of Islamophobia in the West. In Canada, we saw a Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America directly as a consequence of 9/11. The first decade of the 21st century marks a major consolidation of a revitalized political right in Canada, a weakening and eventual loss of power by the Liberal party in 2006 and the rise of Stephen Harper as Prime Minister.⁷⁴ In terms of Quebec politics, we see the defeat of the separatist Parti Québécois in 2003 eight years after the failed separation referendum, and four years later we see the climax of the reasonable accommodations crisis in that province, leading to a public inquiry. The debate over belonging, religious freedoms, individual rights and gender equality largely pitted *de souche* Quebecers, the ethnic group recognized as a nation above, against immigrants.⁷⁵ In Canada during this first decade of the 21st century, we also see in parallel a steady, consistent province-by-province legalization of same-sex marriage, which ultimately reaches the national Supreme Court resulting in marriage equality made law in 2005 with the endorsement of two churches.

Thus, it is a time of much activity and contention around immigration, belonging and equal rights in Quebec and the country as a whole, themes that are front and centre in fact in both periods. These are generalized overviews of periods during which I contend that the Esther Brandeau story circulates anew. Consideration of the socio-political contexts places these eruptions in an evolving political discourse of multiculturalism, rights of minorities and individual rights more broadly, and within the specificities of Quebec

74 This loss was fueled partly by a scandal related to Liberal government corruption in marketing itself to Quebec in the wake of the 1995 referendum vote on Quebec independence. Among Harper's orders of business in his first year in office was a federal apology for the Chinese Head Tax (Harper 2006; National Post). The tax was in effect from 1885-1923 and intended to restrict Chinese immigration. A Chinese Exclusion Act banned Chinese immigration 1923-1947. Harper also tabled a motion, passed in the House of Commons, recognizing the Québécois ethnic group as a nation within Canada (CBC News 2006). In 2008, Harper's government issued an apology for the residential school system, which removed Aboriginal children from their families as a strategy of assimilation (Harper 2008). In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission completed its work investigating the impacts of the residential schools (Truth and Reconciliation 2015). Harper lost the 2015 federal election to Justin Trudeau's Liberals.

75 See Bouchard and Taylor (2008) for the outcome of the public inquiry into the reasonable accommodations debate.

proper, and suggests the relationship between iterations of the story in cultural production, and questions of rights, difference and nationhood.

What will follow in this chapter is a close analysis of two cultural productions, in an effort to understand how and to what purpose the Brandeau story has been deployed. I am interested in whether and how the multicrosser—one who crosses along several axes at once—can be known and represented by examining specific objects of cultural production that make the story visible and knowable centuries after the purported events themselves. At the same time, I am interested in examining how concerns with otherness and defiance, and more specifically, with settler belonging and its policing across the centuries unfold in these contemporary renderings of the story. I am particularly interested in the interplay between gender passing, and passing across religion entwined with “nation,” in the context of physical movement from colonial metropole to periphery, and between the urban and the rural.

Analysis of contemporary works

It could be argued that historical fiction's main mission is to speak to and of the present, predicated as it is on a proposed continuity with, and progression from the past.⁷⁶ Its creation is embedded in and feeds the "structures of feeling"—to use Raymond Williams' phrase—of the time and location of its creation (Williams 1977, 128-135). Like all cultural output, it stands on and feeds the geological layers of what Edward Saïd calls "the cultural archive" (Saïd 1994, xxiii, 59).⁷⁷ In historical fiction, the present and the past meet through representation. An analysis of this productive intersection will show how the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, the story of a multicrosser as I have characterized them, has travelled from first eruption into what I will call *registers of knowability* via inscription in a colonial era archival record and into the present day, where it has catalysed creative productions such as the ones to come under analysis. In what service and to what effect has this historical tale been retold in the current century?

One must consider the stated intention of the work relative to the broader cultural landscape in which it is both embedded and into which it inserts itself, and one must look at the perhaps unconscious ways in which a work builds and circulates its intended and unintended discourses, the uncovering of which is the intention of Mieke Bal's narratological method of textual analysis, an almost mathematical breakdown, a laying out of the inner workings of a narrative to better understand its effects (Bal 1985). Narratology, writes Bal, "posits a connection between narrative structure and epistemic meaning, and as such, is *telling*" (Bal 1993, 318, author's italics). Strategies of narratology are applied in what follows, in concert with a cultural studies approach that is informed by

⁷⁶ While it might be more accurate to use the phrase "creative non-fiction" in the sense that the works under analysis imagine from historical evidence, I use "historical fiction" as this is commonly understood as a bringing to life through fiction actual historical events.

⁷⁷ Saïd argued that "the intellectual and aesthetic investment in overseas dominion" are made in "the great cultural archive" (1994, xxi). This cues us to look at how intellectual and aesthetic processes and outcomes build structures of feeling, negotiated, produced, reproduced and changed in social, intellectual and aesthetic domains. Williams defined structure of feeling as "social experiences in solution," and "as firm and definite as 'structure' suggests ... it operates in the most delicate and least tangible part of our activities" (J. Taylor 2010, 671). Underscoring this barely tangible arena of feeling paved the way for the "affective turn" in the academy.

feminist, queer, decolonial and Indigenous scholarship.⁷⁸ I follow the critical attentions demonstrated by Bal, as well as by scholars of literature attending to literary representation as it relates to, circulates and intervenes in colonialisms. In particular, Toni Morrison's attention to the abstract Africanist figure in the construction of American literature (1992); Jodi A. Byrd's attention to the Indigenous figure as a transit of empire in literary and theoretical writing (2011); and Sarah Casteel's and others' efforts to invoke the multiple experiences of 1492, bringing literary representations of Jewish, Black and Indigenous difference into the comparative conversation (Casteel 2012; Halevi-Wise 2012; Kandiyoti 2012). Together these thinkers foreground multiple hauntings, and propose architectures of conversation to destabilize Eurocentrism.

In her brief work *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, Morrison looks to canonical American literature and challenges the literary critical assumption that Africans and then African-Americans "had no significant place or consequence in the origin and development of [American] culture's literature" (Morrison 1992, 5). She examines the creation of what she calls an "Africanist persona," an abstracted utilitarian Black presence, as central to the project of American literature. Morrison shows how "through the way white writers peopled their work with the signs and bodies of this presence—one can see that a real or fabricated Africanist presence was crucial to their sense of Americanness" (Morrison, 1992: 6). She offers that a study of "literary blackness" can reveal the nature—even the cause—of literary "whiteness" (9), an analysis akin to an ethnography of the white psyche (Doane 1991; Wekker 2016). She identifies a series of linguistic strategies employed in the fiction she studies (67-69) and proposes new readings of such devices in order to "avert the critical gaze from the racial object to the racial subject; from the described and imagined to the describers and imaginers" (90). She shows how through for example, condensed stereotype, metonymic displacement, de-historicized allegory and repetition (67-69), white writers systematically create and use American Africanism as a vehicle for meditating on the so-called larger questions of human freedom and the self, thus revealing the "parasitic nature of white freedom" (57). She is interested in how the founding contradiction of the United States—slavery concurrent with the pursuit of freedom—appears in the literary canon. Morrison has demonstrated how what haunts a literature, and is so central to it, needs to be a starting point for reconsidering that literature, as part of a broader project of understanding history.

In a similar manner, Jodi A. Byrd has traced the Indigenous figure—whether absented, hypervisible or deflected—as a central trope in a variety of genres, from Shakespeare to critical theory to the current affective turn in the Academy—as sites of the transit of empire (Byrd 2011). Sarah Casteel has made an intervention in literary studies to build on scholarship bringing into comparative conversation representations of Jewishness and of

⁷⁸ Indigenous scholars have challenged the supremacy of narratological and other methods of literary analysis, arguing instead for methods that are derived from the nature and intentions of the creations themselves, and the worldviews in which they are embedded (Tuhiwai Smith 2012 [1999]; Womack 1999). It is indeed important to ask whether the methods I have chosen derive from the forms created by the authors. On this front I would suggest that what I might term a midrashic approach to the novels mentioned might yield particular forms of knowledge, especially in the case of Lasry's novel. Elaboration of such an approach is beyond the scope of this dissertation. I leave *detailed* analysis of Lasry's novel(s) out of this dissertation, even as I stress its significance and influence in the creation of McKay's *Esther*, and for that matter, my own creative and scholarly work. It merits, in short, post-doctoral work.

Blackness in North American literature; she looks to Indigenous writers' representations of Jewishness, and elaborates the importance of Sephardism—which she defines as an invocation of Sephardic experience that compares and connects histories—to a broadening contextualization of intertwined but different impacts of "race" ideologies (Casteel 2012).

The two works to be analyzed below were published in 2004 and 2008 respectively, marking the first time the story has been converted into creative cultural production for wide dissemination, moving beyond reiterations of the colonial documents in newspapers and history texts. These works are Sharon E. McKay's novel for young people entitled *Esther* (2004) and Shelley Tepperman's documentary entitled *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter* (2008).⁷⁹ I have chosen McKay's and Tepperman's works because of the significant parallels and contrasts in their deployment of historical fiction. I intend to show how such works—across seemingly disparate genre, content and intent—operate each with its own set of interconnected themes and intended audiences, to make specific claims about tolerance and freedom of choice, and what is obscured or foreclosed in the process.

McKay's novel follows many of the details in the archival record of testimony to stage the life of Esther Brandeau from childhood in the Jewish quarter of Saint-Esprit through to Quebec City, and imagines into these details a very readable story about a girl seeking the freedoms of boys, and of Christians. I would characterize McKay's novel as an example of an inclination to cultural assimilation through the language of tolerance and equality. I would characterize Lasry's novel, which begins earlier, in the period of forced exodus from Iberia, as a counter-assimilationist text in which the assertion of Jewishness as difference coincides with his character Esther's departure from and thus suggested rejection of the colony and of the dominant culture. Both novels affirm, in different ways, to different ends and for different audiences, Esther's authentic femininity as essentialized within a reified heteronormativity. McKay's *Esther* puts to use the story of an 18th century multicrosser in order to champion individual choice through girls' rights and the merits of interculturality. She does so at the expense of Esther's possible masculinity. Further she does so at the expense of access to Jewish community, such that Jewishness for Esther is nostalgia.

Less obvious in Lasry's novel, but to me perhaps the novel's most interesting effect, is its championing of a specifically Jewish masculinity, an othered masculinity that Daniel Boyarin and others contend requires resuscitation from colonisation by white heteronormativity (Boyarin 1997; Levitt 1997). Lasry's affirmation of the value of a Jewish masculinity is arrived at utterly dependent upon Esther's heteronormative femininity. His is a novel grounded in the concept of *tehouvah*, or return to the Jewish faith, a return entwined with heterosexual union to which Esther is headed at the end of his novel. Thus, not only is the colony and the colonial mainstream rejected in Lasry's rendering but so is the condition of the *Converso*, the New Christian, which can only be a less desirable between condition.

⁷⁹ I have not chosen Pierre Lasry's rendering of the story in his novel *Esther : une juive en Nouvelle-France* (2000), from which McKay's rendering seems to borrow many details, though I do offer here some brief comparative analysis. Susan Glickman's *The Tale-Teller* (2012) became available after I had made my selection for analysis and had already written this chapter.

McKay's novel also crafts particular registers of masculinity, which are central to how not just femininity and heterosexuality are produced but also how Jewishness is produced. McKay's novel, intended for a broad youth audience, affirms the centrality of religious faith through a cross-religious similarity that blunts the edges of difference, while Lasry's novel affirms the story's specificity as a Jewish story anchored in Jewish religious themes. Both novels foreclose the possibility of multicrossing community, a community of multicrossers who also take on simultaneous crossings as did Brandeau / La Fargue. I will elaborate on multicrossing community later.

Shelley Tepperman's documentary entitled *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter* (2008) traces the history of Quebec City Jewry. It centres the story of Esther Brandeau by having her play a central character in a magic realist documentary narrated through the encounter between a young female protagonist and an elder male antique store owner. Their relationship allows for the telling of the Jewish history of Quebec City, and makes a claim of central presence of Jews in Quebec since the founding of the colonial city. The central character of Rosie is revealed to be a time-traveling Esther Brandeau in the final moments of the documentary. The issue of passing from Jewish to Christian is, in this appearance of Brandeau, central, while the question of gender passing is marginal. The main issue is the centrality of Jews to Quebec City's history, and its audience is intended to be first and foremost an adult Quebec audience.

Part of what is interesting about works of historical fiction is whether and how creators navigate a tug between so-called "historical accuracy" and speaking to a contemporary audience, and in McKay's case, to a young audience at that. Such works are an effort in translation across eras. Where scholars are implored to historicize, novelists have creative license. Creative works sometimes explicitly tread this negotiation, while often they do not. These authors who contend with the story of Esther Brandeau do assert a commitment to "historical accuracy," in McKay's case through a statement in the afterward, and in Lasry's case, through clear evidence of thorough historical research as exemplified by the rich and highly accurate historical detail in his narrative. Their narratives assume progress toward the present. The authors signal the historical context in which the story takes place not through a representation of self-hood that may be radically different from the present, but rather through reference to historical events, dates, descriptions of dress, modes of travel and systems of governance and societal structures that are marked as of the distant past. Sometimes they craft of a manner of speech that is exoticized as old fashioned. McKay, further, intersperses French words and place names where English translations are available in order to signal the historical context as different, which tends to exoticize Frenchness in the process. Tepperman's docu-fiction functions slightly differently in its assertion of historical accuracy. Because of the expectation of their respective genres, the docu- side of the docu-fiction demands historical accuracy in a way that a novel does not. Tepperman asserts historical accuracy through the expert interviewees, who are very much embedded in the present. Her fictional characters are presented in bodies, dress and manners as also embedded in the present. But they are clearly fictional characters whose utterances are claims on history that are backed by the expert knowledge of the interviewees.

In all of the creative works produced about this story, other than my own, there is no use of "s/he" or of "them" to identify the person in question.⁸⁰ Their creators refer to this historical tale as that of Esther Brandeau, while I myself am alone in referring to it as the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. This metonymic inclination to multitude reveals my own 21st century lens—perhaps of desiring reading—of an 18th century tale. Such an inclination affirms the *possibility* of multiplicity within a single life story, and underpins a desire to tell what has been iterated as a highly binary-gendered settler origin story in a way that enables reading the story through queer feminist decolonial imaginings, even as such imaginings are absent/absented, as we will see.⁸¹

Sharon McKay's *Esther*

Overview

I begin my analysis with arguably the most widely distributed of the above named works, Sharon E. McKay's novel for young readers, *Esther* (2004). I first place this novel within the context of a history of cross-dressing literature for young people, and within a context of post-colonial settler narratives for young people. I will then pay particular attention to how the narrative structure, system of focalization and accumulation of description function to circulate ideas about gender, social standing, age, religion and race, colonisation and land, in the (re)telling of an historical tale of what I have called a *multicrosser*. I will show how the novel produces, circulates and contends with "doubted identity/ies" (Mak 2012), and I will show how these function in an intertwined fashion to essentialize certain categories in the service of a universal message of tolerance. I will do so especially by paying attention to moments of passing, of doubting and of outing. Finally, I will evaluate the novel in relation to an overall aim of the dissertation, which is to imagine what might constitute a decolonial telling of this historical life.

I contend that McKay 1) maintains the stability of Esther's femaleness, Esther's *desire to be* both female and Jewish, and Esther's heterosexuality; 2) reproduces ambiguity around how one knows "Jewishness" through simultaneously affirming racialized readings *and* suggesting Jewishness as not necessarily biologically derived; 3) universalizes Esther's story as one about freedom of religion and freedom from gendered societal limitations, in other words as individual freedom of choice; 4) does the above against a haunted landscape in which the enslaved and the Indigenous silently appear and then are narrationally disappeared; and 5) predicates the story on the absence of Jewish and multicrossing community for the protagonist.

Sharon McKay is a well-known, widely awarded and published Canadian children's author, with a particular interest in historical fiction for young people. Her titles have ranged from Canadian history to war, peace and concern for the international rights of the child, with an overarching, recurring theme of intercultural

⁸⁰ Pierre Lasry in his novel switches between "she" and "he." Bill Richardson, in his comedic rendering, stays with "she" while recounting the historical record, but switches to "he" when imagining an ending in which Brandeau becomes a rabbi (Richardson 1997, 24).

⁸¹ How to embed the complexity of crossings other than gender in my naming the multicrosser is more challenging, though signalled in the two names in so far as one might read Jewishness into the name Esther, or *conversa/Sephardic* into Brandeau. One could easily include Brandão/Brandon/Brandeau amid forward-slashes, spellings across languages and archives, which embed distinct geographies. Referring to Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue is partly a compromise to avoid a cumbersome list. There was also a third name, Pierre Mausiette. I choose Jacques La Fargue because it was his outing that erupted the story into view.

understanding explored through relationships between young people across differences. An overview of her most recognized titles indicate her interests: The *Charlie Wilcox* books (2003a; 2003b) follow a young boy from Newfoundland who hopes to travel on a sealing ship but accidentally ends up in the trenches of World War I.⁸² Four *Penelope* novels in an historical fiction series for girls published by Penguin Canada called “Our Canadian Girl” follow the tale of a girl from Halifax during the same so-called Great War as it was known in its time, or World War I (2001, 2002). McKay was also a Canadian War Artist embedded for one month with the Canadian armed forces in Afghanistan in 2009. *Thunder Over Kandahar*, told through friendship between two girls, was the resulting novel (2010). Other recent titles have included *War Brothers* (2009), a novel set in Uganda about child soldiers; and *Enemy Territory* (2012), in which two teenaged boys, one Israeli and one Palestinian, meet because of their injuries in a Jerusalem hospital and set out on an adventure together.

McKay has also collaborated with author Kathy Kacer, a child of Holocaust survivors, to produce the *Whispers* series: three collections telling the stories of Holocaust survivors, underscoring McKay's interest in Jewish subject matter (Kacer and McKay 2009a-c).⁸³ A non-Jewish author herself, born in Montreal of Irish descent, McKay has said that she first came across the story of Esther Brandeau in an article in *The Montreal Gazette* (Jenkinson 2005).⁸⁴ McKay saw the Brandeau story's potential as a novel and says she tried to convince several other writers to take it on, writers she felt were better equipped than she (presumably because they were Jewish though she doesn't specifically say). As she tells it, when no one she prompted seemed interested, she decided to write it herself (Jenkinson 2005).

Esther, written in English, was nominated for the Governor General's Award in Children's Fiction in 2004, the most prestigious national award in Canada. *Esther* was one of the 183 novels nominated in the children's fiction category.⁸⁵ *Esther* was also nominated for a number of other awards in Canada and the US, including the Canadian Library Association Young Adult Canadian Book Award, and the Willow Award, for which students vote on a winner from among novels selected by a jury. Like McKay's other novels for young people, it was included in the Canadian Children's Book Centre *Best Books for Kids and Teens*, an annual guide, the contents of which are selected by committees of educators, booksellers, school and public librarians from across Canada. Inclusion represents a stamp of approval from within the industry. McKay's books circulate widely through established publishing houses, through libraries, schools and rosters of award shortlists and she frequently makes appearances at schools as a speaker. Lots of young people read her books, and lots may continue to read *Esther*. One could even go so far as to say that McKay's novel stands as *the* telling of the tale in the English language, by virtue of its wide reach.⁸⁶

82 Sealing refers to hunting seals. *Charlie Wilcox* has been translated into Italian and Romanian.

83 Kacer adapted her fictional work *The Secret of Gabi's Dresser* to a play for young people, based on the story of her mother who survived the Holocaust. She has most recently written another play, *Therefore Choose Life*, in collaboration with her son Jake Epstein, also based on a Holocaust survival story (Kacer 1999; *Therefore Choose Life*).

84 This was possibly the 1987 article written by Schnurmacher, in which he announced that a movie was to be made about the story.

85 See Governor General's Award database at: <http://canadacouncil.ca/council/grants/past-recipients?program-code=8161#results>

86 Lasry's novel in French may stand as a definitive telling in French, except that its distribution has been very limited.

Situating *Esther*, Esther framed

As Edward Saïd wrote, "the real issue is whether there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations, because they *are*, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions and political ambience of the representer" (Saïd 1979, 272 quoted in Bradford 2007, 97-98, italics in original). McKay approaches and represents characters and issues through the lens of mainstream popular 21st century Canadian discourse, primarily in terms of championing gender equality and Canadian multiculturalism. To a lesser extent, McKay makes visible homosexuality as an unnamed and quickly evaded secret or collateral accident of passing, and she brings to the foreground, fleetingly, the colonial realities of slavery and the conquest of Indigenous people. To borrow the opposite of an Ann Laura Stoler phrase, McKay works *along a grain* where an historical female-to-male cross-dresser is likely to be seen as astonishing, despite the fact that scholars have demonstrated that 18th century female-to-male cross-dressing was actually quite a substantive practice, even a tradition (Stoler 2009). McKay works *against* a dominant culture where products for children and young people blatantly as well as subtly reinforce gender stereotypes and the heteronormative, while sexualizing ever younger girls in the process; and she works in an English language literary culture for children that by and large does not overtly challenge heteronormative gender stereotypes, and where truly *transgender* narratives for young people are scarce (Flanagan 2008). Few are the stories where the cross-dresser's gender ambiguity, or alternative gender is allowed to be autonomous and stable, and where a return to an "authentic" normative gender is absent from the story arc.⁸⁷

Similarly, McKay *follows* a grain of affirming tolerance and multiculturalism, here through Jewish-Christian conflict, dialogue and possibility embodied in Brandeau / La Fargue. She does so in a present-day Canadian political and cultural landscape in which tolerance, pluralism and multiculturalism are standard affirmative discourses, core Canadian values entrenched in our much-cited Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These discourses often conceal subtle practices of racism and exclusion that draw a continuity with colonial history into the present, in a context where eruptions of hysteria around "race" and religious difference are not infrequent and where Indigenous difference is often subsumed within the multicultural, which undermines the sovereignty of Indigenous nations.

Before any reader opens McKay's novel, they are confronted with two portraits. On the front of the novel, a figure looks directly at us, visible from the chest up, a young white sailor on board a ship as suggested by the vertical rope around which the left hand is gripped, knuckles in view, just above head-level. Under a dark jacket, the figure is wearing a collared white shirt open at the neck, with sleeve amply ruffled around the wrist. The brown eyebrows and brown eyes are pronounced, with a small brown mole just above the upper lip on the left side.⁸⁸ The

⁸⁷ Transgender challenges the binary gender system, and the assumed correlation between sex and gender, regardless of sexual orientation. Cisgender describes a gender that conforms to the expectations of the birth sex. Queer and trans creators address a shortage of "truly transgender narratives" for kids through micro-presses. See for <http://www.flamingorampant.com/press.html>

⁸⁸ This is reminiscent of the little circles sometimes found on the cheeks that sometimes distinguish female characters in Willow Dawson and Susan Hughes graphic novel rendition of the story.

mouth is closed lightly, the dark hair with streaks of red is parted down the middle and tied back. This same image adorns the top edge of the book's spine. Turning the book over, a clearly identifiable young woman, though slightly smaller, stands in almost the same position looking directly at us from a further distance. Hair tied up with wisps dangling, flowers in her hair, and wearing a yellow dress with lace collar, low cut over the chest, she holds onto what appears to be a vertical black pipe or a bed frame or pole with the left hand at head level. A ruffled lace sleeve cuff frames the fingers wrapped around this pole, and the fingers are thinner than those of the presumed sailor on the front of the book, more pointed and exposing the fingertips where we see only the sailor's knuckles on the cover. Same eyes, slightly thicker eyebrows, same mole, same lips, but head slightly tilted rather than directly facing us, skin fairer with a hint of blue makeup on the eyes. Same person, undeniably.

The young woman is meant to reveal the passing of the figure on the cover, a passing that has already failed by the very title of the book, *Esther*, on the cover in cursive letters in the blue backdrop just above the portrait of the sailor. Outed from the get-go. We cannot enter into the novel without this double appearance already clearly inscribed, and which will be repeatedly inscribed in the text. In other words, any gender ambiguity that might be written by and/or read into the text itself is already unwritten by the cover images. In the closing pages of the text, after the author's afterword and the glossary, the acknowledgements thank "Sandra Tooze [graphic designer] who made *Esther* pretty. And Julia Bell, brilliant illustrator, and Kate MacDonald cover model, who *is* pretty." It seems there was never any doubt about Esther's femininity, in that single repeated word, "pretty."

The leaf of the paperback edition of *Esther* underscores where the publisher of this book situates it⁸⁹:

Told as fiction, *Esther* portrays the remarkable, nearly incredible life and times of Esther Brandeau, a young girl who lived in the eighteenth century, and who was the first Jew to set foot in New France. That she did so disguised as a boy, and that the eventual discovery of her deceit became an international incident, is but one part of Esther's dramatic story. With an emerging Canadian nation as its backdrop, Esther's story encompasses the quest for gender equality and the larger quest for freedom—as real to a teenager in 1735 as it is today.

While the book leaf can act as a kind of prologue to frame the tale, McKay's afterword serves to assert the author's intention, acts as a disclaimer and seems to undercut the publisher's marketing:

The tale within is one of *historical imagining*; it is a fictional account. Esther existed, and yet while Esther Brandeau has found a place in the footnotes of history, she has not found a place in history itself. Too much of what she did is unsubstantiated. She is shadow, presumption, hope and dream. Perhaps Esther's

⁸⁹ It is of course important to recognize that how a publisher markets a work may not be in agreement with how a writer reads and interprets their work, or intends their work to function.

story belongs more properly in the realm of myth, and one might *imagine* that Esther would delight in such a place. (314)

In a sense, both the publisher and McKay foreground intentions of "against-the-grain-ness," albeit with different concerns in mind. We will come to see that McKay's novel does in fact tell the tale the publisher claims, the story of a young girl's cross-dressing as a quest for freedom and gender equality. The author's own disclaimer betrays a tension made evident through the analysis to follow between historical accuracy, scant evidence and the quest to tell. In doing so, I aim to read against the grains of declared strategies of against-the-grainness, so to speak.⁹⁰

***Esther* in the context of settler tales of crossing for children**

Victoria Flanagan has shown the prevalence of female-to-male cross-dressing narratives for young people, and notes the typical patterns of the vast majority of such cross-dressing tales (Flanagan 2008). She asserts that female-to-male cross-dressing narratives for young people are by and large surprisingly progressive on troubling normative gender categories as mutually exclusive, in order to underscore the message that all people should be judged according to their abilities, skills and choices, and not according to the restrictions placed upon them by societies.⁹¹ Girls, if allowed, can be boys too. This in clear contrast to the highly conservative ways in which male-to-female cross-dressers tend to be characterized: stereotypical caricatures who usually cross over to female against their will for a short duration, and suffer as a consequence even though they may come away with new insights about the lives of women and girls. Boys can't really be girls, nor would they want to be. This prevalent pattern in male-to-female cross-dressing in children's literature affirms the female as less desirable, and the fact that female-to-male cross-dressing in children's literature has been much more progressive and prevalent suggests the continued overvaluing of maleness within the broader culture. Very few novels for young people, argues Flanagan, produce options beyond normative male and female within a bodily sex-gender binary system, though Flanagan's consideration of novels that do so signals an emerging and needed transgender scholarship in children's literature. Flanagan calls for stories for children and scholarly writing about those stories, that move beyond cross-dressing as merely transvestism, where transvestism is typically understood as simply the act of wearing the clothes of the opposite gender. Transvestism is grounded then in the certainty of birth-assigned gender, whereas transgender can destabilize such presumed certainties.

Flanagan suggests that typically female-to-male cross-dressers in children's literature portray girls who become *remarkable* for their ability to out-perform norms of masculinity, while their remarkableness is achieved not by mimicry of masculinity but by crafting new registers of masculinity through integrating from both

⁹⁰ In Part II, I will take up McKay's claim to Brandeau / La Fargue's unsubstantiated life, and the positioning of the story as a footnote, the purported impossibility of this figure being present in so-called "history" and the consequent assignation to "myth" by returning to eighteenth century archives.

⁹¹ Flanagan's research does not consider texts in which a gender crossing coincides with an ethnic or racial crossing. Clare Bradford has addressed racial crossing in children's literature (Bradford 2004).

standardized gender repertoires. Flanagan also notes that cross-dressing literatures for young adults succeed to greater or lesser extents at troubling gender, but that where such literature often falls short is a) in its third person narration, which removes the reader from the internal life of the cross-dressing character, thereby falling short of giving the cross-dressing character direct agency and voice; b) in returning the cross-dresser to their "original" gendered state at the close of the story, where gender and biological sex concur normatively; c) in avoiding the body and sexuality; and d) as noted above, in rarely offering more than two gender possibilities. McKay's crafting of Esther falls into line with much of this overview. Where Flanagan considers crossing along the predominant axis of gender, an important contribution that I make through the following analysis is to consider gender-crossing in concert with other forms of crossing, or what I have called "multicrossing," which is much less prevalent in the landscape of cultural production for children, and in the scholarship that considers it.

Garber has argued that popular culture abounds with representations of the transvestite figure, and she theorizes this presence as what she calls the "transvestite effect of category crisis"; the transvestite figure appears where the certainty of identity markers are in crisis (Garber 1992, 36-37). She notes that there is a predominant tendency to look *through* this transvestite figure to other ends, rather than to look directly at the cross-dressed body themselves. One could perhaps draw a similarity here with how the figure of "the Jew" was "good to think" Enlightenment questions, and suggest that in Garber's figuration, the figure of "the transvestite" is "good to think" too (Schechter 2003, 102).⁹² In both cases the figure itself is almost an abstraction that serves as a tool for working out ideas, and so is not about actual individual people. Garber also notes that the most foregrounded category in crisis that is revealed through the transvestite effect, along the axis of gender, often obscures crisis elsewhere, for example, along class or race, deflecting that crisis onto gender.

In her theorization of female masculinity, Judith Halberstam critiques Garber for not producing an alternative to binarism, but instead notes that Garber reaffirms gender binarism through the third figure proposed as the only resolution to the binary (Halberstam 1998, 26). As Mak writes, echoing Halberstam, in much scholarship aiming to destabilize normativities, "... the abnormal always in the end sustains the inside, or the normative" (Mak 2012, 14). Amy Robinson points out the conventions of truth upon which the subversion of truth always already relies, in the case of a text and proposal like Garber's where the meticulous details about the cross-dresser seem to reaffirm the status quo of gender binary even as the claim of subversion is often attached to

92 If, as Schechter has shown, the 18th century French obsession with the figure of the Jew suggested that the Jew was "good to think" Enlightenment ideas/ideals (2003), or what Halevi-Wise and others call "Sephardism" in terms of the broad use of the Iberian Sephardic experience to think questions of nation and belonging (2012), as were in different ways "the Indian" and "the African" constitutive of and used to articulate "freedom" (see for instance Stam and Shohat 2012), how might we interpret this expression "good to think" when considering the story of the multicrosser? I like to think that by looking at Esther Brandeau as Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, that I am pointing to the power of queer and transgender, without necessarily affirming that Brandeau / La Fargue was queer or trans themselves, if those terms could even be used in reference to the eighteenth century. The phrase "good to think" cited by Schechter and Wahrman among my references herein is borrowed from Claude Lévi-Strauss, who when writing about Nambikwara Indigenous peoples of Brazil and their use of animals in totems, said the animals were used not because they were "good to eat" but because they were "good to think," although the French "bonnes à penser" gives the possibility of multiple meanings, lost in English (Lévi-Strauss, 1962).

acts of cross-dressing (Robinson 1994, 197). While this paradox of reaffirming binarism while attempting to subvert it might be a predicament contended with in scholarship, it is unrecognized as a predicament at all in McKay's novel. Here the transvestite figure is indeed looked *through* (rather than *at*), to other ends in McKay's telling of the Brandeau / La Fargue story; McKay never allows the certainty of femaleness to be under suspicion, and posits the male personae as disguises, just as the publisher's synopsis on the leaf of the book describes the story as one about a girl "disguised as a boy," echoing the original colonial record, and which the images on front cover and back cover point to.

In McKay's *Esther*, ambiguity comes to the fore around representations of Jewishness, and anxiety around the conditions of colonisation is present through the standard trope of the strategic but silent figure of the enslaved and the similarly silent and strategic figure of the Indigenous. Both appear and then are disappeared by the progressing narrative to which they are vital. Clare Bradford has comparatively studied children's literature in Canada and in Australia, and has noted that settler society children's texts are caught between discursive pressures: the socializing agendas that influence the production of books for children; the dominant discourses that constitute cultural givens; and the counter-discourses that seek to undermine them. In many texts these pressures manifest in ambivalence and ambiguity (Bradford 2007, 24). Referring to colonisation of Indigenous lands, Elisabeth Bronfen writes that "much of Canadian children's literature can be said to know, and to betray its anxiety about its knowledge of, the dispossession on which the home of the nation is founded" (quoted in Reimer 2008, xvi). Reimer overviews the deployment and circulation of the idea of "home" in Canadian children's literature in both French and English, and notes the colonial undertones of children's literature centred on ancestry, which "are built on disavowals of the Aboriginal presence in the spaces claimed for the nation" (Reimer 2008, xvi). She notes how in the typical children's story arc that sees a protagonist move between "home" and "away" on the standard journey arc, "home" stands in subtle and not so subtle ways for "nation," at the exclusion of Aboriginal histories.

In Quebec's children's literature, write Thaler and Jean-Bart, France in the early Quebec canon stood as a home to be abandoned and New France as a kind of promised land (Thaler and Jean-Bart 2008). This pattern subsequently changed more recently into the adoption of the figure of the *coureur des bois* as an idealized figure who lives between the colonial and the Aboriginal.⁹³ This points to a problematic privileging of hybridity as a legitimization of colonization, a privileging that has been challenged particularly by Indigenous scholars (Smith 2010). Reimer claims that the vast majority of children's books in English in Canada feature a narrative that follows a central child character from the moment of being pushed out of an originary home by adults, toward an alien place and ultimately toward the choice to claim the unfamiliar place as a new home (Reimer 2008, 1, 23).⁹⁴ In

⁹³ The *coureur des bois* (or *de bois*), "runner of the woods," was a European male settler who traveled New France trading European goods with First Nations for fur pelts, and was vital to the fur trade. These men had extensive contact with Indigenous people, and were seen as some kind of adaptive intermediary between indigeneity and Europeanness, so-called backwoods and colonial centre.

⁹⁴ Anne Rusnak argues however that in children's literature in French in Quebec, the child is not pushed out of the originary home, but rather change comes into the home. Here, nation is written and asserted against outside pressures (Rusnak 2008).

McKay's rendering, Esther is sent away from her home by her parents, which is what the original testimonial record claims. In this sense, Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's story seems to offer much of the structure Reimer details *already as it is presented in the colonial archive*, etched repeatedly in iterations thereof into the cultural archive, prefiguring it as a seemingly perfect tale already written for young Canadians. And considering that Nodelman notes that intercultural acceptance is especially prevalent as a theme in Canadian writing for young people, McKay's *Esther* is a very predictable mainstream Canadian children's text (Nodelman 2008, 126).

Narrational removal: Analysing *Esther*

I will now give an overview of the narrative structure of *Esther*, followed by a more detailed delineation of the content. The overall aim is to detail the interconnected inscriptions that produce the main protagonist, Esther. McKay's novel is an example of internal focalization where an unidentified narrator tells the tale, here in the past tense and in the third person. Extradiegetically, this narrator has access to knowledge beyond the immediate speakers/thinkers, is privy to the thoughts of characters, and to the broader context of interactions of which the characters may not be privy. The narrator looks back and tells retrospectively with the benefit of present knowledge, through the perspectives of characters. The novel is principally focalized closely through Esther herself in third person voice, though there are shifts to other characters as focalizers. It is only in the final two pages of the novel, in an italicized epilogue, that we learn that the unidentified narrator is in fact the secretary to the colonial intendant who has witnessed the colonial intendant interrogate Esther. The narrator, positioned behind "a thin veil" (18), hears the testimony of Esther Brandeau, and most of what is told is what he heard in that testimony, presumably but not explicitly combined with what he witnessed in his duties while Brandeau was under house arrest, and what his boss, the intendant-interrogator, could have recounted to him. That he is a witness behind a thin veil is an apt metaphor.

McKay takes the third person voice of the interrogation record transcribed by the scribe and found in the French colonial archive and extends that basic structure to that of her novel. The novel begins in Intendant Hocquart's office, focalized through the character of the Intendant. A young sailor named Jacques is under Hocquart's questioning for theft. In this first handful of pages, the assumed authentic femaleness that will underpin the rest of novel has not yet taken force, as this young male sailor is treated as such. A forced outing as female is followed by a self-outing as Jewish. The latter reveals a violation of the law forbidding non-Catholics from presence in the French colonies. Focalization shifts after nineteen pages to Esther. Embedded in the secretary's third person narration, Esther retrospectively tells her story to the Intendant of how she came to be in Quebec, with the secretary witnessing. The interrogation setting intermittently inserts itself into the otherwise linear flow of her story, which begins in the Jewish quarter of Bayonne, more or less adhering to each of the settings and jobs claimed in the interrogation record in the colonial archive, while taking into account details from subsequent colonial correspondence.

Esther's telling is one that is couched within the circumstance of interrogation, of questioning by the Colonial Intendant. In a sense, this structural couching of perspective finds a parallel in how any "persona" that Esther takes on or is given to take on—whether the courtesan-in-training Camille, or two subsequent male identities, Pierre and Jacques—is couched within a stable, authentic, core femaleness, always "she." Her voice is always second-hand. In periodic returns to the room of questioning, we are pulled out from "Esther's story" and are reminded that there is something about her voice that is not her voice, something about her story that is not her own, that "as the story of Esther Brandeau rolled out like a ball of wool" (19), there is a hand that holds the end of the thread that is not hers. This structure also signals an authorial reluctance to give the cross-dresser a *first person* voice. This reveals conflicting motivations and consequences. It underscores McKay's point in the afterword that "too much of what she did is unsubstantiated" and thus McKay's reluctance to manufacture what isn't there, which is a contradiction given that the writing of the fiction already does so. It also underscores McKay's commitment to foregrounding the fact that how we have the tale is precisely through a third person voice interrogation record. The commitment to reflect this fact also consequently repeats a removal of agency that the third person voice record of the interrogation already accomplishes.

From inscription as female to forgiveness in epilogue

I will now delineate the content of the novel in order to be able to proceed to a more detailed analysis of interconnecting inscriptions that produce a certain kind of Esther in the service of the broader thematic concerns of the author as I have noted them. What I am giving first, in narratological terms, is the "fabula"—the events that characters experience (Bal 1997). The fabula is one layer in a three-layer construction called "narrative." The other layers are the "story," which is the fabula given from a specific chosen angle, and the "narrative text," which is the story's expression in signs eg. images, words, etc. All of these registers combine to produce certain effects which I aim to foreground. As such I am concerned not just with describing the sequence of events, but with who is doing the telling and how it is done.

McKay's Esther begins focalization of her tale as a fourteen year-old in the Jewish quarter of Bayonne (St-Esprit), an unusual youngster, close to her mother, despised by her sister and grandmother, observer and secret mimicker of her father and older brother, and caregiver to her younger brother. She learns accidentally in the setting of the home that she is an illegitimate child of her father's. A seeming cascade of disasters has followed her all her life, mostly perceived so by others. On an errand for her dressmaker father, she loses her little brother on a forbidden adventure into Gentile territory. Her father, to save family face, arranges for her marriage to an impoverished widower, who accepts her on the condition that she be sent to family in Amsterdam to wait until the community gossip dies down. Within forty pages of the novel, Esther is on board the ship to Amsterdam, driven from the home by adults. She and a Gentile sailor on the ship, Philippe, are attracted to one another. When the

ship wrecks, Philippe saves her⁹⁵ and they and the crew watch from a lifeboat as an array of passengers united across difference through death drowns as the ship sinks.

Philippe takes her to his aunt, who runs the kitchen in the home of an aged courtesan and her mother in Biarritz. In the kitchen Esther earns her keep by baking the (Jewish) bread recipes she has learned from her mother. Her skill is her value in the house, and will become her currency along with reading and writing. These skills learned from her mother she trades for benefits, such as a proper place to sleep, food, a moratorium on maltreatment of the poor and frequently beaten indentured servant girl of Cook, who Esther has adopted as a little sister and named Pearl. Esther is then discovered by Catherine Churiau, the lady of the house and is crafted into Camille, a young protégée sure to guarantee the courtesan's entry to the royal court. Throughout courtesan training, Esther continues baking bread in the kitchen. She spends 72 pages in Catherine's house before setting out as Pierre, after 9 months, even though in the archival record, she is in the home of Catherine Churiau, widow, for a mere fifteen days. Notably, this is not the longest time that the main character spends in any one place in the novel, but it is the greatest narrative allocation given to a single locale. Consequently we really get to know Esther within the confines of Catherine's house, first in the kitchen, then upstairs, and in secret movement between these two classed worlds, and always as *female*. In order for the narrative to function, for the subsequent journeys as male to make sense, there is an extensive inscribing of Esther as female, first in the Jewish quarter, where she is othered as odd, presumably as a result of her illegitimacy, and later in Catherine's house where her belonging is bartered through certain performances of gender. This heightens the difference with an understood authentic femaleness that is later to be in disguise throughout the bulk of the novel.

When Esther discovers her father in Catherine's parlour selling his textiles one day, Esther flees Catherine's house, disguised as a boy, Pierre, abandoning both access to Philippe and to her new "little sister," Pearl. Seeing her father, it seems, makes her ashamed of herself and what she has become in Catherine's house. In port she later re-encounters Philippe, they work on ships together, but are accidentally separated. She works alone on a Spanish ship for a time, then re-encounters Philippe briefly, but their plan to sail to the New World together is thwarted. She becomes a roaming impoverished boy, and accidentally ends up before her father's house. She makes the choice not to knock on the door, and leaves again. Perhaps the shame that drove her to flee Catherine's house also keeps her from knocking, or perhaps she is not willing to return to her previous life. Perhaps both, it is not clear.

After this, Esther as Pierre becomes a chore boy for a convent of women.⁹⁶ She leaves when a young

95 Of note, the archival record may be interpreted as saying that after the shipwreck Esther "was saved *with* one of the members of the crew", or "*by* one of the members of the crew" (ANF 1738a, 129). While both interpretations of the French are viable, the latter puts Philippe in the gendered position of rescuer, echoed in a scene of a puppet show about a princess rescued from evil by a prince, which Esther witnesses in the Gentile marketplace (my italics). Choquette (1997), like myself, understands the intended meaning to be "she escaped to land with one of the crew members" (138). I translate it as "saved to land with one of the crew members". I thank Nadine Desrochers for comment on this.

96 In the testimony, the convent in Clisson is a Récollets convent. Choquette takes the cue from the testimony identifying the religious order as Récollets, an order of Franciscan monks, and therefore assumes s/he would have worked as a chore boy not for nuns but

nun-to-be falls in love with "him." Next, she ends up as a baker's assistant in Saint-Malo and chooses to leave when she discovers the anti-Semitism of the baker and her children, who cannot understand why the boy is leaving. She then seeks out a retired, opium-addicted soldier suffering from war nightmares. He had been a customer in the bakery, and Esther as Pierre becomes his lackey, only to be rediscovered by the courtesan, Catherine, whose ruin she caused by escaping. The disguise is easy for Catherine to see through. Esther as Pierre ends up in jail thanks to the furious Catherine, but the mother of Catherine, Marie, secretly secures Esther's release, her safe passage to New France and tells her Philippe is in Louisiana. Hence does Esther become Jacques La Fargue and boards ship for Quebec, declaring Catholicism, just after Marie has obliquely revealed herself to be a Jew passing as a Christian, and indicates that she has recognized herself in Esther and had all along been training Esther with the double-knowledge needed to be a Jew passing as Catholic. Whether a young reader, or an adult reader for that matter, would pick up on Marie's possible Jewish history is debatable. This subtext of Marie possibly being a Jew passing as a Christian is ambiguous.

On the transatlantic voyage, Esther as Jacques plays cards with some petit bourgeois young men. During a storm "he" performs heroically as a sailor, while witnessing the cowardice of the young men "he" had played cards with and who are barely able to bear the storm. They end up accusing this witness to their cowardice of theft. It is this accusation that lands Jacques before the Intendant Hocquart upon landing in Quebec City, which is where we are at the outset of the novel, and to which we return late in the novel after she has already been outed as female, and self-outed as Jewish. In the latter part of the novel, we are in Quebec, post-outings. First Esther is placed with an old widow, where she cooks and cleans in exchange for room and board. She makes a plan to escape on a ship, by purchasing a ticket "for her brother," and returns to port later that night disguised as another male persona, Claude Thibodeaux. While descending into the row boat that is supposed to carry Claude to the Louisiana-bound ship, it becomes suddenly clear that the others in the row boat are those same accusing card players. They recognize him, and he escapes as they flounder in the water by the capsized row boat. Her escape is successful thanks to shedding the male garb with silent assistance from "a Negro slave girl," a point to which we will return in depth.

Esther returns to her host widow, Mme. Bonviet, and is taken by soldiers to Hocquart. He presses for her conversion, and places her for the winter with an ill and pregnant mother of six whose son and husband are away in the bush working. This woman too, like the first one, will accuse Esther of being a "Jewish slut" and kick her out. She is finally placed at the Ursuline convent. Refusing one final time the pressure from Hocquart to convert, he deports her back to France. But it turns out that not having had her boys' clothes confiscated, and being sent back to France on a ship that will travel via Louisiana, it becomes clear that the Intendant has facilitated her hoped for

for monks (Choquette 1997, 138). In a conversation in 2007 in Clisson with historian Nicole Petit, I learned that the male religious order in Clisson at that time was the Cordeliers, a sect that followed vows of extreme poverty and thus would not have supported a chore boy. Petit suggested s/he was probably a chore boy for the convent of religious women in Clisson, within walking distance of the Cordeliers.

reunion with Philippe. She boards ship, waving and curtsying in the direction of Hocquart's window. The italicized post-script that outs the secretary as the narrator includes a plea for forgiveness from the reader, "for the times were tough" (312). The telling becomes in that epilogue a Christian act of reconciliation, of seeking forgiveness, of doing penance, of doing justice through this telling, a record of attempt at righting wrong that simultaneously also restores or rights the reputations of the narrator and his boss, enablers of a future we can only imagine, but which we are guided to imagine might be a reunion with Philippe and a requited love story. The door is left slightly ajar to those of us who might imagine simply a continued life as a young man, and/or a deferred Jewish life.

Speech and agency in *Esther*

In *Esther*, the character Esther primarily does *not* speak in first person voice herself, but is rather the principle character through which the narrator delivers her story. The effect is an underscoring of our *distance* from really *knowing* Esther, even as we are voyeur to her story. Nevertheless, the character Esther does sometimes speak in the first person voice, and I wish now to show the four ways in which she does so. This will allow us to begin to see how Esther in first person voice crafts both her Jewishness and her femaleness.

First, Esther speaks aloud in direct exchanges with other characters. She answers questions, asks questions, both rhetorical and for information, she gives instructions, reveals unsolicited details about herself (true or untrue), and she expresses thoughts, feelings and opinions to others, always briefly: To the widow who took her in after the shipwreck: "I have no family" (101); To a nun: "Yes, I have been baptized" (209); To her father: "Then why do Gentiles hate us if their Messiah was one of us?" (64); To Claire, in the convent: "Oh please ... I am not what you think" (221); To the intendant: "Monseigneur, I have learned that fate and choice are mocked by chance" (304).

Feeling and opinion are expressed either to one of Esther's three friends in the novel (Philippe, adopted sister Pearl, and Claire at the convent), or to Hocquart, her interrogator. Strong expressions of opinion and philosophical musings that are delivered to another character in direct speech are given exclusively to Hocquart, and at that, only toward the end of the novel. In this way, Esther's freedom of thought, expression of moral and intellectual standing and her assertion of choice are firmly expressed and we are given full access to this presumed "fully expressed" Esther only in conjunction with the moment of Hocquart's decision to deport her, and coinciding with the ultimate expression of a theme of the novel, which has been alluded to through Esther's other means of focalization: the moment when Esther refuses the pressure to convert, asserts her ability to make a choice and stands by her Jewishness.

Esther speaks aloud in another capacity in the novel, with the intention of being heard only by herself and God. This form of speech for Esther in the novel is uncommon, occurring only five times, but is a *key avenue* through which Esther's assertion of *Jewishness* and connection to her family is underscored, and where her long-ing for choice is also expressed. After boarding ship for Amsterdam: "It's not roots I want, Papa ... it's wings." (66);

Shortly after becoming Pierre: "If I take up the wings of the morning, and dwell on the ocean's farthest shore, even there Your hand will lead me. Your right hand will hold me" (156). The latter is the Psalm 139: 9 (not identified as such in the novel), a Jewish prayer that Esther first remembers as her mother's prayer. Crossing the threshold into a church as refuge while passing as male: "Hear O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One! Blessed is His glorious kingdom for ever and ever" (196). These are the first two lines of the Shema,⁹⁷ a central Jewish prayer, which Esther repeats every time she enters a church, often in a discrete whisper, more often in her own mind, a practice distinctive of Jews compelled or forced to convert to Christianity during the Iberian Inquisitions (Yovel 2009). This prayer is one that Esther daily mimics her father saying in the morning, while peering at him through a hole in the floor of her bedroom. According to orthodox Judaism, men should say the Shema twice daily, while women are not required to, though they are guided to pray at least once daily, without any prescribed liturgy. We could say then that this *Converso* practice has for Esther also a gender-crossing component in the novel.

There is another kind of speech of Esther's in the novel, speech which is not uttered aloud, is represented in italics and is speech as thought, plea or opinion, often "whispered in her heart" (222). This type of speech especially crafts God as an ever-present witness, and several are Jewish prayer utterances. To a statue of the Virgin Mary: "*She's like me—a Jewish girl among Christians*" (129).⁹⁸ Much of the italicized internal speech takes the form of pleas or speech that could or cannot be spoken, but which she hopes will be "heard" by its intended listener, and presumably with God as witness. These are prayer, expression of regret, hope, gratitude, or seeking forgiveness; questions about what she does not or cannot know; and discoveries of or repetitions of knowledge that astounds her: "*Oh Maman, dear Maman, only you will truly grieve*" (97); "*Philippe, where are you now?*" (217); "*Someone who was not Maman had given birth to her. Illegitimate*" (52). Italicized internal whispers on three occasions are repetitions of a name, for instance when she is trying to train her memory to a newly adopted identity: "*Jacques La Fargue, Jacques La Fargue*" (254). In the case of the female name, she refers to herself twice as Esther and in both cases it is a welcome return: "*Esther ... Esther—how good it felt to say her own name*" (16) and "*Esther, Esther, Esther. My name is Esther*" (270). In both these cases, she internally whispers the name in the Quebec context, after she has been outed as female. These internal whispers chart her key concerns, commitments and longings, and erupt into the kind of spoken speech described above and directed at Hocquart at the end of the novel, where Esther converts these types of internal whispers into directed, uttered declarations of her philosophical, spiritual and intellectual commitments, entwined through asserted Jewishness with her desire for choice.

There is a more blurry way in which we appear to have access to Esther's thoughts, and this in the form of statements, questions and thoughts that are interspersed, often like emphasized punctuation, in the flow of

⁹⁷ Deuteronomy 6: 4-9.

⁹⁸ I am compelled to consider the possible implications of this. Perhaps Mary is put forth as a bridge figure, claimed as Jewish kin to an avowedly Jewish Esther. Or perhaps she is put forth as a Jewish claim on all of Christianity. Or she is put forth to serve the example of reaching across religions for universality. The ambiguity of this claim destabilizes any certainty around what constitutes Jewishness.

descriptive narration. At times such thoughts seem not unlike italicized internal whispers. Sometimes questions reveal or underscore Esther's naiveté, at other times they reveal her sophistication or seem to show her feelings, or indicate a need for knowledge that she lacks: "What did that mean, "entrance to society"?" (118); "Were not all women in some way bartered to men?" (126); "Could it be that she had come this far and sacrificed so much, only to find herself a prisoner in this remote land?" (6); "How long did this bleeding last?" (187). Sometimes such statements deliver key messages/themes, such as: "What did it matter what faith she practised?... Were not Jews, Christians and Muslims all the children of Abraham?" (302) Such questions often enforce a blur between Esther's purported perspective, the perspective of another character and/or they signal the infiltration of the narrating voice and authorial hand. The impact is a subtle disjuncture of perception between Esther and another character or characters; or between Esther's embodied experience, and her awareness as an outside eye to her own experience. If one looks closely, this disjuncture draws attention to the voice that is not wholly her own, in other words, to the narrative structure, for it is often unclear whether these are really Esther's thoughts or thoughts by imposition.

The interplay of speech, thought and narration track an ongoing calculation, an attempt to bridge between embodied experience and worlds of perception; between the limitations of the available archival evidence, the narrative structure that those limitations purportedly impose, and the extent to which the narrative structure can serve the delivery of the author's thematic agendas. Most importantly, I contend, through the narrative strategies that I have detailed for making Esther *speak*, several concurrences are achieved: Esther's sense of core femaleness, Esther's assertion of Jewishness through interculturality and Esther's experience of Jewishness as nostalgia and longing for an (absent) Jewish community and family.

Sequential passings, doubtings and outings: Esther's (un)knowability

Above, I have given a summary of the narrative arc of McKay's *Esther* and I have noted how her Esther is inscribed by narrative duration as female in Catherine's house, and how the narrative arc proceeds from this inscribing through to an act of narrational penance by the outed secretary/narrator. Further, I have shown how Esther is made to speak in the novel, vital to crafting her as self-declared Jewish and female. I would now like to look more deeply at how categories of sex, gender, social class, religion and "race", age and interpretation of appearance travel, waver and/or solidify throughout the novel. This will allow us to consider more deeply how Esther is made intelligible, how we are given to come to know Esther. This way we can trace the emergence of patterns that tell us something about the interplay of these categories, their representation and the author's negotiation of them. I will begin with the narrative sequence of passing, doubting and outing that characterizes interaction with the colonial intendant Hocquart, which sets the stage for the telling of Esther's tale.

In this sequence, what becomes apparent is that multicrossing manifests instability in class standing and "race," religion and/or nation knowability; that this instability is recognized through and in turns produces exoticism;

and that this exoticism is both a source of allure and desirability, as well as a metonymic for unknowability. Unknowability is, historically, a trope for Jewishness, and as we saw earlier in the dissertation, a trope for femaleness (Schechter 2003, 1998). Esther's multicrossing in this novel may seem to destabilize essentialized notions linking "race"-religion-nation in/through the Jewish body, by generating ambiguity. This ambiguity operates inseparably from and dependent upon class confusion. Recalling Garber, we could think of this as a category crisis. In other words, doubted "race" operates as class confusion. But contradictory to this supposed destabilization of "race" essentialism is the production of exoticism of the Jewish female body of Esther, even as McKay reveals that exoticism as an effect of viewing, all views held within the narrative power of the secretary's non-neutral retelling.

As noted, McKay's novel begins with Jacques, a young sailor doubted as a thief and standing before Intendant Hocquart. Social rank and masculinity are entwined in the doubting that brings Jacques before Hocquart. What we know initially is that a gold-framed portrait of the King is found among Jacques' possessions on the ship, an object incompatible with what Hocquart and Jacques' accusers see as Jacques' sailor status. How could he access such an object in any other way than through theft? Hocquart's doubting is first that Jacques is not just an accomplished sailor, but a thief. That he is a boy (a youth), and that he is a French Catholic go unremarked and as such, age and religion are not in doubt. But then Jacques' suspected action (thievery) as the focus of doubt shifts Hocquart's attention to Jacques' *appearance*. A thief must be scrutinized. Hocquart reads an (abstract) "exotic quality," which leads to his noting the boy's notable eyes, smooth skin, hairlessness, aquiline features (4).⁹⁹ Blurring with this is an (abstract) "proud dignity" that is incompatible with the boy's young age. The "proud dignity," it seems, does not match the social standing of a sailor either. Still stable is the maleness and the French Catholicness of the suspected thief, if "stable" can be understood as "unremarkable."

An accumulation of readings of this boy—his physical qualities (eyes, skin, aquiline features), his carriage (proud dignity), which together Hocquart experiences as "an exotic quality"—are propelled into notice by a presumed inconsistency with the accused boy's lower social standing. This then propels Hocquart to doubt further: Is this a Gypsy? A Spaniard? Finally, he wonders if this is a Jew. The inconsistency between status of the young sailor, his "proud dignity" and his being in possession of an upper class object gathers into a stereotypical intelligibility cluster of Gypsy, Spaniard, Jew—dark, foreign, other—that may offer Hocquart an explanation for the incompatibilities that stand before him, a boy whose status is barely that of a servant. Who *can* claim/perform this "proud dignity"? Hocquart settles on Jew. Social standing and racialized otherness stand together as separate from Hocquart's social position and from French Catholicness as *he recognizes it*. (Perhaps Hocquart himself has never needed to notice, until now, lower class French Catholicness as anything other than an undifferentiated (except by gender) mass?) Lower class and non-French become indecipherable through this (passing-as-) male

⁹⁹ Aquiline either refers to a nose shaped like an eagle's beak; or to something or someone like or of an eagle (Dictionary). The hooked nose is a classic trope of Jewishness, particularly Jewish maleness. Here "aquiline" is an elegant-sounding descriptor.

(presumed-to-be-) thieving body of the sailor. The doubting becomes focused into a doubting of French Catholicness, honed into a suspected Jewishness, and it is the search for the ultimate bodily marker of Jewish maleness—a circumcised penis—that leads to Jacques' forced outing as female. The undeclared logic of Hocquart is that neither a Gypsy male, nor a Spanish male can have "proud dignity" and a French Catholic does not look so dark and foreign. Thus it is the gender outing catalyzed by a "racialized" viewing of physical markers cued into notice by an abstract noting of a carriage that is inconsistent with known social standing and age. What we might call class or social standing confusion is the cue that catalyzes the racializing doubts that lead to gender outing.

The coming into visibility of any of these inconsistencies is provoked by a suspicion of theft that has been, as we will learn later in the novel, provoked by threatened masculinity on board the ship. While we don't know it now, we will later learn that a group of aspiring bourgeois young men distrust Jacques from the get-go, and see him as someone through which to assert their masculinity and social superiority on the journey. But then a storm threatens the masculinity of the young card-players; one airs confessions in the wake of what he perceives will be his death by shipwreck, while Jacques becomes a heroic sailor in a storm. The card-players' masculinity is threatened by their seeming femininity-in-relation to and witnessed by Jacques, the seemingly superior-by-bravery male. In this sense (Esther as) Jacques' *remarkable masculinity* is consistent with Flanagan's characterization of typical female-to-male cross-dressing stories for young people. Here it is dependent upon the feminizing of the card players.

In this whole trajectory, it is the simultaneity of the crossings that Esther has achieved as passer until the outings, this multicrossing that has now *come into view*, that is to say, *into doubt*, which produces and sustains confusion. This in turn sustains Hocquart's subsequent interest in, attraction to and investment in controlling Esther, of determining how the seemingly unpinnable may be pinned. It also makes clear an intersectional entwining, a lack of separability of axes in McKay's crafting of Esther / Jacques' passings. There is not solely a female-to-male crossing. It is as if the spyglass through which Hocquart surveys the port from his residence is turned upon the body of this multicrosser. Hocquart grapples to read what he sees up close. Social class refracts as Europe's dark(ened) others, which then gather the light to focus on this same body as othered male (Jewish) body, under the looking glass revealed to be a female body without physical confirmation of its perceived Jewish otherness. All this confusion seems to be solved, at least for the moment, by the undeniably clear fact of a female body revealed in the proverbial spotlight.

From the moment of this outing before Hocquart, "boy" becomes "girl." But there are other doubts still. This is definitely a female, but not just any female. Social standing is still in doubt, as is French Catholicness; she is still suspected of being a Jew. In the second interrogation, into which Hocquart and Esther bring an accumulation of suspicions, Esther self-outs as Jewish under duress. Hocquart sees this now Jewish female as simultaneously multiple and contradictory: "defiant and arresting, contemplative and shy" (10). Esther's age may well have remained stable and unsuspected, but it's unclear if "girl" is a perception of age, or a reflection of attitude

toward femaleness. This in turn cycles back to bring into question whether "boy" reflects a perception of age or an attitude toward the lower classes that prevents entrance into a masculinity reserved for the likes of Hocquart. The "proud dignity" continues to be read here in the female, has migrated from male to female, and is in fact amplified by the femaleness itself, making a far leap from boy sailor; "girl" now becomes a courtly "princess", heightening both her allure and the contradiction between her elegance and her presumed underclass position. Esther graduates in Hocquart's perception from "girl" to "woman." The physical markers of otherness—the eyes, the aquiline features, the exotic quality, have all traveled across from male to female as markers of otherness, but these are in fact inseparable from the class confusion that also travels across from male to female, while age seems destabilized (girl-woman-girl), aided perhaps by Esther's self-outing as a seventeen year-old.¹⁰⁰

As Esther enters the room in the third meeting with Hocquart, he has the impulse, quickly suppressed, to rise to greet her, such is her "grace of a princess," a gendered modification of "proud dignity" (18). Furthermore, she knows Latin. Her Jewishness gathers "proud dignity" and educatedness, and produces the viability of an upper class gendered performance that may well threaten to unravel Hocquart's presumed social standing. He refuses to be "bewitched." In that refusal and recognition of witchiness, femaleness is pathologized, but it is a certain kind of othered femaleness, Esther's Jewish femaleness, an unpinnable amalgam of confusion around social standing, exoticism and femaleness.

In these introductory nineteen pages of passing, doubting and outing, McKay has produced Esther as an othered female, whose gender is entirely decipherable through the body's undressing, while her otherness is decipherable only partially, only approximately, through social standing as a repertoire of behaviour, carriage, knowledge, made somewhat explainable through Jewishness. The only categories that seem incontestably definable, stable, in Hocquart's perception, and in McKay's representations, are "male" and "female." However, the only real certainty is "female body" because we know, according to Hocquart, how to differentiate "Jewish male body" and "not Jewish male body." To borrow from Garber, there is crisis everywhere, to be seen through the outed Jewish female body, *whatever that is*. The crisis is that only its femaleness as sexed body is definable. McKay has produced Jewishness for Hocquart, and thus far for us, as an intriguing, recognizable but unknown, unknowable otherness. Only Esther's telling of her story can reveal what that unknown/able is. The naked body tells its femaleness, that it seems is sure. She must tell the rest, and thereby quell the crisis.

Colonial visibility and the intercultural ideal¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰McKay has chosen to make Esther three years younger than she claimed to be upon arrival Quebec.

¹⁰¹I use "intercultural" here in the sense that Esther and Philippe represent an exchange across difference, and the exchange between Esther and the "Negro slave girl" also represents an exchange, or rapprochement across difference. My choice is simply based on the prefix "inter." "Intercultural" and "multicultural" have been understood and deployed in different ways in different contexts. For example, Quebec's official policy is one of "interculturalism," where originary French Catholic culture is centred and other cultures are seen to coexist with it. Canadian state policy is one of multiculturalism, a policy meant to underscore ethnic, cultural, gender, sexual and other rights. It has been criticized for hiding the mechanisms of racism and settler colonialism. McKay's novel upholds belief in Canadian multiculturalism. Debates about multiculturalism will come up later in the dissertation, which will clarify how these unfold in

When Esther is housed in Quebec subsequent to the outings, she decides she will try to re-disguise herself as male, board a ship and escape. She goes out one evening dressed as the maid she is meant to be, locates the captain of a ship going to the Caribbean via Louisiana and pays passage for "her brother." That night she alters the clothing of the dead husband of the widow with whom she is housed, and at dawn leaves dressed as a boy with her maid's cloak wrapped round a loaf of bread and tossed over her shoulder. She hopes that the widow still sleeps. On her way out, she passes a child feeding chickens in a yard, and "a Negro slave girl carrying laundry on her head" (283). Esther smiles at the girl, who does not return the smile. When the bullies from the ship that got Jacques arrested for thievery turn out to be bound for the same ship going to Louisiana, they recognize Jacques and cry foul. Esther ducks behind a horse trough in order to shed her male garb, but a dog pestering her threatens to reveal her hiding place. The slave girl calls the dog away, and blocks the view of the horse trough just as soldiers pass. "She felt human eyes upon her. She looked up into the black face of the slave girl. There was no expression on her face, only recognition of one trapped girl looking at another" (285). The slave girl becomes accomplice to Esther's escape in one of only two in-group recognition moments in the novel. The suggestion is that the slave girl recognizes the gender pass as an in-group clairvoyant, to use Amy Robinson's terms, and facilitates not the pass itself, but escape from it (Robinson 1994). The slave girl is a witness-ally in a fleeting moment of interracial relation as solidarity. This momentarily acknowledges the reality of slavery in Canada and does so as *an intercultural moment of gender solidarity*, then immediately displaces to the margins (again) the slave girl, who doesn't speak (who perhaps "speaks" through her earlier refusal/choice not to smile), after she has served to propel the story, and the novel's key theme, forward. She is a stand-in, a vital but mostly invisible presence, and also the only stranger-ally to Esther in the novel. Philippe begins as a stranger-ally vital to propelling the story forward too, and is also vital to the theme of intercultural solidarity, but he of course will garner central presence, sustained visibility as love interest, the only insider-ally to the multicrossings, this multicrossing to become fuel for his attraction to Esther.

This is not the only reference to slavery in the novel. Long before her departure for New France, we view in port with Esther the cleaning of a slaving ship, on the beach in La Rochelle. Here, McKay reverses the trajectory of colonial voyage, which would typically be La Rochelle - Africa - New World, revealing her explicit wish to expose Esther, and her readers, to the fact of slavery. Esther is drawn down the beach by the smell. Philippe tries to keep her from proceeding. Enslaved people are crammed into circular wooden cages ashore, while a pock-marked slaver watches over them. "Who are these strange people—were they people at all?" (183) Esther is here made a naïve, ignorant child who leads us to the acknowledgement of the slave trade. Her not-knowing suggests a cordoning off not just of Jewish life, or Jewish female life, but of French life more broadly from slavery, the cordoning off a strategy of claiming innocence.¹⁰² She is simultaneously drawn in and repulsed, compelled to

the Quebec context. An elaboration of Canadian multiculturalism vs. Quebec interculturalism is beyond the scope of this dissertation.
102 Colonial historians have shown however the extent to which slavery touched even the most seemingly removed households and locales. See for instance "The Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Project," in which researchers led by Catherine Hall at University

move right up to the horror, to reach her hand into the cages. "It was hell that was parading before her. Esther could hardly watch, and yet could not look away" (184). Philippe explains that they will be shipped to the Americas, and some to New France. These enslaved people on the beach, and the enslaved girl in Quebec City are part of a map of momentary, anonymous presence that underscores the theme of freedom in the novel. Notably, the enslaved that seem doubtfully human to Esther are to be found in the so-called Old World, the one who facilitates her escape in a moment of intercultural gender solidarity is to be found in the colony. This suggests, surely inadvertently on the part of the author, that the colony has graduated a slave into consideration as (almost) human, that the colony is benevolent, a necessity, more humane.

When she is sent on the ship to Amsterdam, Esther notices among the hubbub at the Bayonne port Muslims trading, and notes how "exotic" and "fine" they look. She notes the only silent person in the bustle, "an elegantly dressed black slave guarding his master's trunks" (65). These people will board the ship that will go down, a moment in which the novel's primary theme is explicitly named: "Gentile, Jew, Muslim, rich, poor, slave—all equals in death, and all crying out in despair to the same God, the father of Abraham. The ship rolled, the sea gulped and the calls of the dying were abruptly muted. The ship became a stone, and the stone ship sank" (74). Esther witnesses this equality only in death, floating in a life-raft, saved by Philippe, about to begin her battle for equality and to live her demonstration of intercultural possibility.

Prior to Pierre's witnessing of the slave cages on the beach, just after Esther has visited the beach toward which Philippe rescued her from the shipwreck, she looks out at the tall ships at the pier. Among that familiar hubbub of "[h]arlots and pickpockets," "beaming merchants," "great ladies, with their well-dressed black slaves in tow," a crowd cheer draws Esther's attention to a caged tiger being unloaded, in its wooden cage. Esther cannot look because "Once caged, nothing lived long" (155). Shortly thereafter, Esther seeks employment in that port as Pierre, soon to be reunited with Philippe. Thus we move from well-dressed black slaves to a tiger in a cage to caged slaves to the eyes of recognition of mutual entrapment in the slave girl at Quebec, all silent markers on a

College London map those who received government compensation at the moment of abolition (Legacies). In The Netherlands, Dienne Hondius has shown free Black people to be present in The Netherlands from the 1600s as musicians, dancers, soldiers and servants. She recounts a case from 1596 when a ship of slaves arrived en route to the Caribbean. The slaves were declared to be free by the local authorities upon arrival, though the captain ultimately won the argument and left again with his "cargo" (Hondius 2008). Despite the official position against enslavement in The Netherlands, Hondius shows evidence for the likelihood that there were Black people living under conditions of enslavement. She pays particular attention to the Sephardic Jewish population. Hondius' research complicates a simplistic understanding of the movements of Africans as following only the route of enslavement, from the African continent to the so-called New World, separate from the metropole. Her research also shows that ships occasionally could move back north to Europe from Africa with enslaved people on board, though this was not the typical pattern. In my own research in the French archives I have found occasional cases of free Black sailors living in France in the 18th century. For example, "Alexis, nègre libre" is a 30 year-old listed as a non-marine officer on a ship bound from Nantes to Martinique via Cadiz. Alexis works as a cook alongside an eighteen year-old Nicolas Lamitre (spelling unclear), himself a baker (ADLA 1215 no. 75, fol. 5). On other ships making the transatlantic journey one can find a captain and his slave, so it is possible that one could find on the same ship free Black labourers and enslaved Africans. A recent issue of the *Revue du Cercle Généalogique d'Ille-et-Vilaine* in Brittany, France, recounts the lives of two Africans aged 10 and 16 who arrived to Brittany after French ships conquered English ones and stole their cargo in the early 1700s. These youngsters were purportedly enslaved on the British ships, but were subsequently baptized and worked in maritime trades for equal pay as free people through several generations, married and integrated locally (Delarose 2014). Free and enslaved Black people were living in French port cities throughout the 18th century. See Palmer for the case of La Rochelle (2008).

narrative landscape about freedom and equality. The novel betrays its literary tradition, recalling the hauntings that Morrison and Byrd point us to, the extent to which an American literary canon's emergence depended from the outset on the silent Africanist figure (Morrison 1992) and as Byrd asserts, settler colonial literature's reliance on the Indigenous body, for what she calls the transit of empire, ongoing (Byrd 2011). This reflects the ambiguity that emerges in settler colonial literature for children as it attempts to make visible the realities of colonization (Bradford 2007, 24).

Esther's up-close view is of course framed within Hocquart's bird's eye view; before Esther has been compelled to tell her story, or as she asserts, *chooses* to tell her story, Hocquart—who once gazed into the portrait of the handsome King (object of Jacques' arrest) as if he were hoping it was a mirror—takes stock of his city, Quebec, through a bronze spyglass. What he watches is a slave auction, both "Negroes" and "*les Sauvages*" awaiting their fate. He opines that "Negroes" are the better of the slaves. "*Les Sauvages*," he thinks, "... would rather die in the wilds than face a life of free food, honest work and the opportunity to have their souls saved" (8). Africa-bound escape would be impossible, and "the Negroes" would be unable to survive the wilds here, he thinks.¹⁰³ Again, this moment serves to make slavery and Indigenous peoples appear in a story that is, after all, set on Indigenous territory in the time of colonization and slavery. But what is the narrative purpose? Clearly it is an attempt at "authentic" mapping of the place and time, and an acknowledgement of slavery and colonisation. It also uses "*les Sauvages*" to foreground Hocquart's belief in redemption through conversion to Christianity, foreshadowing the offer he will make to Esther. This sets up a likeness between *les Sauvages* and the Jews, through shared refusal of Christianity. Just as Jews will later in the novel be set apart from the slave trade itself through Esther's naïve viewing of slaves on the beach, here through Hocquart's viewing of Indigenous and African slaves, Jews are subtly aligned with the Indigenous, subtly set apart from the colonizers, as if Jews weren't also engaged in and with colonisation.

Hocquart's viewing of Indigenous slaves is the only time Indigenous people appear in the novel at all. The only subtle reference to Indigenous people elsewhere is in Hocquart's consideration of his own footwear preference, comparing French *souliers* (shoes) to *souliers sauvages* ("wild shoes" or "shoes of the savages" in other words, mocassins), the latter preferred. Indigenous people appear through Hocquart's spyglass, enslaved, to serve the narrative only to be removed from visibility almost immediately. What if the narrative *faithfully makes visible the invisibility that colonization produces*, by itself reproducing that erasure through such unspeaking presences of Indigenous and African enslaved people? This is akin to a question I asked regarding the commitment to historical accuracy that motivates the author's removal of the first person voice as seen in the original colonial record. I would argue that in both cases, historical fiction as imagining against dominant discourse seems to fail, even as Esther has mostly succeeded at passing as male.

¹⁰³He is unaware of the practice of Native-African alliance and of slave-ownership among Indigenous people of other Indigenous people and of Africans. These are not noted by the narrator. Whiteness is confirmed as the mediating centre between Indigenous and African, which precludes any possibility of direct engagement and relation.

The born impostor

If Esther seems an impostor in New France in Hocquart's eyes, she seems just as out of place and unknowable here in her place of origin. In the Jewish quarter of Saint-Esprit, and in her own family home, Esther is other. There is no doubt that she is female, there is no doubt that she is of marriageable age, but her actions and her appearance seem to mark her out as strange. On the one hand, it is her sense of individuality and disdain for the ordinary expectations of being female that mark her out as different in the eyes of those around her. Particularly intolerant to Esther's otherness are her maternal grandmother and her sister. But what is interesting to note here is an underlying passing that marks her environment, which she will inadvertently discover by overhearing her grandmother, and which points to an originary otherness that precedes any narrative action.

It turns out that Maman is not Esther's birth mother, and that in fact her birth mother, who died in labour, was an extramarital affair of Papa's. It is not even clear that this woman was Jewish, as if the lightning bolts of gold in Esther's often described eyes, the eyes that get her in trouble and draw attention to her, are traces of this unnamed dead woman, traces of this sordid affair, just as are, to some, the behaviours that mark Esther as odd and "beguiling." This illegitimacy might even unravel the assumption that the exotic look is exotic because Jewish, and re-inscribe it as exotic because hybrid. That Esther is illegitimate means that Esther's mother and her mother's mother pass as birth family to Esther, until Grandmère, in a fit of rage, curses her daughter for agreeing to raise a bastard child. Esther witnesses this conversation through the same hole in her bedroom floor through which she daily watches, and joins in as her father prays. Grandmère outs herself, her daughter and Esther as not blood related. Esther's otherness is revealed as an inscription written and read on her by those who know of her father's infidelity. In New France she is an impostor, in the sense that she has arrived disguising her femaleness and her Jewishness. But as McKay writes it, she is already an impostor from her very beginnings, as an illegitimate daughter. This illegitimacy is in fact posited by a Bayonne official in the archival evidence pertaining to the story. In a correspondence, authorities in Bayonne write to Hocquart that Esther "may be the illegitimate daughter of David Brandeau" (ANF 1739a). McKay changes "may be" to "is." If her birth mother were in fact not Jewish, as is a possibility in McKay's rendering, this would make "hybridity", or in-betweenness, unknowable. Thus, both Jewish and hybrid may be characterized by unknowability, and ambiguity about Esther's origins may serve to affirm the unknowability that attaches to Esther.

McKay's narrative choice to make Esther the product of her father's affair, and to stage a battle between Esther's grandmother and Esther's adopted mother over Esther's belonging, foregrounds a battle around assumptions of family as derived only through blood lineage. Esther's adopted mother taking in the child who may be the biological child of a prostitute and/or Gentile woman undermines assumptions of Jewishness as derived from blood lineage. Grandmère, on the other hand, doesn't doubt Esther's femaleness but she doubts the quality of her femaleness (daughter of a loose woman, possibly of a prostitute); upstanding femaleness here would be, it would seem, synonymous with Jewish. Precisely because of her origins, Esther can never be in Grandmère's

eyes, an upstanding Jewish woman, the ideal woman. Through this doubting, Grandmère reveals a pathologizing perception of women who are not upstanding Jews, a pathologizing that is in fact more subtly woven throughout the novel, as we will soon see.

This adopting of the other as one's own is important to the ideal of intercultural relation proposed in the novel through the relationship between Esther and Philippe. Esther's illegitimacy grounds the entire story in the generosity of Esther's non-biological mother, simultaneously raising Maman up, differentiating her from the primarily working-class Gentile women in the novel (though Maman's is a poor petty-merchant family), casting Maman as quintessentially morally upstanding, while at the same time, establishing a foundational example in the narrative of an adopting of the other as one's own. Maman is put forth as the ideal femininity, a Jewish femininity. It is also, however, couched in Maman's forgiveness of Papa and her defense of him to her enraged mother: "He is a good man who once went astray. Do not speak ill of him again" (51). Maman is helpless against her husband as he negotiates the arranged marriage of Esther to Red Mordecai, the rag-picker, and her "deportation" to Amsterdam.

In this originary impostor environment we first discover Esther's difference written in hers and her sister Sarah's mutual descriptions of each other, in a sequence in which self-perception may be confounded with the perception of the other. "Sarah was plump, short, with a face as flat as a matzo—she knew that was what Esther thought (22). "Sarah described Esther as thin, with a neck as long as a rope and hair and eyes like a witch's ... Everything about Esther was odd in Sarah's mind." Esther in turn, derides Sarah's inabilities: "A goat had better use for a needle than Sarah ... Sarah, the lump ... Sarah's bread could be used for doorstops." (20-21) It's unclear who is the "ugly sister" in this pair of opposites who share a bed, but despise each other. But the following description of Sarah is notable, in my estimation as a kind of racialized description that writes Esther's own racialized look, because of its focus on darkness: "Frizzy black hair poked out from under [Sarah's] bedcap, and two narrow black eyes glared from beneath her thick, bushy eyebrows" (21). Later Esther's red-streaked, silken hair, crafted only by potion and sun-exposure at Catherine's parlour will remake Esther as less black, less bushy, less "Jewish", a possibility suggested by Esther's eyes, shot through with gold, repeatedly noted for their remarkability. This Esther will enter a character landscape thick with tropes, particularly gendered tropes that reinforce difference, while upholding as ideal the nobility of a certain kind of Jewishness as Jewish femininity, which is alluded to but never clearly named.

Descriptive accumulation

Mieke Bal has argued for a foregrounding of the importance of description to narrative, counter to assumptions in literary studies that place description as almost inconsequential to narrative (2006, 96). She argues that description in fact makes the narrative. Esther is made through repeated descriptions of her bodily appearance, so that these descriptions, repeated from different viewpoints, accumulate like geological deposits.

The frequency operates to secure a base assumption, while Esther herself rarely comprehends representations of herself, nor generates her own image in her own words. A self-described Esther is practically invisible to us, just as she is in the colonial record. She does however describe others, contributing to the solidity of the descriptive geology even as McKay destabilizes certainties in episodes of doubting and outing. The social landscapes in which Esther, Camille, Pierre and Jacques exist, in McKay's novel, are troped through thick description. Esther, Pierre, Camille and Jacques are surrounded by women, and there is a particular dichotomy created between working-class Gentile women, on the one hand, and Esther's mother on the other, held up as the ideal, idealized in fact as othered. Celibate Catholic nuns too stand opposite the working-class Gentile woman. Description paints a noble Jewishness, contrasted against an uncivilized, brutish Gentileness through the bodies of working-class women, predominantly widowed or single, as we will see.

Not long after Esther embarks from Cook's kitchen as Pierre Mausiette, she sits on a seawall overlooking the port of Biarritz and observes a group of women cleaning a ship's deck. I register in this moment a shift in gendered vision to a double-vision. Esther as Pierre sees the women, noting their "fine, sturdy legs" under their hoisted up skirts. She watches them work, then her eyes drift up to the young sailors in the rigging looking down. She follows their gaze back down to the deck and sees it is the maids' "big bottoms they were dreaming about" (155-56). Perhaps Esther has taken a cue from the sailors and dreams himself, in one of the few doors ajar to a queer reading in the novel. The stereotyping of working-class Gentile women will feature strongly in the novel's narrative, part of a masculinizing that coincides with widowhood, with these women crafted as the ultimate ignorant dupes upon which Esther's passing success depends. I am reminded of Ann McClintock's study of the fetishizing and racializing of working class women as objects of heterosexual cross-class male desire (1995), but here they are never crafted as objects of the multicrosser's desire, except in the single open door noted above.

Cook, Philippe's aunt, is the first Gentile woman she encounters, and she is to Esther, by first description, "... stout, plain and grim ... Her touch was anything but motherly" (81). She is later described through likenesses to rats and mice (91), called "an old crow", (107) "a chicken on parade" (108), "growl[ing] like a dog" (162), and "that cow you call your aunt" (191), descriptors stemming from her unbearable and brutal cruelty to young Pearl, who in the end she will beat to death. The Baker with whom Pierre works for a year is "a merry, middle-aged woman" with "[a] huge bosom that started under her invisible chin and slid toward the good woman's knees ... And her colossal bottom could be seen from the front. To be hugged by this woman would be to fall into a vat of risen dough" (225). She likens her arm to a sail, notes that "Thinking was a strain for the baker at the best of times" (227) and when the pompous retired soldier Esther will later work for comes in, Baker puts on airs that Esther finds ridiculous. "As a cow might curtsy, so did the baker," a comment that marks Esther a class apart from Baker (233).

Note that these women are by and large not referred to narrationally by proper names. Cook is always only Cook. The baker does introduce herself to Esther as "Madame Seruane" but tells her to call her "Baker" (229). "Madame Seruane" is in narrational usage, but with the effect of underscoring Esther's politeness in

contrast to the baker's sloppiness and lack of intelligence. She is primarily referred to as "the baker" in narration, and her bread is far inferior to the bread that Esther provides using innovations like second grinding to eliminate sharp seeds. Such peasant or working-class women gain proper names in the colonies (not unlike how the colony makes the slave almost human, or more human than those on the Old World's shore), although that they are named might have a relationship to the fact that Esther is now outed as female and treated as female. Perhaps because of being female and having been shown to have committed the fraudulent act of passing, Esther is now expected to show deference in a way that she wasn't while male in the Old World. In any case, descriptions of these women are classed, hostile characterizations.

Among the women who take in Esther, the first widow who houses her in Quebec is Mme. Bonviet, an old woman whose spittle flies when she speaks. She too is huge, and smokes a pipe. "Without a corset to hem in the fat, her great bulk swayed freely ... A skunk would have to run from the woman's skull ... If farts could be fuel, the woman would have flown" (275). Esther likens her to "a great beached whale" with hands "as big as bear paws" (276). Unlike these women above, Mme. Caron, Esther's second host in Quebec, has a living husband.¹⁰⁴ And while these above women are full of vitality and personality, Mme. Caron is pregnant, sick and ruined by so many births, "pale and faded, with wide, vacant eyes ... And whether the cause was rot or the fist, the woman was without her front teeth ... There was no telling how old she was—likely in her thirtieth year She seemed hardly like a living person at all, though not quite a ghost, either" (291).

While the first two women—Cook and the baker—are unaware of Esther's femaleness and Jewishness, the last two—Mme. Bonviet and Mme. Caron—host Esther after the interrogation and outings with Hocquart, and so to them she is a Jewish girl. All but Cook are explicitly anti-Semitic. Mme. Bonviet in a drunken state, reaches up under Esther's skirt to see if she can cop a feel of her Jewish tail, which could be read as a sexual gesture. Mme. Caron too is anti-Semitic from the outset, distrusts Esther's talking to the baby, calls her a Jewish slut, and demands her removal for bewitching her husband and son.¹⁰⁵ Baker had never seemed anti-Semitic until she defends the truth of the anti-Semitic song her children sing; she asserts that Jews started the plague by poisoning the wells. Baker's latent anti-Semitism suggests that Cook too would have been revealed the same in due course. These women are all abundantly described, fat, thin, likened to animals, in my estimation characterized as unwomanly. The ones "free" in widowhood are beastly, Mme. Caron with the living husband, barely alive. Are these meant to be portraits of Esther's possible futures? We are positioned on the side of Esther throughout all these encounters, and are guided narrationally to look down upon these horrible women. Esther comes to seem more and more like her own adopted mother. Esther is positioned as both a victim of these Gentiles, and as a

¹⁰⁴The husband and his grown son will unexpectedly enter the cabin just as Esther is bathing, interrupting the only moment in the novel where Esther "feels wonderful," the warm water running between her breasts suggesting enjoyment of her own body. She will thereafter be dismissed as a Jewish slut and witch who has bewitched Mr. Caron and son.

¹⁰⁵In several instances in the novel, Gentiles frame Jewish women as prostitutes or temptresses, while Esther's grandmother frames Esther in this way not because she is Jewish but because she is illegitimate. Because there is a possibility to read the biological mother as possibly Gentile, Esther's framing by the grandmother as temptress may be connected to seeing Esther as (part) Gentile.

rescuer of other victims of Gentile brutality.

Against these women, there is also Catherine, the courtesan, and she is barely described at all. Instead she occupies the narrative in space, speech and act, while she makes Esther into Camille. Are we to imagine Catherine as preceding Esther/Camille in a lineage of exotic beauty? The narrator positions Catherine as “a beguiling woman of no apparent age ... there was nothing common about Catherine” (83). Esther wonders, “Who was this strange woman dressed from head to toe in mauve silk with the miniature pink roses racing up and down her dress?” and later notes her booming voice (85). Twice Catherine glides across a room, an action that Hocquart will attribute to the outed Esther later in the novel as princess-like, though it is Jacques he will see as beguiling. Catherine is indirectly described through her surroundings, the ornateness, the abundance, the people with whom she keeps company, through her shifting perception of Esther (from “it” and “a street urchin” to “ungrateful wretch” and “a common scullery maid” to “silly girl” to “my little protégé”). The one person with whom Catherine keeps regular close company is a caricature of a man named Monsieur Bernard, who to Esther is “an odd-looking insect of a man” (100) who “walked toward her like a little grasshopper” (100), adorned in “a profusion of colours” (101), a man who Catherine says doesn’t like girls, whose “laugh was hysterical like an exotic bird in a cage” (144). The suggestion here, though not explicitly made, is that Mr. Bernard is gay. It is his idea to make Esther the protégé. Catherine’s world is peopled by such caricatures as Bernard. In *Esther* Gentile worlds are painted as dangerous, brutish, stupid, mired in poverty or callously consumptive in the midst of a broader poverty. Largely undesirable, save for offering opportunity for Esther’s freedom.

Maman, like Catherine, is hardly directly described: “Maman’s beautiful brown eyes were large and round” (29); “Maman’s voice was soulful and soft” (50); “She looked tired. Dark circles were under her eyes, and even her wig, always so carefully brushed and put on, seemed disheveled” (53). Maman’s speech, and Esther’s memories of Maman’s words, position Maman, noted above, as a loyal wife; as a protector and defender of Esther; as the soft, ideal embodiment of unwavering love, and as a devout woman leading a moral life. The utter opposite of Catherine, the utter opposite of Cook. Whenever Maman is present, prayer accompanies action accompanies imparting of or drawing on religious teachings.

Twice Esther is taken in by nuns, first as Pierre, where she works as a messenger and gardener. Sister Angeline matter-of-factly responds to Pierre’s asking her why she is helping him. She quotes Biblical passage, asserting it as her Christian duty. She sees Pierre as planted by God in order to provide for the convent. Sister Angeline calls Pierre “child,” and is like many of the other women in the novel, “old”: “Esther turned her head slowly and looked into sea-blue eyes half buried in a nest of wrinkles. The face smiled and more wrinkles appeared” (206). Mother Superior is middle-aged, and has an air of wealth, privilege and authority. “She was tall ... regal in appearance and dressed in sober clothing befitting her station” (213). Notably, descriptions of the religious women focus on the face and the comportment, but not on the body itself, so different from the characterizations of Cook, Baker, and the others. Mother Superior is willing to overlook that the boy before her is flea-bitten and ill

because the convent needs a messenger boy. Mother Superior requires only that Pierre prove he is baptized, and when he does through quoting prayer, her demeanour becomes loving and kind. She says Pierre can stay until he grows whiskers, or in other words, though not explicitly said, until he hits puberty and starts desiring or being desired by the young aspiring nuns. In this gendered space of silence and prayer, Pierre can find his freedom in solitude, since his maleness keeps him from the regimented lives of the nuns. Later on and as a last resort in Quebec, Esther is placed in the Ursuline convent. The nuns in Quebec too are welcoming and kind, and old, in Esther's perception. "The Mother Superior, a gaunt woman with liquid eyes and skin as thin as parchment ... gave a regal nod ... This nun was kind, gentle even" (299).¹⁰⁶ There is a mutual recognition, in fact, between Esther and the Mother Superior, of a certain nobility. Esther reports to Hocquart that the Ursulines are excellent teachers. Esther recognizes that in this nun's mind, conversion is a foregone conclusion.

All these women take Esther or Pierre in for financial or other benefit, a barter, which is the thread that overarches the storyline. To Cook and the baker, she is an extra worker, child-minder, teacher, cook, cleaner, baker. To Mme. Bonviet and Mme. Caron, a servant and a source of income for her room and board from the Crown. To the nuns of Clisson, she is a messenger boy, to the nuns in Quebec, a soul to be converted, to Catherine, her key to entrance into the highest echelons of court life, and from each of them she receives food and shelter, and in some cases, small earnings. In all her relationships with women and girls in the novel except with her adopted mother, there is a stated or unstated barter relationship. If we add to the above Esther's relationships with the beaten servant girl, Pearl, and the disabled nun-in-training who falls in love with "him" at Clisson, in both these cases Esther is made to position herself as rescuer, a position that ultimately she fails at upholding, instead putting her rescuees at risk; Pearl dies, and Claire is made to do penance on her knees alone in the chapel for days on end. Prior to this, Esther is in a care-giving position to her little brother, but loses him in the Gentile marketplace. Esther is at the receiving end in several other rescue relationships: Philippe rescues Esther from the shipwreck and serves as an insider to her multicrossing, motivated in large part by his own desire. Marie rescues Esther by teaching her Christian prayers and by intervening in her arrest and arranging her safe passage to the New World, and she stands to gain little from doing so. This places Marie in a surrogate mother position, one in which Marie can succeed in the rescue, where Esther's own mother failed in not being able to stop her departure to Amsterdam and marriage to Red Mordecai (though of course her mother rescued Esther from the start by taking in the child as her own).¹⁰⁷

Marie is positioned as a special case, and not coincidentally. It is indeed her house into which Esther

¹⁰⁶Given the time period of Esther's stay in Quebec, that McKay places her at the Ursuline convent, and not with the Hospitalières, means that this Mother Superior would have been another Esther, Esther Wheelwright, a child-captive of the Abenaki in the border wars between the British settlers and First Nations in what would become New England states of the United States, who would go on to embrace Catholicism against the Puritanism of her ancestors to become the most senior religious woman of her time and place. See the recent memoir by her direct descendant, Julie Wheelwright (2011), who also wrote *Amazons and Military Maids: Women Who Dressed as Men in Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness* (1989).

¹⁰⁷The secretary-narrator ends the tale by framing the interrogator-intendant as ultimately Esther's rescuer, and the secretary himself as the rescuer of the whole story through telling it.

arrives, working first in the kitchen, then in the role of her daughter's protégée. Marie too will benefit from the financial success of her daughter Catherine. But she prepares Esther for what will later be escape. Just before Marie ambiguously outs herself as possibly Jewish from the window of her carriage, having seen to Pierre's release from prison, Esther asks, "Why are you helping me?" just as she asks Sister Angeline. Marie's cryptic answer suggests that she sees herself in Esther. She says, but never completes the thought, that she followed her heart once and it landed her somewhere where she wished she had not arrived. We can imagine that that place of arrival could have entailed becoming a courtesan and perhaps becoming a Christian, two transformations that Marie (the *conversa*?) enables Esther to avoid. I argue that if Marie is Jewish, she is the lone in-group clairvoyant to Esther's pass from Jewish to Catholic in the novel. Marie is described even less than Catherine and Maman: "The woman's laugh was not harsh like Catherine's but soft, like a gentle rain," "her eyes seemed luminous," and "so dignified, so regal and fine," (251) not unlike how some of the nuns are described. Gentleness and softness are elsewhere attributed to Maman, and to some of the nuns. Maman is the first to take Esther in and Marie is the one who enables her supposed freedom. Both are perhaps Jewish women, and unlike the other women in the novel, she is not other to them.

While I have focused above primarily on the femininities made available in the novel, an array of masculinities is produced too. Among the men who speak in the novel, most seem undesirable (in terms of potential object of Esther's heterosexual desire or in terms of Esther's desire to become male): caricatures like Bernard the insect-like man who doesn't like girls (the first of two suggestions of homosexuality in the novel), and the potato-headed man who consumes Camille's beauty and feeds her pork at the feast; the opium-addicted, war-weakened psychologically fragile retired soldier La Chapelle for whom Pierre works as a lackey; Papa; the petty card players who accuse Jacques of theft; the Secretary-narrator; the Intendant-interrogator; the captain who is perhaps the most innocuous; and Philippe. Esther's story is initiated from the outset by her father, and the story subsequently falls to key driving forces, primarily male: Hocquart, who interrogates and then facilitates escape; the Secretary to whom we owe the telling of the tale; and Philippe the only witness-ally to the multicrossing, and seemingly the only likeable speaking male character in the novel, one who could be both an object of Esther's desire (heterosexual or for friendship as McKay sublimates it), *as well as* an object of her desire to *become* male as a means to accessing freedom.

In mapping out the production of masculinities and femininities in the novel as described above, what we see is a three-pronged effect: low status Gentile women are crafted as absolute other to a noble, idealized Jewish femininity; male characters are the key driving forces in the sequence of events; and Philippe the Gentile sailor is the only trustworthy male character, the only witness-ally to the multicrossing, the embodiment of dual loci of Esther's desire: object of heterosexual desire, and desire to be male. I will now move on to analyze this desire in more detail, importantly underscoring the ways in which heterosexuality is inscribed *through the axis of Jewish-Christian masculinity*.

Jewish-heterosexual failure as success postponed

McKay's Esther is adamantly disinclined to marriage, though she has been crafted already as heterosexually inclined: while on an errand for her father, Esther finds a way to "accidentally" bump into studious Isaac, the rabbi's son, so that he will look up and see her. The ruse is a disaster furthering Esther's othering as strange; Isaac literally bumps into her, and spills his books in the mud to the delight of his mates. That Esther wants Isaac to notice her, and that Isaac's noticing her comes in the form of a humiliating disaster for both parties, paints in dramatic tones Esther's first attempt at heterosexuality as a failure that is foundational in the text, a failure at *Jewish* heterosexuality for Esther. Importantly, this desire for Isaac is never uttered in any kind of the first person voice speech or internalized whispers by Esther, but through the third-person voiced blurry boundary between narrator's intrusion and a focalizing Esther: "How would [Isaac] ever see her if he never looked up? ... It wasn't as if she wanted to marry, but if she were to marry ... If she kept looking at [her brother] and walked straight ahead she would collide with Isaac. Then he would have to look up at her and *then* she could beg his pardon" (34-35). Isaac will later presumably marry Esther's sister, so she surmises when she happens upon her father's house while a wandering impoverished boy, and sees the family at dinner through the window.

Failure at Jewish heterosexuality embodied in Esther's invisibility before Isaac will later play to the theme of interculturality, as Esther's opportunity for heterosexual success is to be found in the physically labouring Gentile sailor, Philippe. To marry Red the Rag-picker and produce children with him, according to her father's wishes and view of freedom, would be a Jewish heterosexual success, but not a romantic one. Love and choice are required for that, after all, in a 21st century teen story. For a romantic heterosexual success, McKay's Esther will have to step outside Jewish circles, hence Philippe. Esther will be noticed heterosexually in a way that she entertains positively only once she has been sent from the Jewish context of Saint-Esprit. The studious Jewish boy does not see her, but the physically labouring Gentile sailor Philippe does. They lock gazes on board the ship, suggestive of an impending love affair between a Gentile boy and a Jewish girl in motion between geographies. Their gaze embodies "intercultural understanding" as a main message of the novel. The intercultural possibility is heterosexualized through Esther and Philippe's central relationship, which begins undeniably as simultaneously heterosexual and cross-cultural *visual* attraction: "In front of her, and not farther than an arm's length, she beheld the broad, smiling face of a sailor. He had light blue eyes, white teeth and flaxen hair. He was handsome beyond measure. Their eyes locked. What was she doing? He was a boy, and a Gentile boy, too! Shame came upon her so quickly it was all she could do to lift her hand and hide her reddening face" (69-70).

The ship wrecks, as is the claim in the colonial record, and Esther is saved to land *by* Philippe (not with). The heterosexuality of their connection will become a suppressed possibility in what McKay reframes as exclusively a "friendship" when Esther becomes Pierre in order to escape the courtesan life that would, it would seem, make realization of her intercultural heterosexual desire for Philippe impossible. From this moment forward, Esther's desire will reside there, sublimated, and Philippe's desire will not go away. Consider the following

episode, after Esther has become Pierre and has just had a conversation in which Philippe has recounted the loss of his family to the plague:

"You are a good brother and a good friend," whispered Esther.

They were on a ship with a full compliment of sailors and there were eyes about, even in the dark. Esther could offer no more comfort than words, although she would have dearly loved to put her arms around him. ... Why did she stir him so, and what should he do about his feelings? It wasn't that he didn't know what to do with a woman. But Esther wasn't like any female he'd ever known or was ever likely to know. What could he do? It was Esther he loved, but it was Pierre Mausiette who was lying beside him. (179-180)

For the remainder of the novel, we will be left with the memory of Esther's initial attraction to Philippe, the persistence of Philippe's desire for Esther, and a later promise from Philippe to Esther that they can remain "friends" and not have to marry if she were to join him in Louisiana, even as he expresses to himself his ongoing desire for her. The possibility of the realization of intercultural heterosexual desire is the final word in the novel, when Esther boards ship for Louisiana in the novel's final pages, she passes again as a means to an end: reunion with Philippe.

Passing as unremarkability? Passive passing, active passing

There are only three externally imposed outings in the novel. The first is the gender-outing in Hocquart's office, when Jacques is forced to lower his trousers to prove he is Christian. Only Hocquart witnesses this moment. The next is when Grandmère inadvertently outs Esther's origins in a conversation Esther overhears. The last externally imposed outing is by a cabin boy who overhears Philippe call Pierre Esther, and then discloses this to the angry Spanish crew to affirm his own value.¹⁰⁸ All other outings are voluntary self-outings: by Esther, by Marie, and by the narrator who reveals himself in the end.¹⁰⁹

In McKay's *Esther*, I would put forth that there are two types of passing: what I will call "active passing" and "passive passing." While the distinctions are not so clear-cut, when we look at passing across the axis of gender in the novel, the character Esther actively disguises her gender through costume and through bodily behaviour when she becomes Pierre. She creates a new persona as the vehicle of the pass. When we look at passing across the axis of class standing, most obvious is the transformation from Esther to Camille in the parlour of Catherine Churiau. Here Esther is actively transformed through dress, makeup and hairstyle, and she is physically trained in the etiquette and games of the courtly or court-aspiring classes. Her body is trained to perform

¹⁰⁸Any question of Jewishness does not factor into the cabin boy's betrayal. This crew is, I would contend, othered as dark and brutish, a kind of racialization and typical trope of Spanishness, also imposed on Esther / Jacques by Hocquart at the outset of the novel.

¹⁰⁹To Philippe, she outs herself as Esther while passing as Pierre. To Pearl, she outs herself in the marketplace as Esther while passing as Pierre. To Marie, she unconsciously outs herself as Jewish, and importantly here likely only to readers who might be in the in-group. To Esther, Marie in turn consciously outs herself as Jewish. To the cabin boy who becomes a witness-betrayer, Philippe accidentally outs Pierre as female. To Hocquart, Esther outs herself as Jewish. Hocquart is a lone witness to this outing. To Claire, Pierre outs himself as non-Catholic, while sustaining a gender passing and while sustaining the invisibility of Jewishness.

a certain carriage, to realize specific tasks. Camille, we could say, is actively made.

Once male, passing is invisibility, Esther as Pierre discovers. She had been hyper-visible in the various landscapes she crossed up to this moment as a female, because of her purported inability to perform “female” properly and because of how her origins precede her and shape others' viewing of her. As a male it seems she is utterly unremarkable, until Hocquart. In the streets of the Jewish quarter, running an errand with her little brother Joseph, she is an object of disdain and of potential attack as an unmarried woman out in public unaccompanied by a man. Outside the Jewish quarter, where she has transgressed with her brother by even venturing, she is the object of potential sexual violence by Gentile boys who recognize her outsider status, presumably by her clothing, and/or by being an unaccompanied female, or possibly by her racialized appearance, though neither we nor Esther can figure how. On the ship bound for Amsterdam, Philippe is taken by her. As Camille, she is meant to be an object of desire, of constant scrutiny. As Pierre, she suddenly experiences not being noticed at all: “As Camille, her every movement had been scrutinized. But no one noticed a scruffy boy in peasant's clothes” (154). Freedom, it seems, is a layered invisibility that is not only gendered; he is invisible because he is a *Gentile peasant boy*. He will be noticed as a risk and a pest only when he becomes unemployed, hungry and disheveled, and taken for a “street urchin,” but still he will be assumed Gentile.

When we look at passing from Jewish to Christian, strategic omission and context make the pass. We could characterize passing as Christian as contextually assumed in most cases—in Cook's kitchen, in the baker's kitchen, in the ports, on the ships, while working for the retired soldier. When necessary, the pass as Christian is asserted through speech omission, such as when she explains to Philippe that she can't eat pork, and he suggests she not mention this to anyone. That speech omission as a strategy of passing is underscored when Esther accidentally speaks too much, for instance, when she argues with Marie about the Biblical story behind her name, or when she allows her adopted little sister to make bread with her and the girl questions the unfamiliar prayers Esther says over the bread. At the convent, strategic utterance enables the pass; Pierre proves his Catholicism by reciting prayers for the Mother Superior, prayers taught her by Marie, who will later subtly reveal herself as Jewish to Esther. Most obviously underscoring the passivity of the pass from Jewish to Christian is the fact that Esther's Jewishness is only revealed when she chooses to reveal it *herself* through speech under questioning by Hocquart.

Clearly, speech is not passive per se; it is action. But what I am drawing attention to is that what I have called a passive pass does not depend on the modification of bodily presentation, but on words. In what I am calling a passive pass, the body isn't concealed, altered or disguised. In McKay's *Esther*, Esther's gender and class cross-dressing are made visible to us through active passing heavily dependent upon visual cues—cues of dress and comportment—whereas there seems to be no religion cross-dress and/or race cross-dress to be made *visible*, rather only to be named through speech. In some cases this is an explicit naming—“I am Jewish”—and in other cases it is speech that signals tacit knowledge of the practices of the group into which the pass is made, for

instance, recitation of the right prayer at the right moment. It might be that, if we return to Garber, the clarity of the seemingly un-messy gender and class passes conceal the real crisis for McKay, which is the ambiguity on the religion/"race" axis, or religion and "race" axes. In the case of McKay's *Esther*, I would argue that Esther's cross-dressing story is really about the muddy connections between "race," religious identity and community affiliation and the contours of nationhood, and about gender and sexuality as they intersect with these.

Esther judges the pass

I have considered thus far how the transactions of passing operate in McKay's *Esther*, but what I have not done is considered how Esther herself is positioned as an interpreter and judge of her own passings. The telling message on this front comes when Esther has been presented publicly as a courtesan at a lavish dinner at Catherine Churiau's. When she discovers that she has eaten pork, she spends the night violently ill, and admonishes herself:

She could not avoid her reflection in the looking glass, try as she might.
Who was she?
A traitor.
A liar.
A fraud.
A prostitute—*almost* a prostitute.
A pig-eater. (146)

This is narrated as a self-judgement on her violation of what it is and should be to be a Jewish woman. Never in the novel is Esther made to view her passing from female to male in such a negative light. The ease of the successful pass from female to male is not experienced as negative by Esther, but the ease of the pass from Jewish to Christian runs counter to how it is experienced internally by Esther, as very difficult. As for the gender pass, she reflects upon the freedoms it allows her and the protections it affords her; she reflects on the confusion it presents vis-à-vis her desire for Philippe; and she feels relief at finally being able to say her (real) name, Esther, aloud again, once outed at Quebec. Passing as male is for her a means to an end—freedom to choose, freedom from marriage to Red Mordechai, at best a freedom from or in the least a postponement of what is expected of a female, but with the core femaleness intact, and the core heterosexuality intact. It is for her, overall, an expression of a justified desire for individual autonomy. It is also a pass that she rehearses in St. Esprit when trying on her father's clothes and praying with him secretly by looking through the crack in the floor each morning. It is a Jewish male pass that she rehearses, *and/or* an expression of Jewish masculinity in Esther. Passing from Jewish to Christian she experiences as often agonizing, this juxtaposed with the seeming ease, the effortlessness, the passivity of the pass from Jewish to Christian. She "counteracts" or resists this easy pass by utterance of "counter-prayers" when entering churches, for example, in order to affirm to herself and God as her witness that it is not a

pass she wishes to make. She will later ultimately risk all by refusing to convert under pressure, resulting in her deportation. It is as if there need not be any worry about the stability of femaleness, but there is concern over the lack of stability of Jewishness. The deportation will turn out to be a reward; Hocquart arranges it as a deportation that will turn out to be a door to an open future, presumably an intercultural heterosexual one with Philippe.

The ease of the pass from Jewish to Christian suggests a fluidity, a malleability that contests any notion of an essential Jewishness, and yet much of the novel features a thick accumulation of essentializing description of Esther's difference as readable on her body. That malleability, then, does not foreclose assertion of an essential Jewishness. McKay produces a tension that may reflect a struggle to define what exactly is the meaning of Jewishness; present in the novel are Jewishness as religious performance, Jewishness as self-defined, and Jewishness as inscribed on the body. Against this tension, the novel's affirmation of interculturality is made through Esther's own assertion of her Jewishness. Interculturality is affirmed concurrent with the impossibility of Esther's return to her Jewish family, as well as the presumed absence of any current or future proximate Jewish community. The affirmation of interculturality is also made through the foundational failure of Jewish heterosexuality for Esther through her invisibility to Issac, and the subsequent centring of Gentile Philippe as an object of her desire and as a proposal for her future. Taking all this into account, it seems that Esther can only be a Jew by being Jewish by self-definition, a definition that is inseparable from her being *detached from* Jewishness in social-religious practice, which is to say apart from Jewish community. In other words, she is given to live her Jewishness in isolation. Jewish community is removed from any of her immediate landscapes. Interculturality then, perhaps counter to intention, is premised on a compromise or sacrifice. She is isolated into interculturality, where the dominant cultural position predominates in writing the terms of the encounter.

Let us return to the passage in which Esther admonishes herself after her presentation as courtesan at a dinner in which she inadvertently eats pork. I want to further consider how the pass from Jewish to (apparent) Christian as the core of this expressed revulsion is entwined with rank/status and gender. I have suggested above that Esther expresses anxiety about Jewish to Christian passing but not about gender passing, but these passings, as we have already seen throughout the analysis, are connected, confounded by the question of rank/status/class. In this passage, we see that she eats pork, for which she might call herself a traitor to the Jewish faith. She hides her Jewishness, for which she might call herself both a traitor, and a liar. She might see herself as a fraud because she has violated Jewish practice and yet claims to be Jewish, hides her Jewishness rather than asserting it. She understands that to be a courtesan is to be "*almost* a prostitute." She has stepped up in rank by moving into access to the courtly Gentile world, but enters as something close to a prostitute. Her beauty allows her this entry. We can recall from earlier analysis how Esther's mother embodies the ultimate in Jewish womanhood to which Esther should aspire, and this status as courtesan violates those aspirations in multiple ways. Her revulsion then is multifold: revulsion at the pass from Jewish to Christian, which involves both fraud and traitorship, and revulsion at what the pass to courtesan status, entwined with the Jewish to Christian

pass, does to the sanctity of her Jewish womanhood. The revulsion is really against the unspoken, but implied sexual expectations of courtesanship. Prostitute and pig-eater are linked here, if not equivalent. To be a pig-eater is as bad as to be a prostitute, and here she is (almost) both. Jewish womanhood is under assault. She is troubled by the rank pass here for its effects on Jewish womanhood.

As the novel progresses, as Esther passes as Pierre and as Jacques, we see a repeated anxiety around passing, but as I have noted it is never an anxiety around the certainty of her core femaleness and heterosexuality. Upstanding heterosexuality is safeguarded as Esther's desire for Philippe is converted into friendship, postponed. She is always really she. Heterosexuality and gender are intact throughout the novel even as she passes as male, but most under threat is her Jewishness. Jewish law and a community within which such laws are enacted write her Jewishness as she has known it from her earliest life, but here she has violated Jewish law by eating pork, and notwithstanding the possible Jewish descent of Catherine and Catherine's mother Marie, Jewish community is completely unavailable to Esther in the novel. She has had the opportunity, early in the novel, to return to her father's house, but she opts not to. That would be to return to a particular low-ranking Jewish heterosexuality through marriage to the Rag Picker. In the end the only Jewishness available to her is self-definition, in which she claims a Jewishness that seems incompatible with the community she has left behind. In the face of a Gentile world, this self-defined Jewishness has no mirror. If we return to Victoria Flanagan's characterization of passing stories for young readers, we see here that McKay's Esther is not an example of crafting new gender registers by having the female character who passes as male craft new registers of masculinity. McKay instead places her Esther at a moment of crafting a self-oriented register of Jewishness, one which leaves heteronormative gender and sexuality largely intact. Whether this self-defined Jewish womanhood meets the standard of Jewish womanhood embodied by her mother is left an open question.

Searching to see the multicrosser

I want to end with a scene in the novel, perhaps a predictable one, that offers a door ajar to queer reading. This allows me to re-anchor the above analysis in a broader concern of the dissertation, which is to try to understand a link between queer (mis)reading, seeing the multicrosser and how to realize queer, feminist, decolonial tellings of historical tales. It is compelled first by this question: How can such a scene steer me to arrive at a reading that is not the heteronormative Jewish erasure that the novel seems to proffer as the easiest read on an outcome? The scene goes as follows.

Esther has been in the convent for some time, working as Pierre, the chore boy, living in his own shed and mostly working in the garden and running errands in town. Claire, a young nun-in-training, soon reveals to Pierre her violation of obedience expected of an aspiring nun; she confesses to Pierre her attraction to him, and then disappears for weeks. Pierre sneaks into the chapel at night and discovers Claire, who has a physical disability, doing a presumably painful sustained penance on her knees. It is important to consider from the outset the

implications of the author's portrayal of a character with a disability, particularly since this character conforms to several longstanding tropes of disability in literature, even as some typical representations of disability are thwarted. For Claire, being disabled means that there is no hope for her other than the religious life. (This may concurrently be read as no hope for a poor girl.) The implication is the repeat of a tired literary trope that disability forecloses any possibility for a happy future.¹¹⁰ It may well be that this is how someone like Claire may have been perceived and her life constricted at the time in which the novel is set, but what is problematic here is that there is no "outside" offered to the representation itself. The girl with the disability becomes a key to propelling the narrative forward, and like the Negro slave girl, then disappears from the storyline, in this case as Pierre departs.

As Pierre, Esther watches Claire doing penance on her knees in the chapel and waits for all the nuns to leave, before approaching her. Claire takes Pierre's appearance as a sign, and asks Pierre to kiss her so that she knows what a kiss is before becoming a nun. That Claire is represented as a desiring subject is a positive thwarting of stereotypical representations of people with disabilities as being desireless. Pierre resists Claire's attention, and while the narration sets us up to believe Pierre will out himself as female to avoid the kiss, instead Pierre affirms their friendship and in dangerously intimate (erotic) proximity to Claire's ear, outs himself as non-Catholic in a fluctuation between "I am" and "I am not" as a negotiation between which outings she will choose—not a boy or not a Catholic (the assumption being one or the other, not both)—and how she will do it:

"I am not what I say I am. Oh please, oh please. I am not what you think," Esther whispered in Claire's ear.

"What do you mean?"

"I am ..." Esther, writhing in anguish, blurted out, "I am not..." Could she say it? Could she tell her that she was a girl, too? What mighty hand of vengeance¹¹¹ would descend upon her once the truth was spoken? What retribution would be demanded? But what choice did she have?

"I am ..." The words stuck in her throat. "I am not ... a Catholic!" (180)

This is the only self-outing in the novel uttered in the negative, as the opposite of an affirmation: "I am not a Catholic," rather than "I am Jewish." This is a double-passing—as Jewish, as male—*within an outing*, as non-Catholic. Claire kisses him. Pierre doesn't block the kiss. We are left guessing as to whether Pierre is caught before he could block it, or actually accepts the kiss. This is Esther's only known kiss in the novel, and could be read as a same-sex kiss. We recall Esther's initial impression of Claire: "Her lips, full and ruby coloured, were her saving grace"(209). This suggests that everything else about Claire is collapsed into the negative of her disability, while at the same time opening up the possibility that Claire might be desirable. The narration positions Esther /

¹¹⁰See Keith on representations of disability as incompatible with a happy life in children's literature (Keith 2001). See Saad for a systematic analysis of representations of disability in children's literature in the U.S., which reveals that characters with disabilities are overwhelmingly female, and that clear patterns of sexism, racism and heterosexism exist in the representations of disability (2004). For other sources on representations of disability see for example L. J. Davis (2006) and Brenna (2010). On the field of radical disability studies at the intersection of disability and queer theory, see for example McRuer (2006).

¹¹¹This borrows the Catholic language of a punishing God.

Pierre at a distance from any explicitly direct possibility of desiring Claire. We are left with ambiguity.

What I take from this is a pattern: Esther is almost never permitted any form of desire at all. Her desire for Isaac has a humiliating outcome for her. And recall the shame of noticing Philippe on the ship, and the subsequent authorial choice to convert that relationship into a friendship where desire is only permitted to Philippe. Here again with Claire, overt expression of or acting on desire is not permitted to Esther / Pierre. When it is, as with the exception of Isaac, it is thwarted or punished with humiliation. Even though the novel is focalized through Esther, desire in the novel is principally enacted through *others' desire of her*. When there are opportunities for possible expression of Esther's desire, these are given a shame response (as in her initial attraction to Philippe), or a narrational ambiguity, as in this case with Claire. The effect is that desire is made practically impossible. The last hope for Claire for fulfilled desire and happiness is foreclosed when Pierre leaves. There is persistent hope for Philippe. We are left in ambiguous deferral as to Esther's desire for intimacy.

But let us not leave this moment with Claire yet. What is particularly compelling about this moment is that it is secretly, knowingly *witnessed* by the Mother Superior, a witnessing we are privy to and which Esther will later come to know. In the moment of subsequent departure, Esther discovers that Mother Superior's window overlooks the garden where Pierre had worked unaware of being watched, often in the company of Claire. As Esther is leaving the convent for good, Pierre looks up to this window, makes eye contact with Mother Superior, and internally whispers, *She knew. She knew*. Did Mother Superior know all along that Claire was attracted to Pierre? Did she know that Pierre was actually female? *Or both?* Was Mother Superior recognizing Claire's attraction to another girl?

In an effort to understand what she calls "economies of readable identities," Amy Robinson investigates the mechanics of passing in literary narratives, and looks at the process as an exchange involving a passer, an in-group clairvoyant and a dupe (Robinson 1993; 1994). She writes of passing as an effect of mechanisms of the pass. To borrow from Robinson's terms, was Mother Superior seeing not just passing as an effect e.g. not just seeing a boy, but its mechanism e.g. girl passing as boy, and a girl desiring that girl as boy? Did it take one to know one? This is a unique moment in the novel because a triangle is set up that suggests the possibility of what Robinson calls a "community of common interest," though it takes a queer (mis?)reading for me to complete the transaction, to clarify its ambiguity. This long duration of passing in the convent, which culminates in a self-outing as non-Catholic—though not specifically as non-Christian, and certainly not as Jewish—sets up and plays out the possibility of queer reading, in which a (celibate) older woman is positioned as a possible insider-clairvoyant to the gender pass (there is no suggestion that Mother Superior sees the Jew passing as Christian), not unlike the elder (unmarried) Marie about whom we must clarify the ambiguity of her possible Jewishness. We must calculate the distance between these two witnesses to the same multicrossing body.

Freedom for the solitary multicrosser?

From the vantage point of historicity, one could say that McKay has translated an eighteenth century context highly regulated by notions of rank and status—you are what you are and so it must stay—into identity as inner self questions, questions of individual freedom and equality, which are particularly modern questions. McKay's narrative hinges on particular choices that make a particular kind of Esther, resulting in the possibilities of "freedom" within specific assumptions. If Esther, always female, were to be visibly unremarkable, there would be no story. Certain types of female masculinity are denied Esther by the crafted descriptive archeology of McKay's characterization. The secretary, in his apologia, cites a witness to a "handsome lad" on board the ship as it docked in New Orleans, one who quickly disappears into the crowd, in an ending that does not permit Esther to really disappear; instead, her ability to perform masculinity, it is presumed that we will hope, will enable her reunion with Philippe. While not as explicit a return to core gender that Flanagan cites as typical in cross-dressing stories for young people, the narrative accumulation sets up this return as the hoped for end. Freedom is to be found in (temporary) masculinity and (her man of) choice. Freedom is, concurrently, to be found in a self-definition (as Jewish) that makes improbable any access to like-defined others, in other words to a Jewish community, however self-defined.

If to make the passer tell the tale—in other words, to out the passer—is itself a form of violence that goes against the intention of invisibility that the act of the pass makes possible (Mak 2004), then how can one *tell the tale* of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue without doing violence? Esther is at her self-declared happiest in this novel atop the mast of a sailing ship looking out upon the world, out of reach so to speak, with no protection but the hand of God: "She was released from the bonds of the earth and could surely soar with the birds ... This was her life, her life. The thrill of it. She would have none other" (260). It is not just maleness, but performing masculinity as a sailor high above deck on a moving ship that makes her happy, allows her to embody "freedom," freedom from being anchored to the expectations of her presumed single position. She had hoped for fate to intervene on her marriage to Red Mordecai. Philippe was her hoped for fate. She had dreamed of wings not roots. Papa urges Esther to "choose life" according to the Biblical passage that serves as the epigraph of the novel: "I call heaven and earth to witness that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life" (Deuteronomy 30: 19). Papa interprets "choosing life" as choosing the opportunity to have children. McKay directs our attention to the future moment when freedom is determined by the availability of unencumbered choice. In Esther's constrained circumstances, "choosing life" means *not* returning to her home community, instead choosing this perch on high. I would say *he* feels those dreamed of wings atop the rigging, a sailor.

But let me bluntly decant this image of Esther's freedom like so: Esther, male, is atop a mast, adrift from land somewhere between so-called Old World and so-called New, aboard Foucault's "heterotopia par excellence" (Foucault 1984 [1967], para 19).¹¹² Closest to the edges of these worlds, where ocean meets shore, we have on

¹¹²Foucault writes about utopia and heterotopia in a short piece in 1967. He distinguishes between "utopias," which "have no real place,"

one shore the barely human slaves caged on the beach and the nameless grotesque working-class women, and on the other, undifferentiated Indigenous people and the solitary, vital but silent, disappeared slave girl who comes right up to shore's edge to perform selfless rescue. The Old land is peopled, city and country, by great inequities and dangers. The New land is undescribed, a hinterland, a vast out there that we only barely know, described merely as the place from which the *named* Mme. Caron's sons and husband return after a season of working, a trope of an empty hinterland. *Les Sauvages* are seen only through a distant spy-glass in the hand of a colonial patriarch. The colonised and the enslaved are abstracted and positioned at a distance. The multicrosser's freedom is achieved in the movement toward this landscape, and their survival and escape are made possible through such abstracted or nameless figures as the slave girl, even as she might represent a possibility for Esther / Jacques to find new community, a community that is not yet possible.

Let us revisit the perch: Esther at her happiest, a sailor. This is a multicrosser who has not once in the novel encountered a multicrosser like themselves. Marie, Mother Superior and "the Negro slave girl" are the closest. Allowed by some of the ambiguity in McKay's *Esther* that I have described, I imagine a ship crewed by a merry band of *multicrossers*, a community which is never made visible in McKay's novel. It is a ship, a fleet of ships, a network on land and sea I imagine into McKay's narrative, a network seemingly impossible to track in the archive, Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue the one who did erupt into visibility. Who is the multicrosser? They are not, unless witnessed. They are the one who simultaneously crosses from taken-for-granted normatively inscribed positions into multiple positions assumed out of bounds, along co-inscribing axes—gender, religion, "race", ethnicity, nation, geographies of origin, class—and *are read to be doing so by other crossers*. Sometimes they are at the same time *passing* in the presence of reading eyes from outside this tacit knowledge, in the presence of dupes, as Robinson would call them.¹¹³ When the multicrosser is witnessed to be passing by another multicrosser they both become less exceptional, they are recognizable, they begin to become authors of the transaction that writes them into knowability.

It may be that one starting point for understanding how a telling of this historical tale may not do violence, may be queer, feminist and decolonial, is to look for whether, in our case, the multicrosser is made to exist under the presumption of other multicrossers. Who are seen, not looked through, who speak, who see, who witness and

and are "fundamentally unreal spaces;" and "heterotopias", which do exist in real space, but which he views as "counter-sites," "effectively enacted utopias." Such places are "absolutely different from the sites that they reflect and speak about." They are capable of juxtaposing many places that are often not compatible, and they also "open onto ... heterochronies." Examples of heterotopias include museums, libraries, cemeteries and fairgrounds. Heterotopias, says Foucault, create either spaces of illusion, or spaces of compensation. He proposes that certain colonies may have functioned as heterotopias, and brothels are another extreme example of a heterotopia. He writes of these in the same breath as ships: "Brothels and colonies are two extreme types of heterotopia, and if we think, after all, that the boat is a floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea and that, from port to port, from tack to tack, from brothel to brothel, it goes as far as the colonies in search of the most precious treasures they conceal in their gardens, you will understand why the boat has not only been for our civilization, from the sixteenth century until the present, the great instrument of economic development ... but has been simultaneously the greatest reserve of the imagination. The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilizations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates" (Foucault 1984 [1967]).

¹¹³Robinson would elaborate further to say that the dupe's very (mis)reading in the presence of insider witnesses converts the transaction that is passing, into passing in drag (1993; 1994). But that is beyond the scope of this analysis.

are witnessed. And whose witnesses are also not isolated into position, into silence, as is the Negro slave girl, or into abstraction, as are the Indigenous inhabitants seen through the spy glass. The question, when considering McKay's novel as I have detailed it, is whether, which and how young adult readers might reach for or should reach for and see gaps and other relations, and through these craft other landscapes and resuscitate multicrossing into them. The promise of witnessing, which is never in the first place made, must be crafted bricolage-style by the reader, and anachronistically: from the moment with Pierre, Claire and Mother Superior; the recognition between Esther and the enslaved girl; the retroactive impact of Marie's barely detectable Jewish disclosure; the newly male boy in the port sitting watching the boys atop the rigging watching the women below; from the guy who might find herself triangulated toward recognition, toward happiness.

Shelley Tepperman's *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter*

Historical documentary as contemporary intervention

Shelley Tepperman's docu-fiction *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter* elaborates the changing landscape of the very port city—Quebec City—where Brandeau / La Fargue first arrived, a port whose architecture, whose layout and structure closely resembled and still resemble French ports such as St-Malo, to which she was ultimately deported, and La Rochelle, from which they arrived. Tepperman playfully creates a world that is contemporary and familiar, mixing documentary with fiction. The work's two key protagonists encounter one another in the streets of today's Quebec City, make reference to contemporary popular culture, and meet contemporary people—historians, a rabbi, community members—through the intermediary surface of digital photography that comes alive into video as interviewees speak. Contemporary colloquialism is tinged with the magic of time-travel. Interviewees speak from digital picture frames on antique tabletops in the elder documentarian Haïm's eclectic antique store on Quebec City's main strip. Haïm himself speaks of history as if he were there at every occasion, a witness to 400 years' worth of historical events, as much as he is a contemporary person living today, eating bagels with a young photographer, Rosie, in an old city shop. Haïm not only introduces Rosie to famous Jewish Quebecers and key moments in Quebec and Canadian history in which Jews have played key roles but, as the film unfolds, it slowly becomes apparent that Haïm has indeed been there himself as witness or protagonist of some sort, from the boat that brought the explorer Samuel de Champlain to Quebec, right through to the present day. Haïm is in fact Quebec Jewish history itself, embodied and alive, an eternal storytelling grandfather with a mission to make sure the history he knows, that he embodies, is witnessed and transmitted. As it turns out, Rosie in the end reveals herself to be Esther Brandeau, also a time-traveler whose seemingly naïve listening has enabled the telling of the history that we hear. Tepperman plays with genre, crafting a fictional spine to an otherwise straightforward and recognizable genre of educational documentary.

In contrast to McKay's telling for young adults, which has seen wide distribution, Shelley Tepperman's documentary-meets-historical fiction about the Jewish history of Quebec City has seen little circulation beyond its airing twice on Quebec French-language specialty documentary channel Canal D TV, in July 2008, in relation to the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec (Montreal Film Group 2008; Levy 2008). This is a city whose Jewish history is largely overshadowed by that of Montreal. The present-day Jewish population of Montreal is far greater, though as Tepperman's docu-fiction shows, Quebec City Jews have played decisive roles in Canadian Jewish history, and Canadian history more broadly. While McKay's novel is targeted to an anglophone youth population (and the adults who disseminate it among youth), Tepperman's docu-fiction is an educational piece initially targeted through Canal D at a francophone Quebec family audience. It is shaped around two protagonists who reach across eras to give the multicrosser historical continuity, contemporary relevance and community, but as we will see, not in immediately evident nor uncompromising ways. In taking up Tepperman's sixty-minute docu-fiction, I explore how the multicrosser appears (or does not) within a work negotiating the politics and history of

Quebec while telling of the role of Jews in the history of Quebec. I will demonstrate how Tepperman's form and content strategies make these negotiations evident, and what effects they produce on the multicrosser.

The filmmaker, the context

Shelley Tepperman, a Jewish Montreal writer, director and translator, has worked in theatre, television and film. She is most lauded for her work as a translator of Quebec francophone playwrights. Her translations have been presented on stages across North America and the UK, and she has been nominated three times for Canada's Governor General's Award for translation: for Dominic Champagne's *Playing Bare (La Répétition)* (1993); Yvan Bienvenue's *In Vitro* (1995); and Jennifer Tremblay's *The List (La Liste)* (2012).¹¹⁴ All three plays were themselves nominated for GG awards in playwrighting (Champagne in 1991, Bienvenue (for a collection including *In Vitro*) in 1994, and Tremblay in 2008). Tepperman has also translated three works by the world-renowned Quebec playwright and director Wajdi Mouawad, current director of French Theatre at Canada's National Arts Centre: *Tideline (Littoral)*, *Alphonse* and *Wedding Day at the Cro-Magnons (Journée de noces chez les Cromagnons)* (Mouawad 2011; 2008; 2002). Mouawad won the GG for *Littoral* in 2000.¹¹⁵

Tepperman has worked in film and television since 2000, doing freelance directing, scriptwriting, editing and advising. Her own current film projects include a documentary about two of her ancestors involved in the founding of Israel, "one a right-wing terrorist, the other an idealistic left-wing kibbutz-builder," she says, a work that draws together Israel, Brazil and Canada and contends with the conflicted identity of a diasporic Jew. She is also at work on two other documentaries, one about Quebec's Deaf communities and another about an African-American community in Texas and its efforts to adopt close to 75 unwanted children. Arguably her most circulated work beyond her play translations has been for television, including as creator-writer of *Legacy in a Jar*, a documentary delivered in the form of a food show about Italian residents of Montreal, which has aired several times on Canadian community television channel OMNI; as a writer for *Doctor*ology*, a comedic documentary starring Leslie Nielsen that describes various disciplines in medicine, which aired on the Discovery channel; and as a writer/story producer for *Dogs With Jobs*, a Canadian series about working dogs and show dogs in syndication around the world.

Tepperman crafted the docu-fiction about Quebec City's Jewish history, to come under analysis here, in collaboration with its lead actor, Solly Lévy.¹¹⁶ A teacher of language and literature, a theatre director, comedian, actor, singer and writer, he has written books about *haketia*, the Judeo-Spanish language of Sephardic Jews of Morocco, where he originates and who constitute a strong presence in Montreal's predominantly Ashkenaz Jewish community. As a director Lévy has adapted known works of Quebec literature to this language (Levy 2008,

¹¹⁴Information about Shelley Tepperman is available on her website www.shelleytepperman.ca and information about past recipients of Canada's Governor General's Awards for literature is available at <http://ggbooks.ca>.

¹¹⁵The film adaptation of Mouawad's *Incendies*, directed by Denis Villeneuve, was Canada's official selection for the 2011 Academy Awards.

¹¹⁶Tepperman explained this to me in a conversation in October 2010.

para 8).¹¹⁷ Tepperman's docu-fiction draws on the input of prominent Quebec historian Denis Vaugeois, cited earlier, and anthropologist Pierre Ancil, who as this dissertation is nearing completion has just co-published *Les Juifs de Québec: Quatre cents ans d'histoire*, an edited volume of essays about the history of the small Jewish community of Quebec City and its decisive contributions to Quebec history, in which one finds the main topics of Tepperman's film (Ancil and Jacobs 2015). The book emerges from an exhibition in Quebec City, also mounted in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of Quebec. In Tepperman's docu-fiction, Solly Lévy plays a grandfatherly antique store owner named Haïm, a photographer and community memory keeper who befriends Rosie, a young photographer played by emerging actor Claudine Ruelland. A playful draft title of the film plays on a mainstream culinary association with Jews: the bagel.¹¹⁸ *Au-déla des bagels: Comment les Juifs ont marqué la ville de Québec* (*Beyond Bagels: How Jewish people have made a mark on Quebec City*, my translation) was its draft title. The film endeavours to educate a contemporary Quebec audience about its Jewish history. It was broadcast in 2008 on Canal D TV in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City under the amended title of *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter* (*The Jews of Quebec: An Untold Story*).¹¹⁹

Such edits between draft and final product could perhaps reflect a wariness of provocation around the taken-for-granted Catholic French origins of Quebec's earliest settlers. It might suggest a gap between "insider" minority community knowledge and the mainstream. How the film affirms Jewish presence at the earliest moments of colonization speaks to a cultural-historical negotiation that telling Jewish history in Canada, and more specifically doing so in and of Quebec, entails. It is also worth placing this docu-fiction and its foregrounding of the presence of Jews at the earliest moments in the emergence of Canada as a country in dialogue with Richard Menkis' consideration of early histories of Jews in Quebec (Menkis 1991). In studying the work of Benjamin Sack, an amateur historian who did the first major study of the history of Jews in Canada in the early 1900s, and historiographies about a Bordeaux merchant family, the Gradis', who outfitted Quebec in the 1700s, Menkis overviews bendings of history to underscore assertions of nationalism and belonging in the face of Jewish experiences of discrimination. He detects an adherence to a trope of early presence he says often features in historiographies of minority ethnic communities, and certainly in Jewish historiography in Canada (Menkis 1991). Menkis calls this the "myth of profound Jewish roots in French-Canadian society" and "the intellectual steeplechase to prove longevity in the land" (quoting Harney 1988, 28). There is indeed a claim to earliest

117 Haketia is a variety of Spanish that borrows from Judeo-Arabic of Morocco, spoken in northern Morocco, and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, opposite the Strait of Gibraltar. Haketia is not the same as Ladino, the language of those Sephardic Jews who migrated to the Balkans, Greece and Turkey. Solly Lévy himself has been the subject of a documentary short entitled *A Sephardic Journey: Solly Lévy ... from Morocco to Montréal*, one of a series of 52 documentary shorts about immigrants to Canada. It was directed by Donald Winkler, a three-time Governor General's Award-winning translator and documentary filmmaker (Winkler 1999).

118 The trope of food is practically a cliché in the discourse of multiculturalism.

119 The English subtitle is the official one, not my translation. The piece has been subtitled, but has not seen wide circulation to anglophone audiences. See the subtitled trailer at <https://vimeo.com/24878879>. The work was subtitled after I consulted the French original. See the production company at <http://www.velocite.qc.ca/>. See also http://www.montrealfilmgroup.com/news_archives.html and an article in *Canadian Jewish News* (Levy 2008). I consulted the French language original as well as an unpublished script draft with working title *Au-déla des bagels: Comment les Juifs ont marqué la ville de Québec*, courtesy of the director.

presence in Tepperman's film, paired with claims to the indispensable contributions of Jews, as we will see.

A basic understanding of Quebec's unique position within Canada as a francophone province with an historically strong separatist movement is also helpful to review here, and will be elaborated in more detail as the film is analyzed. While tracing the history of Quebec within Canada is not my aim, it is useful to recall that New France as a colony came to an end in 1759-1760 with a defeat by the British, leaving a large francophone settler population under British rule. The French Canadian settler story is one said to be "pure laine," signifying French Catholic in its roots. A separatist vote for independence in 1995 very narrowly failed, a result which the leader of the separatist party of the day famously blamed on "money and the ethnic vote."¹²⁰ In 2007, a public inquiry was called in Quebec to address what is known as "the reasonable accommodations debate" about minority religious and cultural rights, often pitted against women's rights and separation of church and state. Montreal's Jewish community figures in this debate.

A close viewing of Tepperman's film allows me to place the choices of the filmmaker within its historico-contemporary context; to foreground nuances in the movement between an archival record dating to the French colonial period and cultural production from it several centuries later; and to consider the ways in which Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's multicrossing is and is not represented in this work. Considering Tepperman's docu-fiction after detailed attention to McKay's novel, it becomes apparent that the risks and tensions that inhere in the act of telling are more exposed in Tepperman's work, by virtue of its genre, intended audience, intention and timing. I have suggested how present-day concerns underscore the representation of the historical tale in McKay's work, and I will consider these issues in Tepperman's work. Below I describe the style and content of Tepperman's documentary, with particular attention paid to the intergenerational relationship between its two main protagonists; the relationship of the content to contemporary culture; and how the transtemporal is made to work in the film and to what effects. With attention to gender, this will allow me to underscore the risks and tensions within which the history is told, and to show how the risks and tensions negotiated in the film feed a compromise on the representation of multicrossing.

I will address what I see as the key claims the work makes. The first is the centrality of Jews to Quebec's successes. The second is the claim to a spectrum of understandings of Jewishness, ranging from total assimilation into mainstream Quebec (and accompanying shedding of Jewish identification and practice), to integration concurrent with maintenance of Jewish identity. As a consequence of this, the film makes expansive what constitutes "Jewish," claiming Jewishness across that range. Third, the film places Jews at the outset of the founding of Quebec as a city and as a province, and highlights Jewish presence continuous from that moment to the present. In terms of its foregrounding of the centrality of Jews to Quebec's success, the film foregrounds Jewish contributions in the arenas of sports, law and political life, union life, business enterprise, culture and humanitarianism. The film makes explicit each of these contributions through recounting real life stories and

¹²⁰Jacques Parizeau was then leader of the Bloc Québécois. He died June 1, 2015.

through the fictional protagonist Haïm's presence across time and in each of these arenas.

The overall effect of the film is to shed light on Quebec's historical record of contending with Jewish difference in two concurrent ways—acceptance through assimilation and rejection through exclusion—while asserting the importance of choice in identity and a retrospective sense of shrugging at the foolishness of making any big deal about difference. The film demonstrates a spectrum of real experiences lived between these two. The contentious contemporary debate around "reasonable accommodation" for religious minorities is foregrounded as part of the telling's contemporary context in a humorous way, while also demonstrating its historical antecedents. The recurring trope of food as a signifier of multiculturalism offers an accessible entry point for a non-Jewish contemporary audience, and has the effect of more comfortably couching the claims of the film. In all of this attention to navigating Jewishness and telling Jewish history though, what happens to the knowability of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue because of this negotiation?

What I will do moving forward is to apply narratological tools for analysis of the content and mode of delivering that content in the film. That is to say that I will look at who speaks, how and when, and I will look to the ways in which speech is framed. I will look to the structure of the film as well as its content. This will, like the analysis of McKay's film, be grounded in an intersectional reading, one attentive to the colonial context. The reading is driven by the central question of the dissertation, which is how to do a reading/telling of the Esther Brandeau story that is queer, feminist and decolonial. First, I will give attention to the question of genre, by comparing Tepperman's film and McKay's novel.

Genre, time and negotiating the present

I want first to attend to genre in comparing McKay's novel and Tepperman's film. I have made clear that the intended audiences and the reach that each of the works has had are quite different. The genres too—novel, film—themselves are quite different in several ways. And yet at the same time, in dealing with an historical tale, McKay's novel and Tepperman's film share something genre-wise. When we think genre, we usually think in the first instance of a novel, or a play, or a poem, a painting, a film, an installation, or an essay. There are certain conventions that differentiate such genres and which set up certain expectations, though of course the delineations between genres are hardly cut and dried.

Despite the obvious differences between a novel and an audio visual medium, we can also consider sub-genres within each of these genres, and here is where we find a link. Both McKay's and Tepperman's works deal in historical material. McKay fictionally (re)creates an historical era within which the story of a central protagonist, Esther Brandeau, unfolds. Historical film as a genre does the same; it recreates a locale of the past, within which a story is made to unfold. Both are particularly huge industries nowadays. The main protagonist in McKay's novel, from start to finish is Esther Brandeau, within the years of her existence. The present is not represented. In Tepperman's film, Esther Brandeau's story is only one of many historical tales recounted about the Jewish history

of Quebec City, but Esther Brandeau is also a time-traveling character vital for the delivery of the documentary material about Quebec's Jewish past; she serves as a focalizer whose omniscience is in disguise as a present-day person. So while McKay's novel very clearly fits as historical fiction, Tepperman's work is a hybrid; it is both documentary and fiction, with the fiction itself as the vehicle for the delivery of the documentary material about the past as well as the present. In other words, the fiction in Tepperman's work is not quite what we think of when we think historical fiction.

The fiction aspect of Tepperman's hybrid work features transtemporality—movement across times—but not reenactment of the past. The characters in the fiction that are the vehicles for telling the historical tales documented in the work might be from the past, but their actions are set in the present. These fictional characters, one of whom turns out to be Esther Brandeau, might be seen as stand-ins for the documentary maker herself, who is removed from the camera and whose presence is not a subject of the documentary itself. Without going into the history of documentary and discussions around authorship, authority and the constructedness of the frame and the gaze of the one with the camera, suffice it to say that the one doing the filming, the interviewing and collating in Tepperman's work does not enter the frame. The fiction in a sense removes its maker, and we could say the same about the author of an historical fiction novel. In Tepperman's work, fictional characters guide the overarching telling, removed as they are spatially from much of which is told, as we will see.

Thus, whereas in McKay's novel no interaction between past and present is staged, Tepperman in two ways brings the past and the present together into the same work. First, present-day Quebec is the environment in which the docu-fiction unfolds, even as aspects of it are fictionalized through the two main characters who do the narrating. Parallel, or better yet, interwoven tracks, run through the film: a fiction set in present-day Quebec City, with characters that magically have lived through many centuries to arrive t/here and who tell us the history documented; and a documentary, which is delivered within interviews with living people who serve as experts and community members, inter-cut with expository material such as archival images. Such materials are given explanation and elaboration by a fictional character. The interviewees play an expository and a participatory role in the documentary aspect of the docu-fiction; they give us facts, they speak to the camera as themselves, they share their recollections and their expertise, they take the documentary maker and the fictional characters to certain contemporary locales, such as a contemporary Purim celebration. In Tepperman's docu-fiction, worlds are *interpiercing*; a character who is several centuries old but looks like an ordinary resident of present-day Quebec visits an ordinary present-day celebration. We meet living interviewees living in the so-called “real world,” who are also present in and accessed through the magical fictional world of our narrators, through photo frames contained in that magical world. Frames of these talking heads are small in the magical world of the antique store, sitting on a table among many picture frames, and large in the contemporary world, where they occupy the full screen. In this sense, there is a scale fluctuation that places the interviewees within a broader time scale and constellation of authorities, and effectively produces ambiguity around authority and expertise.

The interplay between present and past through Tepperman's fictional backbone to an educational documentary makes for a clear genre difference from historical narrative in which the "historical event" is kept within the representational bounds of its own era without any narrative time given to the present day, as in McKay's novel.¹²¹ The motivation of speaking into the present moment is made more explicit in Tepperman's documentary than in McKay's novel, through her main characters Haïm and Rosie, who are continually and centrally present, and particularly in Haïm's case, are alive for each of the events described going back hundreds of years. Preoccupations with freedom of choice in relation to religion and equality in terms of gender implicitly make the novel relevant to or driven by present-day concerns, whereas preoccupation with freedom and equality of religion is very much explicit in Tepperman's docu-fiction. Let us look now to see how the film unfolds.

The story: *Les Juifs de Québec*

I would like to explore each of the arenas in which Jewish presence and/or centrality are foregrounded in the film, and to highlight nuances and effects. This will also allow us to get a sense of the truth claims being made in the film. Haïm claims to have been on the boat with Samuel de Champlain at the founding of Quebec. By placing himself there on the boat, he enacts that Jewish presence too through fiction, through himself the time-traveler, thereby proposing Jewish centrality at the moment of creation of what is now Quebec. In law and political life, he and the historians who talk in the digital photo frames recount the contributions especially of the Hart family, who over several generations as elected politicians were instrumental in the establishment of the first granting of civic and political rights to Jews in the British Empire in 1832, which would go on to be vital for civic and political rights also for francophone Catholics under British rule, as well as all future Canadians.¹²² Here, the fact of the importance of Jews to what would subsequently become mainstream political culture is suggested. Haïm recalls, in pan-historic style, working for an entrepreneurial Hart, and defers to journalist and historian Denis Vaugeois (author of a recent biography of the family) to explain the importance of Ezekiel Hart, the very elected bilingual politician who first challenged Quebec's parliament by not wanting to swear an oath on the Christian bible (Vaugeois 2012).¹²³ Haïm points to himself in a picture documenting the 1982 150th commemoration of the important law's establishment. "I don't think I was ever as proud to be a Jewish Quebecer," says Haïm. This same Hart family gives rise to the coach of two Stanley Cup-winning Montreal Canadiens hockey teams in the 1930s, namesake of the most valuable player trophy still given to this day. The love of hockey cannot be overestimated, with Montreal being one of the founding teams of the game in North America. This fact citation seems to make a double claim: it locates Jewish influence right at the heart of Quebec popular culture, foregrounding importance of Jews in this iconically Canadian/Quebec sport, while at the same time downplaying the relevance of Jewishness per se to that contribution. In other words, a *Jew* was key to those victories but their *Jewishness* didn't really have

¹²¹Pierre Lasry's novel also stays within the past historical era represented (Lasry 2002, 2000).

¹²²See Vaugeois for an in-depth study of the Hart family (Vaugeois 2012).

¹²³Vaugeois claims the Hart family as the first Jewish family in North America, a claim that others have made for Esther Brandeau.

any effect. The impact of the Hart family will also be felt in business life, from very early on, and this is spelled out in the film. In enterprise, a number of Jewish contributions are mapped to the city of Quebec, from the establishment of the first hydroelectric system to a renowned supermarket that was a focal point of anti-Semitic boycotts, to redevelopment and expansion of the city, to a building at Laval University named after a Jewish figure.

It should come as no surprise that all of these key contributions are made by men, and the film is self-aware of this, as Rosie prods Haïm to delineate some female contributions. He says:

I surely knew some. But what do you want, History with a capital H has a tendency to gather those that make the most noise, men... But what I think we forget too often is that on one hand there were women who worked in the shadows without being known, and there is on the other hand those who have marked our history in striking ways. Like Léa Roback.

The only female public figure foregrounded, Roback was an instrumental feminist union activist whose story resonates with Rosie. Roback recognized as parallel, explains scholar Pierre Ancil, the experiences of poor French Canadians and the exploitation faced by Jews in Russia, Roback's antecedents. Two women are interviewed in the film, one about her family's efforts to feed and house refugees of the Holocaust, and another about her family's winning entries to the ice sculpture competition in the Winter Carnival, a staple of Quebec culture. As Haïm characterizes the 1950s and 1960s as a harmonious time, Elsie Skolnik, a community member, describes her in-laws winning the ice-sculpture prize for their creation in front of their store. Haïm shows Rosie a picture of himself in 1952, on a carnival float in the parade, playing *the* Bonhomme of this most Québécois of cultural institutions. The Bonhomme is the mascot of this celebration. These serve to show that Jews too can and have participated in these most Québécois traditions and have won, as in Skolnik's tale, the top prize. These stories are intended to normalize or mainstream Jewish belonging in Quebec.

Notably, in the episode narrating the women's charitable work, a rabbi is brought in to clarify a particularly Jewish understanding of charity as justice, which actually gives to me a subtle effect of highlighting Jewish women's life as separate from rather than integrated into the mainstream, suggesting integration, centrality, assimilation as Jewish male endeavours, all of which will be bucked at the ending of the film, when Rosie is revealed to be Esther Brandeau, wholly assimilated yet self-aware trickster for the sake of the telling.

Intergenerational inscribings

Having given this overview of the figures and their contributions to Quebec that are foregrounded, and the arenas into which Jewish presence is claimed, I want now to consider the relationship between Rosie and Haïm and their positions as tellers of the tale. I want to pay particular attention to how gender is contended with through their relationship, and how heterosexuality underpins the tellings. First I pay attention to how the tellings relate to

the original archival record of the Brandeau / La Fargue tale. Let's start with how Haïm reiterates the contents of the interrogation record with his own spin. As he tells Rosie, Esther Brandeau

boarded a ship bound for New France disguised as a man, in the hopes of passing unnoticed. But as soon as she puts foot to land, people realize, because of her look, her carriage ... that this is a young girl! What's more, we discover that she is not of the Catholic religion. So, she is stopped. She tries to cajole the authorities by telling them her story, her terrible story. Her parents who lived in misery, who tried to send her to a slightly better off uncle, but the ship wrecked and she was recovered somewhere in France by a widow who made her eat pork, meat absolutely forbidden by her religion ... And when at the end of her confession, Esther confesses that she didn't hate it, eating pork, the folks say to themselves, "this one, we'll be able to convert her."¹²⁴

Haïm alleges that the authorities in New France get Esther to taste all sorts of pork dishes—ragouts, *oreilles de crisse*—deep fried smoked pork jowls, the ears of Christ. All the while they tell her, "if you convert, you'll be able to eat all this without feeling guilty!" As Haïm tells it, for an entire year, Esther feasts, but she's indecisive. "She wants to convert, she changes her mind, she doesn't want to anymore! Everyone is exasperated." Since the colony can't pay her return voyage, Haïm says, they ask King Louis XV of France to put the cost of sending her back to France on the royal tab.

Rosie remarks, "If she was into the pork trotter ragout, she could have converted, no?" To which Haïm replies,

In the history of Jews, like that of all religions, we often find people who chose exile or even death over renouncing their faith. Esther is comparable a little bit with those lay Jews who don't observe to the letter all the laws and prescriptions of Judaism, but who nevertheless feel deeply Jewish. It's a little like Catholics who believe in God, but who don't go to mass every Sunday.

There are several important details to take note of here about Haïm's telling of the Brandeau interrogation. First, while we have no way of knowing from the available historical information how and when Esther Brandeau was outed as female, nor how and when she was outed as Jewish, here Haïm asserts that first it was her physicality that outed her as a female. In his first introduction of Esther Brandeau's story earlier in the film though, he refers to Esther Brandeau as having arrived "disguised as a *boy*" [*italics mine*], which is in fact how the collator of that first

¹²⁴Some interpretations found here are not found in the original records. First, there is no indication that she lived in misery in her place of origin, nor that the uncle to which she was being sent was better off. The documents say nothing about the uncle's social position. In fact, the original record says that Esther Brandeau's parents had sent her to Amsterdam, to one of Esther Brandeau's aunts, not uncles, and to her brother. Note that Haïm claims she didn't hate eating pork, while this was a point of trouble for McKay's Esther.

colonial record inscribed it. In the later, more elaborated telling Haïm says she "boarded a ship bound for New France disguised as a man," and then upon arrival, suddenly people see that "this is a young girl!" In Haïm's telling, there is a movement from man to girl, just as in the arc of the journey as collated in the colonial record, Pierre Mausiette sets out for Bordeaux a man, and Jacques La Fargue journeys toward arrival in New France dressed in boys' clothes.

In Haïm's telling, a combination of physical characteristics and performance raised suspicion that this was "a young girl." The suggestion is that she didn't carry herself like a man, and this in turn betrayed her. The attempt to pass as a man here, rather than as a boy, perhaps makes the passing less plausible than if she were tasked with passing as a boy. Since Haïm is telling this story having told Rosie (and us) that Rosie is very much similar to Brandeau, we are led to imagine Rosie, small-framed, almost shoulder-length cropped hair, attempting to pass as a man. The suggestion might be that Rosie would not pass as a *man*. This compels questions: What kind of man? What kind of masculinity is achievable?

Haïm has earlier said that Esther Brandeau passed as a *boy*, or young guy. The subtlety of the naming in the language is significant; though "garçon" could mean "guy" from child to adolescent to young man, "homme" cannot reach into youth without an adjective, such as "jeune," young. A space opens up here through language, which reflects deliberately or not the ambiguity in the sparse documentation that brings us the story in the first place, and which reflects an uncertainty in interpretation by contemporary readers of the historical tale trying to imagine Esther Brandeau. In Tepperman's film, Rosie steps into that ambiguity, and becomes a vehicle through which Haïm enables us to imagine what he has purportedly witnessed. She is our surrogate Esther Brandeau, and her youth and femininity seem to suggest, in Haïm's mind, the impossibility of the task that Esther Brandeau took on: to pass across genders. We are led to imagine failure as an inevitability.

Haïm has already, in his earliest "personal experience" on board ship with Champlain, demonstrated the ease with which one could pass as Christian, undetectably Jewish. (Undetectable *to whom*, we should ask and we should consider whether the passing was made possible in the company of, or because of the company of like others.) He gives no clarity, however, as to how he interprets Esther's outing as Jewish. Haïm offers no conjecture beyond the order in which the outings happen, presumed to be sequential, not concurrent: Jewish after female. There isn't the suggestion of *her* outing *herself* as Jewish, as Esther does in McKay's novel; there is simply no speculation. In fact, the discovery of her passings simply begins "as soon as she steps foot on land." The outings happen after arrival, meaning that the settlers and authorities of New France saw something that the crew and passengers apparently did not. We should ask what and why didn't they see, or whether they *did* see and did not tell. Jacques La Fargue was assumed to have been outed as female first, after arrival, not as Jewish first. Is the assumption that *she* reveals her Jewishness herself? Or that some insider to this fact betrayed Esther's Jewishness? Haïm is silent here. We look at Rosie. The subject changes.

The historical records in the French colonial archive that bring us the Brandeau tale do not describe

Brandeau's physical appearance. We know only of an approximate age of twenty years old, according only to what she purportedly told under interrogation, and that information is to be taken with a grain of salt; first, we accept it as fact by assuming that first Brandeau / La Fargue could be trusted to have told the truth, and second that what was put to paper as a documentation of this interrogation reflected what was in fact said. Any description of Esther Brandeau's body and bodily carriage that exists in any form in the existing cultural archive—such as characterization of gait and stature, for instance—is conjecture. We do, however, find characterizations of behaviour in the colonial records, terms and phrases such as "flighty" and "obstinate," "not entirely reprehensible" and "at times dutiful and obedient." Details such as these translate into contemporary cultural productions like this film, reflected for example in Haïm's characterization of Esther as indecisive about conversion.

In his *Obstinate Hebrews: Representations of Jews in France 1715-1815*, Ron Schechter examines written records of all sorts, from patriotic liturgy to parliamentary transcripts to popular literature and encyclopedias, and writes of "the bizarre preoccupation of French commentators with a tiny and weak minority" and that "historians have vastly underestimated the importance of the Jews to non-Jewish writers, readers, as well as to political actors and their audiences in 18th century and early 19th century France ... the images and perceptions of Jews mattered" (Schechter 2003, 6-7). Halevi-Wise and others call a branch of this fascination—a literary fascination with the figure of the Iberian Jew— "Sephardism" (Halevi-Wise 2012). She demonstrates the vast uses across many contexts to which the Iberian Jew has been used as terrain to work out ideas about nationhood, freedom and belonging. Schechter makes notes of typical representations and characterizations of Jews in the period coinciding with Esther Brandeau's time. He gathers a host of characterizations, including obstinacy, the discourse of sincerity vs. insincerity, opacity, the stereotype of dissimulation, hypocrisy and feigning. Schechter says of eighteenth century French thought that "the greatest question of the day was the possibility of human perfectibility," and that this notion of perfectibility "was a continuation of an older eschatological dream of universal conversion" (Schechter 2003, 9).

Though Schechter writes that a pronounced preoccupation with "the Jewess" will not appear until the 19th century, and that the feminization of the Jewish male will not emerge until late in the 18th century, many of the characterizations noted above appear in the archival records related to Brandeau / La Fargue. In the inscribing of the tale, colonial officials betray their characterization of Brandeau according to many of the above tropes, calling her "flighty," "obstinate," "indecisive."¹²⁵ Given Schechter's delineation of classic tropes of the Jew at the time, it is interesting to consider that the ways the colonial authorities read Brandeau represented an intersection or concurrence of classic tropes of the Jew as well as classic tropes of femininity, the latter most simply characterized by a "female" passion and unpredictability opposite to a "male" calm and control. While at first glance, one might interpret the officials' interpretations as driven by common perceptions of women more generally, given Schechter's work, we might note that these representations could be seen as an instance in which

¹²⁵Sander Gilman has also linked such characterizations to stereotypes of "madness" (Gilman 1985).

Jewishness and gender are co-inscribing.

These characterizations are taken at face value by Haïm in his re-telling. He recirculates her supposed flightiness, obstinacy, indecision, but couches it in secular 21st century ways of being. Those characteristics—gendering and proto-racializing in their time, fluctuating between essential and changeable difference in the 18th century perceptual language (Schorsch 2009a, 2009b, 2005; Schechter 2003)—are transposed to a 21st century Quebec and concerns over the right to difference. The pork Brandeau eats is barely an issue. What we see here, in Haïm reiterating the record of her behaviour, is a persistence through the cultural archive of what was a co-inscribed proto-racialized gendering, now changed by the context of its re-inscribing; Haïm removes the proto-racializing undertones to how Jewish difference was read in that original archival record, and recasts behaviour—the obstinacy, the flightiness, the indecision—not as a consequence of some inherent characteristics of Jewishness, but rather as effects of a dilemma posed by the circumstance of required conversion as it meets a desire to commit to Jewishness, a *feeling* of being Jewish. However, I do not think that the gendering of that behaviour as typically female, in Haïm's rendering, has entirely disappeared.

Haïm reads Rosie through gendered assumptions. She—and Esther Brandeau—are assumed ultimately to fail at passing as male. Rosie is also read through Haïm's heterosexuality; his eight wives, the many boyfriends he jokingly says she'd have if she'd lived as long as him. Does Rosie's speech heterosexualize her character? She immediately thinks of heartthrob actor Marlon Brando when she first hears the name Esther Brandeau, but elsewhere, she is not overtly heterosexualized through her own speech or actions. What is also interesting though, is the way in which Haïm positions himself. He was there at every occasion. He explains that he played the coveted *Bonhomme* role once at Quebec Carnival, to help out his friend Gaétan, because Gaétan had a date "with one of his duchesses." Haïm takes credit for the fact that the couple were married six months later. A pattern emerges in which Haïm is an accessory to Gentile male success. In an earlier draft of the script and cut from the final documentary, Haïm is present at those Stanley Cup hockey victories coached by the Jewish coach; he is the vital guy who sharpens the players' blades.

I find this self-positioning of Haïm—accessory to non-Jewish success—as a possible instance of Haïm feminizing himself while simultaneously positioning himself, and by extension Quebec Jewry, as vital, central, indispensable to the project of Quebec. This leads me to ask whether the only way to make such a claim to centrality is through taking a notch off the masculinity of the one who claims to have been there at the earliest moments, while foregrounding the contributions of those who came later. We may understand this self-feminizing of Haïm's as a means to consciously assert difference while asserting belonging and centrality. The means to do so is along the axis of gender. This may be an instance of recuperating a particularly Jewish masculinity colonized in Europe, as Daniel Boyarin has posited (Boyarin 1997). We could read it either as a refusal of the logic of centre and margins, or as evidence of their negotiation. The following scene from a draft script which was subsequently cut from the final version of the film is illuminating around these matters.

Haïm tells Rosie that there were even Jews in the British militia and that he, Haïm, was going to have to fight against them in the famous Battle on the Plains of Abraham, which marked the beginning of the end of French rule of the colony. He describes the predicament he faced, ever-present at yet another pivotal moment of Quebec history: "I didn't have the choice. Quebec was my city. I had to defend it!" Rosie asks how it went. Haïm says, "Not too well. I'd never worn a uniform. When I'd finished getting dressed, I realized, like the good Roi Dagobert, that I'd put my drawers on backwards.¹²⁶ I got dressed again as fast as I could and I arrived on the plains about three minutes after the start of the battle. It was already over. We had lost." It is not clear whether "it didn't go well" because the French lost or because Haïm didn't get to see battle. "Le Bon Roi Dagobert" is a classic children's song dating to the French Revolution, which makes a buffoon of a figure of royalty. Here, Haïm positions himself as the laughingstock—self-deprecation as a self-feminizing gesture, I would argue—who is willing but unable to serve in battle alongside his fellow francophone Quebecers, against the British. He positions himself as not battle-ready, as unable and unfamiliar with military practice, albeit part of a single "we" that includes both Jews and Catholics.

There is an ambiguous countering of his own self-feminizing though through the possibility that "it didn't go well" because he didn't get to fight like a man. Or that had he been present he might have helped what was clearly a weak team. We can't be certain whether Haïm is just a buffoon, or if he found (happened upon?) a strategy to not have to fight, or to not to have to fight as a Jew against other Jews aligned with the British, his loyalties split, positioned as an accessory to what might have been "his army's" success. To me, this brief little bit of storytelling was too laden, and too complex to include in a film in which a claim to centrality in Quebec history is being made. It at once puts Jews on the French side, predating the permissibility of their presence and suggests split loyalties between French and British allegiance, concurrent with Jewish loyalties that cross this split. Such suggestions might undermine an argument for Jewish belonging. The scene's editing out may reflect the already noted political negotiation involved in sharing a Jewish history of Quebec, that the documentary is a negotiated telling.

Several other cuts between script and final film underscore this further. In Haïm's suggestion, Jews were able to set foot in Quebec by not outwardly broadcasting their Jewishness *and* because some who held positions of influence were either Jews themselves, or turned the other cheek to the Jewishness of those around them. Among these potential controversies is the suggestion that though Jews were not permitted in the French colonies, strictly forbidden according to imperial ordinance, Jews did indeed arrive to and settle in New France despite their exclusion, raising questions as to the purported white, Catholic, French origins of Quebec's first settler communities. Cut from the film is an exchange in which Haïm tells Rosie not just that he was among other Jews on Samuel de Champlain's ship, but that Champlain himself—or as Haïm affectionately calls him, "Samu"—might have been Jewish too.¹²⁷ Rosie is astonished. "It's an hypothesis," says Haïm, and Rosie asks how he

¹²⁶"Comme le bon Roi Dagobert, j'avais mis ma culotte à l'envers." The rhyme is lost in English.

¹²⁷Similar claims to Christopher Columbus' purported Jewish derivation have also been made. Gitlitz cites the likelihood of Columbus having Jewish ancestry, referring to Madariaga's biography as the best analysis of Columbus' origins (Gitlitz 1996, 54). The

comes to that hypothesis. He points to the name Samuel: "It doesn't get more Jewish than that!... And if you take a look at his nose, in profile..."—invoking a stereotype—he holds a photograph of himself next to a bust of Champlain: "We look a little like family, no?" In this same exchange, Rosie is confused by Haïm's claim that Esther Brandeau was the first Jewish person in New France, since Haïm himself, and his companions and possibly Samuel de Champlain himself, arrived earlier. Haïm says, "She was the first who was noticed. The others blended in with the landscape." In this script draft, the dual claim is explicitly made: the centrality of Jews to the history of Quebec and the earliest presence of Jews in Quebec. Though it is cut from the final film, the intention seeps through more subtly; the impulse haunts the film without explicitly betraying itself.

We also do not see in the film itself the section titles that structure the film's script, neither visually as text nor spoken, in the film itself. Most of these are far from provocative: "Quebec: Saint-Joseph Street"; "Where do the Jews come from?"; "Esther Brandeau: A Jewess Disguised as a Man"; "The Law of 1832"; "Léa Roback" etc. But "The Jewish Blood of Quebecers" is, I contend, an eruption of intention that is then strategically dulled. Part of how such claims are strategically dulled is through the mythical, fabricated Haïm. His era-crossing embodiments pit genres of "proof" against each other, leaving the door open to questioning. How can we know for sure? Rosie asks: "So, the Jews have always lived here clandestinely?" she asks. "Without leaving a trace for those who write history books," Haïm says, "... until the arrival of Esther Brandeau, in 1738." In this way, Haïm is the evidence that historians, readers of history had no access to, until now. The suggestion of transmission of "history" through embodiment means that contemporary bodies know history by virtue of being bodies in community. Embodied, community knowledge of a kind other than written history exceeds what the expert witnesses can bring. In the absence of books and objects, the past can nevertheless be known, through oral history transmitted across generations, through bodies that remember. Haïm is proof. He is story. The story is proof. Haïm is history and historian, his camera rolling suggesting that he is history that documents itself. The experts—journalists, historians—occupy the bulk of the "objective" input of the documentary, contained inside digital picture frames inside the frame of documentary, but they stand alongside this other kind of knowing, the repertory knowledge, to borrow from Diana Taylor, and this story exists only in dialogical relation, only in the presence of the willing witness (Taylor 2003).¹²⁸ You or I, as witnesses, have the option to not believe. In the absence of documentary proof, statements of fact might be taken as patently false and presumptuous, while claims can serve as suggestions or provocations, as if saying, How can we know for sure? Claims rather than assertions can perhaps be less contentious, and the use of the time-traveling fictional character is the means through which Tepperman can make claims.

documentary does not address the complexities of converts to Christianity, the phenomenon of crypto-Judaizing and the New Christian diaspora. Native American author Gerald Vizenor refers to Columbus as a *marrano* (Vizenor 1999, 113 quoted in Casteel 2012, 59).

¹²⁸Performance theorist Diana Taylor distinguishes between "archive"—material records like documents, photographs and objects, and what she calls "repertoire," which is performed socially (2003). We will delve into "repertoire," Pierre Bourdieu's notion of "habitus" (1990) and Paul Connerton's notion of "social habit memory" (1989) later in the dissertation.

Triangulation: The audience's take on knowing one

Tepperman sets into play a challenge to the assumed "pastness" of a past typically associated with antique objects and historical documents. She does so by presenting the living bodies of Haïm and his mentee, Rosie, as living "history," history continued/ing, past as well as present, a process involving living bodies in relation across eras. History is not a fixed object, nor known and verified only through documentary evidence, but rather a socially performed verb, predicated upon transacting; it is a transmission or exchange. Haïm speaks of a "we" that migrates across centuries and geographies. Rosie's apparent similarity to Brandeau is an anchoring point for the documentary, cast as a possible contemporary Brandeau stand-in in the eyes of Haïm, himself an embodiment of Jewish history. Haïm's playful reading of Rosie as a possible contemporary Esther in passing, in fact turns out to be true. This we learn together with Haïm at the very last possible moment, in a wink from Rosie / Esther herself as she leaves Haïm's store.

The fact that Rosie is other than she appears is hinted at though, at the outset, by the structure of the narration. We have access to Rosie's internal thoughts but not to Haïm's. For instance, in voice-over, we hear her say: "After talking about the Hart family, and its role in the foundation of Judaism in Quebec, my new friend would astound me." Such access to Rosie's thoughts about the exchange between the two protagonists occurs three times in the film, segueing us between sections of the chronological documentary. We are never given similar access to Haïm's thoughts. Through these voice-overs, Rosie's feelings are revealed; excitement about learning new things, horror and embarrassment at some of what she learns about how Jews have sometimes been treated in Quebec. Of the impending tale about the Church-sanctioned boycott of a Jewish store in the 1930s, she says,

It was so enjoyable listening to Mr. Haïm's fine stories, but he was about to tell me things that, seriously, I really would rather not have known. I know that my grandparents on my mother's side often did their rounds at the Pollack store. It's a name I remember hearing.

Rosie's simple private thoughts, which appear periodically throughout the documentary, inaccessible to Haïm, provide an outside to Haïm and serve as an accompaniment to us; we learn with Rosie, we are Rosie. We know as little as she, we are learning what we don't yet know. Yet, when Rosie speaks in these short private voiced-over thoughts, she summarizes how she feels about what she has heard from Haïm and his experts and witnesses, *and* she previews what she is (and we are) *about to hear next*. Thus, in the broader context, the film recounts her encounter with Haïm as having already happened, as if she is looking back on this encounter, as if *she* is telling Haïm's telling. Haïm seems the main focalizer. Rosie's gendered and youthful naïveté, her questions, her surprise, drive his focalizing forward. But Rosie's looking back and recalling, *contains* Haïm's looking back and recalling. Rosie's not so obvious focalization contains Haïm's. The effect is that it is not actually clear who is telling the story,

Haïm or Rosie, or, given the ending, Esther Brandeau.

Where Haïm is looking back, Rosie is looking back and forward. Maybe she was there too, before herself as Brandeau, maybe she was among Haïm's companions 400 years ago. Time is confused. She is passing as other than narrator, but is the narrator. Who is the narrator? And where are we? Are they—Haïm and Esther—conspiring together on the trick that enables the telling? Rosie passes as non-Jewish to Haïm and to us. She passes as learner/listener when in fact she is teller. Everybody is Jewish, even her, the film seems to be saying. Rosie, or Esther as Rosie, does not weigh in on the matter. Instead, Haïm gives Rosie a bagel for the road. As she's leaving, he asks one last question, an oversight: "Excuse me, but I still don't know your name." To which she replies with a wink, "Well, yes, you know it. Brandeau. Esther Brandeau." We watch Rosie as Brandeau (or vice versa) wander the streets of Quebec City, visiting the places Haïm has spoken about. She carries her camera, a documentarian producing evidence. On the Dufferin terrace—where once the first electrical lamps had caused such a stir, installed by a Jewish entrepreneur as Haïm has told earlier—Rosie looks up at a lantern. The light comes on. She makes them come on, it seems, not the entrepreneur who invented them. In those final moments of the big reveal, she winks at us, the camera. It is as if she is taking a picture of us. The desire to transmit that has manifested as gendered in the film—Haïm acts from the desire to transmit, Rosie acts from the desire to receive knowledge—is upturned in the end when it is Rosie narrating Haïm's narration. Could it be that Esther uses Haïm to fulfill her desire to transmit?

Let's consider the arrangement of positions in light of Amy Robinson's theorizing of passing as a transaction of reading, that operates in a triangle of positioning: the passer, the in-group witness and the dupe (Robinson 1994, 1993). Robinson's formulation, which is devised from literary analyses of instances of disguised lesbianism and disguised Blackness, is based on the old adage, "it takes one to know one." Haïm is a self-proclaimed Quebec Jew, as old as the city itself. Rosie is apparently a secular Catholic "de souche" Quebecer. We are viewing her as such, in line with how Haïm is viewing her, because of how Haïm speaks to her, because of how she speaks privately to us and because of how she responds to Haïm with questions, amazement, lack of awareness. In the end, Rosie turns out to be Esther Brandeau. This can have several meanings. Haïm is the dupe who did not recognize Esther passing as Rosie, or Haïm is a member of the in-group who is privy to her passing and plays along. Where at the outset we were positioned as Rosie, now we are positioned as Haïm when it appears that he is duped. This movement moves *us* around. But let us recall that at the outset Rosie reminds him of someone. Esther Brandeau. Now it may appear that from the outset, together they have collaborated in a ruse to enable us, the dupe, to hear the argument. It also allows for the possibility that the dupe may in fact be part of the in-group, unknowingly. The dupe doesn't know s/he herself is passing. Through this time-transcending characterization, many boundaries are revealed for what they are: blurry. "De souche" may not be what it is assumed to be. The present may not be in a linear relationship of progress from the past. An expert may know less than a non-expert. That we are moved around with Haïm and Rosie unfixes—or produces ambiguity around—

what constitutes Jewishness, a different ambiguity than what I uncovered in McKay's novel, but an ambiguity nonetheless. It is an ambiguity also entwined with instability or uncertainty of Catholicness. In McKay's novel, the ambiguity is in the effect of multiple ways of producing / representing Jewishness: written on the body, betrayed by practice, a question of lineage, a matter of personal conviction. Tepperman, through making use of the transtemporal as a creative device, casts the umbrella wider: if Rosie is Esther, any *de souche* Quebecer can be Jewish. The umbrella is wide enough that it might include you or me. Simultaneously, through her time-traveling focalizers, Tepperman destabilizes the notion that the past is distinct from the present. Thus, the ambiguity is also a temporal one, or at least, has a temporal dimension.

Of bagels and reasonable accommodation

Just as the documentary begins with food, food reappears as a segue to the end, and again right at the end. The third and final focalization by Rosie segues us into the final moments of the film. Rosie's voice:

Discovering all these nice characters made me want to ask Haïm about the Jews of today. But before that, I had a little confession to make to him. Haïm is making me discover a universe that was completely unknown, of Quebec and of their history. I was a little embarrassed about what I had to tell him.

It is a bagel-related incident that she is referring to, a culinary faux-pas as a means to link Rosie to Brandeau's purportedly forced culinary transgressions. The difference between Esther and Rosie, or between then and now, is that for Rosie what would once have been a profound transgression is now merely a personal choice and almost no big deal. Rosie confesses to Haïm that she likes to eat her bagels with ham and cheese. Haïm says, "So what?" Rosie thinks it's maybe a bit sacrilege, adding pork to the mix. Haïm's reply situates the documentary in response to contemporary politics in Quebec. He says, "I would say that that's an accommodation that doesn't appear to me too unreasonable." The question of "reasonable accommodation" has erupted in Canada nowhere more intensely than in Quebec.¹²⁹ By law, reasonable accommodation can be requested, for instance, by people

¹²⁹It is beyond the dissertation's intentions to delve into this debate, but a detailed footnote is in order. "Reasonable accommodation" refers to adjustments in practices so as to ensure the ability of individuals to express their rights and freedoms. In Canada, it stems from Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, where equality of rights is guaranteed (Canadian Charter 1982). For only one recent Canadian scholarly anthology about reasonable accommodation, see Beaman (2012). See Bilge on reasonable accommodation and its most recent manifestations in Quebec's multiculturalism debates (Bilge 2014). My aim is to point to the filmmaker's embedding of the documentary in contemporary political discourse. Here I give a selective overview of the debate as it has manifested in Quebec. A series of examples leading to Quebec's provincial inquiry in 2007, and more recent events related to the defunct Charter of Values proposed by former Quebec separatist premiere Pauline Marois illustrate what is at issue. In 2007, a number of cases of reasonable accommodation became high profile and garnered intense media coverage in Quebec, polarizing the public. Debates centred around for example whether and where Muslims should be allowed to wear niqab, burqa or hijab, whether and where Sikhs should be permitted to carry traditional kirpan, whether Hasidic boys should be protected from the vision of women in work-out wear visible from the street, whether Orthodox religious women could be given female examiners for their driving tests. In June 2013, Quebec's football federation denied permission to Sikh male youth who wear turbans from playing in the league, they said for safety reasons. The national federation then barred Quebec teams from playing at the national level. Quebec's then Premier in turn admonished the Canadian federation for telling Quebec what to do, thus illustrating a separatist battle manifesting within a reasonable accommodation debate. These cases often bring to the fore a real or imagined battle between gender rights and religious

who feel the status quo of an employer or public institution infringes upon their religious rights. In Quebec a 2007 public inquiry highly criticized by racialized groups and not participated in by First Nations concluded that media attention to and public outcry about reasonable accommodations, that were perceived by many to undermine fought-for women's rights and the secularization of Quebec society, were vastly disproportionate to the number of requests actually made, that the facts in such cases were often distorted, and that the controversy reflected Quebec's white francophone Catholic settler-descended population's identity insecurities as a linguistic and culture minority in an anglophone-dominant North America (Bouchard and Taylor 2008). The report did not name racism as the primary impetus behind the public outcry. Hassidic Jews have been central in the reasonable accommodation debate. Women's bodies have been a key terrain upon which the debate has played out, for instance, around what might constitute reasonable accommodation in relation to Muslim women's manner of dress, to Hassidic Jewish women's need not to be alone in the company of men—for instance for driving exams—and to Orthodox Jewish men and boys' need to be "protected from" the sight of women in exercise wear at a public community centre across from a synagogue.

rights. Bilge argues that gender and sexuality rights are pitted against religious rights as a xenophobic tool (2014). Marois had also put forth a Quebec Charter of Values, which would prohibit public servants from wearing "overt and conspicuous" religious symbols at work, and anyone receiving service at a public institution would have to uncover their face. Crucifixes and Stars of David would be considered small symbols exempt from the ban (CBC 2013). Opposition to perceived over-accommodation has sometimes been rooted in a perception of a step backward from gains made for Quebec women during the Quiet Revolution in which church and state were delinked. The 2007 Quebec public inquiry was led by two senior public figures, both white male Quebecers, one francophone, one anglophone. Historian Gérard Bouchard is the younger brother of former Quebec separatist leader Lucien Bouchard, and is the author of two connected historical fictions—*Mitsouk* and *Pikauba*—involving francophone settlers and Aboriginal characters (Bouchard 2005, 2002). The philosopher Charles Taylor has written about modernity, social theory, secularism and multiculturalism. (C. Taylor 2007, 1989). Their report was released in 2008 (Bouchard and Taylor 2008). An abridged version is available at:

<http://red.pucp.edu.pe/wp-content/uploads/biblioteca/buildingthefutureGerardBouchardcharlestaylor.pdf>

The authors concluded that media and public attention given to "reasonable accommodation" was not in proportion to the frequency of actual requests for accommodation, let alone the number of requests granted in Quebec, and that in the majority of cases, there was a striking distortion between the facts, and how the public perceived the cases. The authors concluded that the attention given to the issue was primarily a symptom of white francophone Quebec insecurity over identity as a minority within a dominant anglophone culture in North America, often expressed through a discourse of "inevitable disappearance." (This discourse, interestingly, echoes a discourse applied externally to Indigenous peoples via "the myth of the disappearing race.") First Nations in Quebec by choice were not party to the inquiry, on the grounds of having a different arrangement with the government as nations unto themselves. It is vital to note that the call for the inquiry elicited strong outcry from Quebec's minority populations who felt their identity as Quebecers was under siege. One of the commission's recommendations was that the government adequately define the model of interculturalism that Quebecers, they say, generally accept as a framework for social cohesion, but which remained ill-defined in public policy. Distinct from Canada's broader "multiculturalism," Quebec "interculturalism" responds to its unique circumstance where a large majority of its overall population is francophone settler French-Canadian descended. In short, Quebec interculturalism is a strategy that privileges the need to preserve the so-called founding francophone settler culture of Quebec, while simultaneously becoming multicultural. Jewish difference has factored in the reasonable accommodations debate, sometimes indicating how religious orthodoxies—Jewish and Muslim—allied themselves against secularism, often in cases that implicated centrally the question of gender. The most notorious case was that of the Parc Avenue YMCA in Montreal. The Jewish community asked that the fitness centre put curtains over the windows so that boys and men walking to and from the synagogue across the street would not have to see women in exercise wear. The Y in response replaced the windows with frosted glass. After outcry from Y users, the frosted windows were removed and blinds were installed. In 2010, the Quebec Orthodox Jewish community appeared before the Quebec National Assembly to fight a bill that would ban Muslim women from wearing *niqab* while receiving or delivering government services. They argued that gender rights were being put ahead of religious rights, encouraging a hierarchy of rights that could only exacerbate social tensions for religious minorities. On the other end were citizen groups arguing for a ban on wearing religious symbols of any kind by civil servants. Arguments from the non-religious have tended to pit gender and sexuality rights together against religious rights, where orthodox religious arguments have tended to put religious rights above gender rights, or in the case of the deputation before the National Assembly above, to argue for a law that respects Charter rights without hierarchy.

Haïm's reference to the debate here acts as a broader signifier of minority-majority dynamics, linking together the history told in the documentary covering centuries of Jewish presence in Canada, the negotiations and strategies enacted in the face of exclusions, and the contemporary context of political debate describe above. While the granting of reasonable accommodation is usually understood to be given in relation to and by the white francophone Catholic settled majority to particularly minorities, here Haïm flips the minority position and as a Jew grants Rosie and by association all bagel-loving non-Jews, the reasonable accommodation of non-kosher consumption. He approves of the bagel appropriation. As it will turn out, Brandeau is still eating whatever she wants so many centuries later, no less Jewish *as well as* non-Jewish, and a Quebecer. Where McKay sends the multicrosser into an unknown future elsewhere, here is Brandeau, still, unkosher bagel in hand, her disappearance from the archival record apparently not a foregone conclusion, her deportation unsuccessful.

Sanctioned crossings: seeing invisibility

Not long after Haïm's joke situates the history told within contemporary political controversy related to ethnic and religious identity (which, as the reasonable accommodations debate has demonstrated, play out often on the terrain of women's bodies), the documentary takes us to a contemporary Purim celebration. In the lead-up to Rosie's final wink-reveal, fresh bagel in hand at the end of the film, a young girl appears in a home movie that Haïm has shot of Purim celebrations at the synagogue, which he is showing Rosie. The young girl speaks of the origins of Purim. Ending the documentary content of the film with this visit to a real contemporary Purim celebration is significant. Rosie watches the screen as the young girl explains Purim, and we are thusly given a direct window into a gathered, practicing, festive contemporary Jewish community:

It's happy because we celebrate that the Jews weren't killed, they weren't massacred in big numbers a few thousand years ago. So it's really fun all this, we like remembering... The pastries ... are called 'hamentaschen', they're like triangles. It's apparently because the legend says that Haman had triangular ears so it's to remember that. It's a link between history and the present.

Haïm summarizes jokingly for Rosie: "The idea hidden behind each Jewish festival is always the same. They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat!" Haïm pulls out a tin of hamentaschen and says to Rosie in all seriousness, "All these stories I've told you, I keep them alive. Here [points to his heart]. So my great grandchildren and my children's great grandchildren will be able to remember." And then another joke, with a wink: "I guess that's why I'm not in a rush to die." History stays alive in order to tell itself. Haïm is history and historian, video camera in hand.

A number of ideas are collected in the Purim imagery the young girl and Haïm together invoke: food as entry into intercultural exchange, food as community gathering, history as nourishment, the relationship between

transgression, preservation and the sacred. As the tradition goes, found in the biblical Book of Esther, Purim is the celebration of Esther—also known as Hadassah, meaning "concealment." She is the chosen wife of the Persian King Ahasuerus, and she is Jewish though he doesn't know it. The King had ordered his then wife Vashti to display her beauty before him and his guests, and she refused. Not tolerating such an example of disobedience, the King sent for all the most beautiful virgins of the land to be gathered so that he could choose a replacement wife. The King chose Esther, an orphan raised by her cousin Mordecai. Esther later learns that prince Haman has sought the King's approval to slaughter all Jews in the realm because Mordecai refuses to bow down before him.¹³⁰ Mordecai pleads with Esther to intervene. Esther reveals her Jewishness to her husband, pleads against the slaughter, Mordecai is made prime minister and it is Haman who is ultimately sentenced to death.

Purim is a festival of masquerade, based on a Biblical story not of passing from male to female or vice versa, but from Jewish to non-Jewish—as a celebration of the deliverance of the Jews of the Persian Empire from the evil of Haman. At Purim revelers conceal their identities through costume and mask, and also find a permissible avenue for contravening a Biblical prohibition of wearing the clothes of the other gender, hence its embracing and deployment by queers.¹³¹ The dynamics of strategic concealment and revelation are played with here, the idea that things may not always be as they appear. Who can tell the difference between Haman and Mordechai at Purim? (Warland 2003, 3) Who can tell the difference between Esther and Rosie? In a sense, Tepperman's film is woven through a Purim backbone, a backbone of masquerade, concealment, misreading, revealing. Ending at a Purim celebration suggests that we read the Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue story through the biblical Book of Esther, through the sacred act of concealment and revelation as strategy of commitment to community, through *disguise*. The film itself is a Purim-esque world where past and present interperce, where the forbidden can be breached, where claims can be "safely" aired.

In the final reveal, when Rosie tells Haïm that she *is* Esther Brandeau, the film seems to suggest that hers has been a sacred act of concealment and revelation, an expression of commitment to community, a disguise that has enabled the telling we have taken in. The film also seems to suggest that Rosie is Jewish and not, and that she belongs, multiply: she is Jewish, she is not, she is a Quebecker. This is according to the perspective of Rosie/Esther. Since we don't know if Haïm and Rosie have conspired in the docu-fiction's telling to us as possibly-insider-dupes, we don't know if Haïm concurs. Rosie's wink is the last word. It seems we are the targets of the suggestion that anyone could be Jewish or Jewish-descended however self-defined, if they are (knowingly or unknowingly passing as) Quebecers descended from Catholic origins. The reveal suggests that Brandeau crossed eras, ahead of her time, performed being multiply affiliated before it was deemed possible or conceivable, as it is now. What then is the concealment that preserves, in Rosie's conceal-to-reveal? It seems history has been hidden

¹³⁰If we analyze the gendered refusals in this tale, we can see that Vashti refuses patriarchy, and Mordecai refuses ethnic superiority and elitism; both are "obstinate," we could say. However, Esther is not—particularly in relation to Vashti—an uncomplicated heroine, given that she completed the punishment of the insubordinate wife.

¹³¹Recall that Vancouver artist Wendy Oberlander staged a version of the story in which nuns were played by men (Ducharme 2004).

but is now revealed. What is concealed is history, memory, which through Rosie and Haïm now erupts into knowability, through their visibility.

But Brandeau's arrival to New France was not just predicated on a concealment of Jewishness, but a concealment of gender also, and yet gender passing is not re-enacted in the documentary's leveraging of the tale for its narration, so there is nothing to reveal here it seems. We are not asking who can tell the difference between Esther and Jacques as retold here, because Jacques is absent. The gender pass was temporary, momentary, and is thus relegated to the past. It is not remembered through its re-performance, except obliquely, if at all, through the suggestion of Purim. It seems the axes of simultaneous passing are teased apart even as they are co-inscribing, and one is disappeared. The female masculine historical experience remains outside the frame of the docu-fiction, outside representation. Like with McKay's novel, it becomes apparent that when viewing Tepperman's film, in order to make the multicrosser fully visible, we must enact strategic readings, what I call queer leaps of faith. Otherwise the multicrosser as multicrosser slips away.

The filmmaker constructs an internal parallel of the pattern of Haïm as Jewish male accessory to non-Jewish success, by making Haïm himself accessory to the success of Brandeau-as-Rosie, to the success of Jewish persistence. Jewish persistence, dependent as it is here on Rosie/Esther, is gendered female. The film returns Brandeau to visibility, through a contemporary re-staging of the initial invisibility of "Jewishness," Rosie passing as not-Jewish. But the film does not re-stage the gender transgression, unless obliquely we viewers make leaps toward the possible reading of gender transgression by association: Esther Brandeau passed as male, maybe Rosie passes as male outside the camera's viewfinder? Maybe Haïm is a 400 year-old Brandeau, still passing? Maybe Haïm is Rosie in the future?

Like reading certain scenes in McKay's novel—the nun as insider to Esther's gender pass watching Esther as Pierre with Claire in the convent; the multicrosser watching the bottoms of women washing a ship's deck by watching the men atop the mast watching—these would be queer leaps of faith. The film makes explicitly visible the presence of Jewishness within the dominant francophone Catholic Quebec across a long history, but it doesn't likewise find a way to make explicitly visible the presence of gender transgression within a heteronormative and/or gender normative mainstream, Jewish or not, of the present or not. While the definition of Jewishness proposed in the film is expansive and multiple, there is no similar expansion across gender. In a hierarchy of what may be readable, what might best be heard by a mainstream audience, in a film about Jewish history, Jewish-Christian passing trumps female-male passing. These appear to be traded off against each other. Here, the complexity of the multicrossing can be made fully visible—the representation of that complexity completed—only through a certain *desiring reading*, of the original documents, of their re-presentations. A queer leap of faith through that desiring reading is even more of a leap in this documentary rendering, since unlike in McKay's novel, Esther is never present as a gender crosser. Both McKay and Tepperman, in different ways, fail to take full account of the multicrosser as multicrosser.

Intersectionally storied land: toward settler responsibility and Indigenous sovereignty

I want to make one more read on Tepperman's ending at Purim, a celebration that sanctifies concealment, passing and the strategic self-reveal as sacred commitment to community survival. This closing anchored in Purim casts the story of Quebec's Jews in a narrative of the persecuted surviving, in remembering and celebrating that survival. I want to return to the hauntings that Morrison, Byrd and others signal to us to be attentive to, and to a passing comment made by Haïm in response to questioning by Rosie. She asked why he chose to come to cold Quebec and not to the more hospitable climate of the Caribbean. This and passing use of the word "colonists" is the closest acknowledgment from the protagonists and the interviewed historians in the documentary, of the intertwined and troubling histories of which the earliest Jewish, or purportedly Jewish settlers were a part, which together enabled construction of a settlement such as New France, even as Jewish participation in colonization was entwined with persecution of Jews. Though clearly the reference to Quebec's harsh weather is tongue-in-cheek, the possibility of choice proposes that all settlers had choices available to them in terms of where they might migrate, when slaves arrived enslaved, and many white settlers arrived indentured (and among each of these groups of arrivants, gender determined differential experience). Further, as the documentary maps the landscape of Quebec City through Jewish marking of it, the land itself as storied and already peopled before settler arrival becomes the story of settlers who built it. Partnering with this comment is another that was cut from the final version of Tepperman's film, in which Haïm explains to a confused Rosie that Esther was just the first Jew to be noticed, that the others "blended in with the landscape." Land here conceals passing Jews, safeguards them, but is not revealed to house a prior and continued Indigenous presence. The film tells a Jewish history only in relation to white French Catholic and British Protestant history, even as it notes through historian interviewee Pierre Anctil, the relationship between early presence of Jews in the New World with the decisive moment of 1492 and the ongoing persecution of Jews and *Conversos* in Iberia and beyond.

How can we take into account multiple histories in ways that do not hierarchize and occlude, that serve a decolonial aim? After Purim where transgression is the new order, things return to the old order, the "real" and "right" order of things. But what might happen if the point is to completely intervene in the real order of things, the colonial order of things, the settler order of things, the gendered and heteronormative order of things? Here I want to bring into conversation two strands of scholarship, for the conversation is where I see future work to be done: Sephardism and marranism within literary studies, and queer Indigenous studies. This will bring us in conclusion back to the question at the heart of the dissertation, which is how to tell/perform a reading of the Esther Brandeau story that is queer, feminist and decolonial. In particular, this will allow me to ask more deeply what is decolonial in queer reading, by troubling queer reading itself, as I have claimed to have been doing.

In a gesture of deepening the comparative turn in literary studies of the Americas, Sarah Casteel draws on Sephardism as an avenue for bringing into dialogue Jewish and Indigenous histories of colonization (2012). Sephardism is a term from literary studies defined in multiple ways, including as "a politicized literary metaphor

used by Jewish and gentile novelists, poets, and dramatists from Germany, England, France, the Americas and Israel, and even India to explore their own preoccupations with modern national identity” (Halevi-Wise 2012, xiv); and as “a form of literary expression that functions politically during heightened moments of historical consciousness in diverse national contexts” (5). Halevi-Wise distinguishes “between sephardism as an expression of Sephardic ethnic identity and sephardism as a wider vehicle for representations of modern nationalism and postnationalism” (4). Bernard Horn writes that Sephardism thus defined “demonstrates how nations in the process of self-definition have used or accessed this historical experience as a repertoire for interactions between nation-states and what they regard as Others...” (189). Like Casteel, Kandiyoti, in a study of Latino/a writers in the United States, highlights that many authors who deploy Sephardism do so not to “collapse or create supposedly stable identity formations ... but rather to posit Jewish, Sephardic, Latin American and diaspora Latino/a identities as historically connected” (Kandiyoti 2012, 236).

Seeing Sephardism as an opportunity for intersectionality (63), Casteel brings into conversation literature by Indigenous authors that invoke the multiple violences of the year 1492 as Jewish expulsion from Iberia, and European "discovery" of the Americas, and who write Jewish and Indigenous characters into their narratives. Casteel cites Kandiyoti and Jonathan Freedman's theorizations of Sephardism as an "invocation of Sephardic experience that compares and connects histories," and in the case of Indigenous experiences of the Columbus catastrophe that led to colonization, Casteel suggests that the node of 1492 is a more productive mode of engaging Jewish and Indigenous histories than the node of the Holocaust as analogy to the genocidal effects of colonization (Casteel 2012, 60). We could say then that the Atlantic is Casteel's reference point. She further specifies a sub-category, let's say, of Sephardism: marranism or the deployment of the crypto-Jewish or *Converso* experience to promote “a view of identity as syncretic and traceable only through stories” (ibid). Freedman more specifically understands marranism as embodying a “rooted yet flexible construction of social identification” (cited in Casteel 2012, 62). Sephardism then is understood to describe strategic deployments of a specific Jewish history to make broader analogies or claims, and marranism as a self-crafting of identity entwined with the telling of story. Following Kandiyoti, Freedman and Casteel, the opportunity to be found in thinking Sephardism and marranism is in foregrounding linkages between histories that do not cause them to compete (Casteel 2012, 62).

Casteel sees value in shifting away from dominant-subordinate comparisons and looks to Indigenous authors' deployment of Jewish characters. She argues for example that Indigenous author Gerald Vizenor, in invoking Sephardism, extends his notion of Indigenous "survance" to the Jewish experience of 1492.¹³² Importantly, the authors that Casteel analyzes do not disappear the *Converso* experience as an incomplete Jewishness, but invoke the strategic, storied, imaginative possibilities of marranism to Indigenous sovereignty.

¹³²Survance, writes Vizenor, “is an active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name. Native survance stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy and victimry” (Vizenor 1999, vii). This is a complex connection that needs to be troubled, because post-1492, Jews of the 1492 Inquisition diaspora came to be both victims of that experience, and engaged as participants in the project of colonization as merchants, slave-owners and settlers.

Casteel demonstrates how Sephardism proposes an alternative to competitive memory in histories of trauma, and how it can resist the collapse of diasporic colonial experiences into hybridity at the expense of Indigenous sovereignty.¹³³ Less prevalent in Casteel's formulation however is a consideration of gender and sexuality. It is important to ask what opportunity is offered by Sephardism or marranism when the axis of gender is taken up. If marranism foregrounds a rooted, yet flexible identity-construction, then how does gender factor into that rooted flexibility? Further, what happens to the analytical potential of Sephardism or marranism when gender and sexuality are taken up when what Maria Lugones has called the coloniality of gender itself is accounted for, and when what Andrea Smith and others have foregrounded as the heteronormativity of settler colonialism is accounted for? (Lugones 2010; A. Smith 2010; Morgensen 2011). As queer Indigenous scholarship has shown us, gender and sexuality are key terrains of conquest (Lugones 2010; Smith 2010).

Sephardism and marranism in their theorization have emerged from literary studies as characterizations of deployments of Sephardic history in works made by creators of fiction. Both Tepperman's documentary and McKay's novel for young people deploy the story of Esther Brandeau in order to weigh into conversations about nationhood, citizenship and belonging. In this sense, we can consider these works as examples of Sephardism, even as they tell a tale of an actual, real figure of the *Converso* diaspora. In McKay's case, she attempts to (re)create that *Converso* context. Both Tepperman and McKay in their own ways look to Esther Brandeau's *Converso* experience as one of being between Jewish and Catholic. This offers them a means to propose religious and communal identity as self-crafted and a matter of choice.¹³⁴ Insofar as the creators also propose choice in identification, flexible but rooted identification to recall Freedman's definition, these works could also be seen, not unproblematically, as examples of marranism, if Sephardism and marranism are deployments of Sephardic and *Converso* experience as vehicles for thinking issues of belonging. We will return in a moment to the potential of understanding these works as instances of Sephardism and marranism.

As I have noted above, Tepperman does not make visible or transtemporal Esther/Rosie's gender crossing, though the message of female capability and need for contemporary expectation of gender equality is implicit. Rosie's responses to Haïm's storytelling suggest, further, a heteronormative reading of the historical figure. Gender is stable, sexuality is stable, Jewish difference is painted as difference within a self-chosen wide spectrum, and the land is a backdrop to a conversation across settler communities. McKay's novel as we have seen also functions through gender binary fixity, heteronormativity, and an ambiguity around Jewish difference read as class difference. I have shown McKay's novel to exemplify what Garber called the transvestite effect of

¹³³We can recall here, for example, in our introduction to the literary landscape in which McKay's novel is situated, that in historical literature for children, the *coureur des bois* is often subtly and not so subtly put forth as the best of both worlds, and thus by extension hybridity becomes an *improvement* all around, better than Indigenous who are posited as lesser, and giving a claim to the land to settlers. Smith has challenged diaspora studies and celebrations of hybridity for the ways in which they undermine Indigenous nationalist efforts and ways of being as primitive (A. Smith 2010, 50-52).

¹³⁴Tepperman, in arguing for Jewishness as expansive, seems to affirm the value of hybridity, and suggests the viability of *Converso* identity not as a transitional or stilted moment as Pierre Lasry's novel suggests, but as its own authentic experience. The expansive argument is one that does not erase other chosen embodiments of Jewishness.

category crisis. McKay too makes the story a conversation between white settlers on storied land as backdrop signalling generically colonial realities for Indigenous and enslaved people. In both cases, though differently, the multicrossing of the historical figure is not fully visible, and settler arrival is not troubled. Just how much of a connection might there be between not seeing the *multicrosser* and an architecture of telling that places at the silent margins those most on the receiving end of colonialism's march is a question that requires attention.

Indigenous scholar Jodi A. Byrd characterizes as a “cacophony” the interconnected histories in the transit of empire and calls for different architectures of conversation between histories so as not always to be mediated through the dominant, and crucially, she challenges sweeping Indigenous experience under the liberal umbrella of multiculturalism, a move that serves as contemporary guise for ongoing colonization (Byrd 2011; Morgensen 2011; Coulthard 2014). Given Casteel's articulations in relation to Byrd's call, one looks upon the telling of the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as an opportunity for intervention on many fronts. Queer feminist decolonial (mis)reading, my performance of reading for multicrossing, is a strategy I have enacted in this chapter that has just unfolded. It has been an effort at accounting for the multicrosser, at deploying the multicrosser in the service of intersectional discourse attentive to the colonial, present and past. Rather than aim for a cohesive narrative that necessitates simplification and occlusion, Byrd's call for cacophony and Casteel's and others' focus on Sephardism's possibilities foreground the need for complexity, not equivocating and hierarchizing difference and historical experience. Sephardism and marranism, as Casteel and others have deployed them, that is, as analytical attentions, allow shifting the node of comparison and contrast between histories to 1492. They allow interconnection and comparison, not competition among histories of victimization. They allow us to see the nation and belonging questions that compel the deployment of Sephardic and *Converso* history. Taken together with Toni Morrison's attention to the absent-present Africanist figure that serves the early white American literary canon and workings out of notions of American freedom, and Jodi Byrd's highlighting of the Indigenous figure and experience as haunting and central to ongoing construction of empire, we can see how multiple histories can be taken up. What exactly does a queer theoretical grounding offer this, and more importantly, what are some of its risks?

There is a troubling that must be made here, and that is to queerness in relation to settler colonialism. Queer discourses can simultaneously affirm queer rights to difference, while upholding settler colonialism and its subtle and explicit intention of removal and replacement of Indigenous peoples through deflection of such reality (Morgensen 2012, 22). The danger in a queer settler readerly position and deployment of queer reading is in an uncritical deployment of queer that does not recognize or account for the centrality of Indigenous removal through absorption into the big multicultural umbrella that is the present-day guise of colonization of Indigenous territories. Scott Morgensen guides us to identify the ways in which settler queerness can be and is absorbed into complicity with settler colonialism (2011). This compels asking if and how what we will might call queer disruptive potential is collapsed or absorbed into the status quo, blunted of its potential to unsettle. In the case of the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, I want to dwell for a moment on the claims to “earliest presence” argued in

Tepperman's film and many historiographies of Jewish Canada, and debates over the “firstness” of Esther Brandeau, argued by some, refuted by others. Even as the “earliest presence” argument, the “centrality” claim and the “firstness” contentions have tended to be deployed within claims to Jewish belonging in the face of histories of exclusion, these are a part of a narrative of arrival, of discovery on the part of historians and cultural analysts like myself. Arrival, discovery, firstness, these are narratives that betray, in my estimation, a colonial imaginary.

What if instead, we place Esther Brandeau within the colonial project while simultaneously recognizing the story's details that suggest disruption, as the multicross unravels on colonized territories, as the multicrosser is betrayed and evicted from these territories, fails to disappear into the landscape, fails to belong. In one of his many searing moments in *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization*, Morgensen refers to the desire to belong as a colonial desire; a settler in a settler colonial state desires to belong on stolen Indigenous land. He instead advocates groundlessness as a tool for destabilizing the settler colonial imaginary (Morgensen 2011, 227). What if reading Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue today is about reading *Eruptions Into Knowability* for disruptions into, or disruptions of knowability, where the knowability in focus is not just the multicrosser per se, but the contexts that both enabled the multicrosser's freedoms of movement, as well as their arrival, disruption, and eviction? A queer, feminist decolonial telling of the story of Esther Brandeau would be, in my estimation, one that leverages the potential critical disruptive power of the tale. The disruptive power is in the enabling by and eviction from the imperial terms of the encounter, the arrival, the being discovered. The disruptive potential is in the multicrosser's resistance to total entrapment, unpinnability, and perhaps in representations' failure to fully account for the multicrosser.

Conclusion

In Part I: *Eruptions Into Knowability*, I began by introducing the foundational document in the French colonial archive that brings us the story of Brandeau / La Fargue. I offered a close reading of this record so as to establish the ways in which this figure is inscribed in a gendered way and in terms of Jewish difference. I foregrounded what I saw as a gender instability tamed by “she,” and the discursive feminization of the male figure prior to outing. I foregrounded the ways in which the document's retroactive witness structure destabilizes its truth claims. I characterized the document as a record of interrogation. In making this analysis, I proposed that we be attentive to how characterizations and discursive qualities may travel over time as the story is reiterated in the cultural archive. I then offered a genealogy of how the story has travelled through the cultural archive to the present day, which enabled me to foreground how Brandeau / La Fargue has been represented in different milieus, from journalistic print to historians' accounts and more, at different points of time. I paid particular attention to bursts of visibility of the story in relation to moments in Canadian history with heightened attention to questions of belonging and difference. I then moved on to analyze two contemporary creative works that represent the story, the first the novel for young people by Sharon McKay entitled *Esther* (2004) and the second a docu-fiction entitled

Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter by filmmaker Shelley Tepperman (2008), in which Esther Brandeau serves as a narrator of a work about Quebec City's Jewish history. I drew on narratological tools, with an intersectional attention to gender, race, class and the colonial context. In analyzing both these works, I showed how the multicrosser as multicrosser falls from representation.

I situated my analysis of McKay's novel with the literature on fiction for children, and demonstrated the infrequency with which multicrossing features in that literature, making McKay's novel and analysis of it an opportune offering. I also situated my analysis within the scholarship on settler tales for children in settler colonial contexts, within which McKay's novel figures as a very conventional work. Finally, in its themes of gender equality and individual choice, I proposed that McKay's novel is an example of the transvestite effect of category crisis, where the crisis around Jewish difference is deflected onto the gender axis. In my analysis of McKay's rendering, I paid close attention to the moments of outing that are depicted in the novel, and through this analysis I demonstrated the way in which ambiguity around Jewish difference is produced through confusion between ethnic or proto-racial difference and class difference. I also paid particular attention to how interculturality is staged in the novel, and how gendered, racialized and heterosexualized hierarchies figure in these exchanges. This analysis also enabled me to develop the notion of "multicrosser," while showing the shortcomings of McKay's representation of Brandeau / La Fargue as multicrosser. I concluded that queer readerly leaps of faith are the only means to complete the visibility of the multicrosser.

I then moved to an analysis of Shelley Tepperman's educational docu-fiction *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter* (2008). Here, I began with a comparative reflection on genre by considering novel as genre and film as genre through the works considered. I elaborated the genre-specific qualities of each, but also their overlap. I gave attention to the hybrid structure of Tepperman's work and worked to demonstrate how the deployment of transtemporality in the film allows the present and the past to interpiece, and this strategy's significance to making truth claims about Quebec's Jewish history. I also paid attention to the heterosexualized, gendered and intergenerational relationship between the film's two chief fictional protagonists, who serve as vehicles for delivering the documentary material, and how a triangulation of witness positions implicating us as viewers enlarges understandings of what constitutes Jewishness. I showed how what may be considered a proto-racialized, gendered inscription of Brandeau in the original 18th century archival record is recast in the film through a fictional character's transtemporal retelling in present-day Quebec in such a way that any proto-racialization of Jewish difference disappears, but heterosexualized gendering of Brandeau remains. I analyzed the negotiations undertaken to make truth claims about earliest presence of Jews in Quebec, and about the indispensability of Jewish contributions to the success of Quebec. I showed strategies that allow for making what might be contentions claims in the film, for example through feminization of masculinity, along with couching any claims within a fantastical fictional context where fictional characters embody history and purport to argue for bodies as evidence that exceed the present-day expert witnesses. Like with McKay's novel, I showed how the multicrossing

figure is not fully accounted for in the film because the gender passing is traded off of Jewish-to-Christian passing. I ended where the film ends, with a Purim celebration, and unpacked the significance and consequences of couching the film within a Purim framework, and as a conversation between settler histories. Thus I ended by returning to my central question, which led me to propose rethinking the Brandeau / La Fargue tale and analyses of its representations through the intersection of Sephardism and marranism with Indigenous critiques of queer settler colonialism. I argued that this is a way to leverage the disruptive potential of Brandeau / La Fargue in the face of settler colonialism and may serve as one means of being in service to queer, feminist, decolonial world-making.

I have been compelled to situate my analysis in the gaps that I have found in McKay's and Tepperman's tellings, first in the disappearance of the multicrosser as multicrosser and second, driven by the ways in which Esther Brandeau's story might be and has been assimilated into settler colonialism, even as it is deployed to affirm Jewish difference, gender equality, and/or queer visibility. I offer my analysis as more evidence attesting to the fact that events and contexts *long after* the era of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue *write* the knowability of the story itself, retroactively. There is no lens that can eliminate the present of the past.

Part II: Archival Sense

Overview

Archival Sense is an autoethnographic account of archival research on the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. It traces two intertwined concerns. On the one hand, I look to corroborate or refute the third person voice testimony that first erupts the story into knowability for us through the French colonial archive, by conducting research in Canadian, French and Dutch municipal, regional and national archives in all but one of the locales named in this testimonial record, in addition to site visits in Spain and Portugal. On the other hand, through an attention to the researcher's sensing body as a research tool, I investigate the meaning and contingency of "evidence." Archival Sense marks a dramatic stylistic departure from Part I: Eruptions Into Knowability, as I move from a position of, let us say, "outside observer" into a closer proximity with/as the subject matter. As I trace my archival search, I also trace insistence that presses upon me in unexpected ways as I research. I trace competing impulses of silly sidetracks and pulls of other kinds on the one hand, and rigorous archival investigations on the other as I attempt to produce what M. Jacqui Alexander calls "a texture of [my subject's] living" (Alexander 2005, 295). I characterize these seemingly incommensurate impulses as a tug between doubt and desire. In all of this I am asking two concurrent questions—*How* can we know about the multicrosser? and *What* can we know about the multicrosser?

I pay particular attention to the lives of women, and how women, particularly widowed women may have factored into the story. I pay attention, often awkwardly, to the potential Jewish presence in locales where they were unlikely to be according to historians. I work, in essence, along networks of synchronous communities rather than exclusively along the genealogical tracks of patriarchal lineage of archival records such as births, deaths and marriages. I work between records, maps of contemporary sites, my body feeling and moving in space in a speculative research process through which I arrive at a telling of the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, one which destabilizes the record's, and my proposals', certainties. My aim is to find new archival information regarding the story; to examine the labour and contingency of the archival research process; and to examine the centrality of the labouring body of the searcher to that which is "found." The overall impact of Archival Sense, I hope, is to take the reader on a journey through archival labour in order to sense the "probable proximities" I layout herein that give us a texture to Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's living and movements prior to arrival in so-called New France.

Doubt and Desire is the title of the autoethnographic account of archival labour and wandering on streets and between ports in Archival Sense. It is roughly divided into two sections. The first section, entitled "Servanne," is named for a widow baker found in a Saint-Malo tax ledger, and features deep immersion in city streets, attentive to the lives of women, especially widows, and the haunting of barely detectable Jewish presence. The second section is entitled "Of Ships, Captains and Tombstones," and dwells principally in port records and shipping networks largely devoid of women. The theoretical landscape into which the work of Doubt and Desire inserts itself is left for after the archival journey: In *The Bridge: An Epilogue-Prologue*, I situate what I have performed in

conversation with scholarship on the role of desire in queer and amateur historiography (Dinshaw 2012, 1999; Lorde 1984); the relationship between amateur historiographies and the gendering and coloniality of the practice of history (B. Smith 1998, Trouillot 1995); and debates about what constitutes “evidence.” I characterize my practice narrated in *Doubt and Desire* as a practice of disidentification (Muñoz 1999), one which leverages affective evidence in historical practice. I dig into what affective evidence is and how it functions, drawing Avery Gordon's work on “haunting” (Gordon 2008 [1997]) into conversation with Muñoz's deployment of “ephemera” as affective evidence (Muñoz 2009). *Archival Sense* bridges us between a practice of reading in *Eruptions* and a practice of performing in *Becoming Archive*, by living an attentiveness to bodily sense.

There is an early 18th century French map of the Bay of Gascogne where the western coast of France and the northern coast of Spain spill into ocean. The map is concerned with the ocean more than it is concerned with the land mass at the eastern periphery. Instead, the map tracks a web of straight lines that triangulate distance and direction, a seemingly scientific laying of paths out of the map toward what is not in the frame, the colonies beyond the western edge of the map and the continental geography to the east. In the interstitial space between land and sea, where depth is still 'detectable', the science of lines is cluttered with the qualitative descriptors of depth finding in cursive handwriting: "grey sand mixed with grass", "52 leagues," "ground shell." The texture of what is reachable is recorded. The map is a qualitatively, experientially described and describing depth finder, which in its making makes the project it does not know. The map produces the mappable. The map is a colonial trope, appropriated here, for travelling around the thing that cannot be known: her/his/their life. How do I look for evidence? What constitutes evidence?

Doubt and Desire

Introduction

I write across the pull between doubt and desire; I follow the record along my doubts, my search compelled by a desire to find. Find fault lines. Find leverage for intuitive inclinations. Find catalysts for avenues to return to the texts armed to argue with them, to edit them, to draw them out to multiple dimensions, see them movable in relation to each other, details to suddenly leap out in formations other than what they might seem to tell. Holding on to the textual archives as anchors, entry points, rife. Believing in them enough to be compelled to doubt them, while searching with and against them to find her / him / them. I search across a tensile desire: to know *and* to witness a successful disappearance that would foreclose any need to complete an ending. Wanting to know, but wanting the passer to succeed.

The men who captain ships, crash them, arm them, own them, litigate about them, the ships, their cargo and crew. Certain sorts of constellation points in ink. I could start with them.

There is another pull to do with a commitment to hold “the evidence” at a distance, its counter-pull to enter an archive from the centre of my own person, there to float with those between the inked lines, haunting across time. This counter-pull is less the metaphor of the constellation, or the pattern that steps out in formation, and more the metaphor of resonance, of pulse, of how sound makes matter shake. How the fault lines appear where vibration has caused matter to lose its adherence to a certain form. Something akin to what Canadian poet Dennis Lee calls “cadence”, that knowledge-feeling in body from which the poet must find translation through words, the disorienting vibrational sense where subject and object lose their distinction (Lee 2013).¹³⁵ How sound can shift from harmony to disharmony, or hold many at once. Resonance in body, which is its own meaning. The uncanny sensation of already knowing, before the search. In embodiedness. This could have something to do with spirit.

M. Jacqui Alexander describes the experience of moving from relying on documents and archived history to working with Spirit in order to know an historical subject (Alexander 2005, 287-332). Her move is driven in large part by the absence in archival records of anything that would make present and truly known the enslaved woman at the centre of her work. This move makes evident a shift from approaching a subject's body “as the ground for epistemic struggle” toward a search for a means to hear the subject narrate her own life experience, to approach “the texture of her living” (295). In Alexander's case the subject is an enslaved woman in Trinidad within a broader unwritten story that resides in land and water, cued by a familiar intersection in Trinidad. Alexander is textually alerted to the woman's story in a book, but she is unable to really find her in records. She finds her subject through

¹³⁵Lee writes: “Most of my time as a poet is spent listening into a luminous tumble, a sort of taut cascade. I call it “cadence.” If I withdraw from immediate contact with things around me, I can sense it churning, flickering, thrumming, locating things in more shapely relation to one another ... I may not know what cadence is, but I know one thing: it is no more theoretical than breathing....What does cadence feel like? ... [It] is disorienting, because it collapses our familiar categories of inner and outer, subject and object. You don't perceive a vibration; *you vibrate*. Your muscular system has become both the recording instrument and the thing recorded. And the pulse you feel is neither subjective nor objective. Rather, it is your immediate portion of the kinaesthetic space in which you exist” (Lee 2013).

embodied spiritual practices, and narrates the story she finds as an historiography that might be balked at by many an historian committed to the primacy of the written archival evidence.

I am haunted by Natalie Zemon Davis' caution to me over tea and banana bread in her Toronto living-room: "We owe it to them [those we research] not to remake them in our own image."¹³⁶ It seemed a simple caution away from entwining myself with the subject matter, to maintain distance. Even though one might be inclined to see Davis' caution as representative of an historiographic approach diametrically opposed to Alexander's, I hear that caution as intending precisely what Alexander's approach is driven by: allow the subject to speak. Both, it seems, call for research methods that allow the researcher to approach, to come into proximity with the subject researched, without overwhelming them with projections and desires. Alexander will produce a telling of Kitsimba, the voice at the centre of her research, in the scholarly piece in which she articulates the call for approaching "the texture of her living." A figure that haunts calls forth Alexander's approach, and Alexander's entry into the process so as to tell demonstrates how working with the ghostly "calls into question the linearity of history" (Weinstock 2013, 74). Alexander will go on to animate that voice in the genre of fiction, a novel, suggesting that works of fiction can stand as "archival evidence," by exceeding the written record, by working outside of its failure to give account.¹³⁷ This might be to work with what Avery Gordon calls "transformative recognition" as its own kind of knowledge, something other than what she refers to as "cold knowledge," meaning perhaps that which is factually based or materially concrete (Gordon 2008, 8).¹³⁸

As Carolyn Dinshaw argues, in the queer touch across time between queer historian and her subject, the longing touch itself underpins an historiographic method that is decidedly queer. It operates within transtemporal movement as temporal concurrence, or what some call queer time (Dinshaw 2012, 1999; Freeman 2010). Transtemporal movement is driven by the very need for queer past and queer continuity, against heteronormative notions of time within which queers can never fully figure. Though for many it might not, for me this queer touch across time has something to do with spirit; it is a haunted compelling. Writing of a queer historiography that touches across time stems from both haunting, and desire for transtemporal community. That there can be touch, across dramatic even barely reconcilable difference, across eras that may not understand each other resonates with me. Rather than the queer touch across time producing her/him/them in my own image, instead I think of that resonance of the queer touch across time not as an *optics* but as movement through space, as pulse, a surround, collected within cadence. Which is never frozen. Neither me, nor them, nor the so-called "truth" of the story.

The search to find is a way of thinking, a way of producing the world. The aspiration to finding produces a

¹³⁶In a response to a critique of her book *Slaves on Screen*, Davis writes, "The fourth group for whom *Slaves on Screen* has concern are long-dead persons, who left inscriptions of their efforts at manumission; family tales of capture, owners, escapes, marriages and children; abolitionist pamphlets; and plantation accounts and diaries. ... [W]e owe it to them to treat the traces they've left us with seriousness. They are not a mere commodity for our use in book sales and box office receipts" (Davis 2001, para 9).

¹³⁷I heard Alexander give a reading from this novel at University of Toronto (Alexander 2012). It left many in tears, and generated a deep discussion about telling traumatic history, working with spirit and negotiating a hostile academy when working unconventionally.

¹³⁸Fiction unconsciously knows, suggests Radway, and can be seen as historiography that also serves as a diagnostic tool of the historical moment in which it is written (Radway 2008, para 7-8).

particular kind of world. In searching, I produce a world. I produce a way of archiving the world produced. I produce the archive by activating it, the story that I search for being partly there, and a lot elsewhere. These spaces, intertwined, interpellate me. As I approach the subject of my search through searching, I am produced.

Entering the allure of the archives

Arlette Farge wrote more than twenty years ago a travelogue through the process of archival research in Paris, an account of how regimes of documentation could be leveraged to recount the lives of ordinary people, of people on the margins, of poor people, of those relegated to prisons and crazy houses, of women, especially of women, how from the archives one could show that their ordinary activities served as resistance to their conditions and to the historical record which deemed and deems them subordinated, voiceless (Farge 2013 [1989]). Farge argues that a particular way of reading archives reveals how ordinary women were up in everything, at the front lines of rebellion, voiced, directing events, despite the violence of conditions and of men.

Farge describes and follows what she calls “the allure of the archive,” this allure speaking of the desire—to discover or to wander or both—that the archive activates. As she faces the arrangement of documents, the filing, her eye to the centrality of the marginalized, I laughed out loud many times in recognition at the cold buildings and frustrating bureaucracies that she describes, the gate-keeping bureaucrats¹³⁹, the secret behavioural codes, tightly kept, that a newcomer to the archive must navigate, the fool who doubts her own judgement of the inanity of it all. The rife silence of the reading room. There is a certain ritual of the search within which one has to self-initiate, a habitus of the institution(ed) that you have to acquire, a habitus that is a product of the sheer written abundance, the logic underpinning it, the nations of belonging it engenders.¹⁴⁰ The hierarchy of tables and timing, the schedules laden with breaks and closures and the certainty of unreliability, the ease through which the initiated seem to move according to these rhythms. All these records a national past-time; French elders (mostly white, I notice) retire in droves to map their genealogies. Who knows if and what they will find there in the abundance.¹⁴¹

Following feeling: a heretic methodology

In 2007, when I first arrived in France as an artist to search the archives for Esther Brandeau, I felt like an amateur in a state of urgency, on the verge of some egregious faux-pas. I had so little time. I didn't know if I'd ever

¹³⁹This is not to say that archivists are not vital. I am indebted to many generous archivists and amateur historians, who are often the institutional memory of collections, especially collections in transition, and who remember people who've come to search.

¹⁴⁰For Bourdieu “habitus” is structured by experience, and structuring in that it helps shape experience and practices. The habitus as structure “comprises a system of dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices” (Bourdieu 1990, 53-56 cited in Grenfell 2012, 50). How one practices is the result of a relationship between one's habitus, and one's circumstances. We practice how we do as a result of the relationship between the logic of the habitus, and of the broader arena called a field (Grenfell 2012, 51).

¹⁴¹Oona Thommes Paredes describes doing archival research in Spain for her work on the Spanish colonial period in Mindanao, Phillipines. She notes: “One day at the *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI), after reflecting on the rows of Andean and Amerindian faces in the *sala de investigadores* ... I had to ask one of the staff archivists how he felt as a Spaniard, seeing all these Americanos studying how his people had colonized theirs, studying their revolutions against people like him. He said ... that Spain had no choice but to reckon with its own past...” (Paredes n.d., 7). At French archives where I have worked—regional and municipal—I have rarely encountered researchers of colour. The National Archives in Paris are perhaps different, though I have not worked there.

be able to come back. I was inventing my search as I enacted it. I needed to find. Urgency had to be masked by a competent calm in order not to aggravate those with the knowledge to guide me toward the right indexes, to alert me to absences in the record, those who could save me inordinate amounts of time, help me decipher handwriting, abbreviation conventions, unexpected notes in margins.

Not sure to what degree of precision I desire to find, as I discern the logic of each archive's organization, I produce a methodology of reading, a methodology of search. No idea where to start, yet knowing precisely *the feeling* of what it might be that I am looking for.

The sudden unexplainable barely describable *feeling* while walking down a grassy slope toward the river in the small town of Clisson—its shores once abounding in the stench and activity of tanneries—the voice of a local historian guiding me around the city suddenly disappearing into a distant echo chamber even as our conversation continues.¹⁴² The momentary sensation of suspension in slow motion. The *feeling* at a particular intersection in Rennes, of claustrophobic abundance, of crowded activity, the dirtiness and business of a street that isn't—right here, right now—dirty, nor is there anyone else here but me. A *feeling* that catches me off-guard looking out a tiny bathroom window up into the wooded hills behind Saint-Esprit, the formerly Jewish district facing the cathedral across the river in Bayonne proper. The bodily sensation of vista. Of being on the verge. Of vertigo. Of knowing, standing at the edge of a cliff-top path overlooking the sea in Saint-Jean-de-Luz. A yes-ness. My video camera tracking each of these moments, *feeling* pegged to pinnable *geography*. These streets and locations then mappable from present to past through a local archive, its books, its documents, its map collections.

The sudden leap of possibility that a piece of text triggers even as its contents seem peripheral to the question. What was the question? You follow it because you have a feeling. And the feeling sends me back to the streets to stand there. The archive speaks but so does this territoryspace, through this body, moving not just physically but across time. The body, my body, first moves through, stands, waits, looks, listens, wonders. Feels. A catalogue of gut inclinations do not offer the clarity of handwriting, of linear logic. They seem so arbitrary, but they are a form of certainty that produces the outlines of a tale to be told—not *the* tale, rather *a* tale—which is the story of the search as one possible story of the subject. Sometimes they do far more than produce mere outlines, but are indispensable compass tools, sitting at the centre of what is to be known. This is what I call a heretic methodology.

The side-tracks that yield archival recognition and lose the path back to the point from which you diverted from the initial search betray these contours, which sometimes disappear, and sometimes re-determine the centre, sketch what will be made to stand in relief against the monotony of ink on paper. The baby in Vitré, baptised, without parents. No matter that I transcribed details of this baby's birth, the transcribing that Farge says is so vital an historian's activity. I have no idea now why I pursued that baby, those baptisms, that mother. Burned my eyeballs on the microfiche, precious hours devoted to deciphering the terrible brown 18th century handwriting. Who

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does the baby have to do with?

What remains is the feeling of a story of a child abandoned, its telling.

The hours spent following the trail of the family Pain in Saint-Malo from a still-existing original tax ledger of that city, which dates from 1726, at least seven years before Esther Brandeau / Pierre Mausiette / Jacques La Fargue's arrival there. The next available ledger dates from 1762, all the years of direct significance missing. S/he worked six months with a baker "Seruane" in Saint Malo, after having already been in Biarritz, Bordeaux, Nantes, Rennes and Clisson. And would go to Vitré after. All this sometime before 1738. I have long doubted the truth of the recounting in that 1738 testimony. What were the stakes in the telling? What protections could be enacted in the act of telling? Five years described, hundreds of kilometres covered, but less than two years of activities accounted for. Six months here, a few months there. Were the names of employers and captains invented? Were the places and jobs real? Was the memory vague? Were there, in those statements recounted in the testimony, strategies of obscuring that left traces toward fact? Did Seruane even exist? So much detail could surely not be invented, and yet, so much missing. Did the shipwreck actually happen?

I decide to search the Saint-Malo tax ledger myself even though the archivist I phoned ahead of time so generously searched the entire record for me without my asking her to, all those inches of thick yellow pages, those thousands upon thousands of entries, still not digitized. The eyes sometimes glaze over, the mind wanders, you don't remember where the glazing began. Like reading a story and suddenly ten pages have gone by and you don't know what you've just read. How far back to go to re-look to make sure you didn't miss something? Looking for a Seruane baker, the archivist found nothing. I see some Servanne first names. It is the archivist who tells me she thinks Seruane in the original record is probably a first name—even though retellings of the Brandeau / La Fargue story have seemed to decide, have assumed this was a last name, or that it was spelled Seruane, not Servanne. It is the first time it occurs to me that *all* these names recorded in the original two and a half page testimony could be first names. If you are a casual labourer who works for someone for a few weeks, do you remember their full name five years later? Did you get the day job with barely an introduction, and only hear the boss' name in ear shot sometime after? Did you even know a name at all? If I demonstrate that one name named was a first name, it changes how I read and search for the remaining names. The excitement. The road-map of the document changes. Then the panic. How to find a first name Bernard, or a Servanne, or an Augustin? Unindexed? In a city of 19,000 like Saint-Malo in the 1700s, or the far larger city of Rennes?

I come across a last name in this precious 1726 Saint-Malo ledger (AMSM 1726, 28). *Pain*. I know that Esther / Pierre / Jacques worked for a baker named Seruane. Servanne. Baker. Bread. Pain. French for bread. Utterly unconscious at the time of the metaphorical entrapment, I embark on the now-laughable pursuit and follow the bread trail. I am embarrassed now in retroactive judgement. Servanne Pain. *Sage femme*. A midwife. She pays ten livres in taxes. She lives in the same house as a widow button maker, who pays 2. And a barber, who

pays 1. And a sailor [*matelot*]¹⁴³, who pays 2. The sailor's name is Laurent Elnaut or Esnaut. And a *maître* [master tradesman], the husband of Mary de la Touche, who pays 2. These the occupants of the building owned by Monsieur Longpré Tichouard. In one house next door a hat maker pays 15. And in another neighbouring building, a tailor pays 3, the widow of a sailor, 1, and a girl day labourer [*journalière*], 1. Servanne Pain. Midwife—unmarried? widow?—who pays the most (who earns the most?) in her building, whose last name means bread.¹⁴⁴ I imagine the life the midwife has access to in a town where 19,000 people are crammed into a tiny space at the edge of the sea. Whose children does she deliver in a city of widows? How many does she deliver from womb straight to interment? What deaths does she witness? And what might this have to do with Esther / Jacques? None of these details affirm anything in particular. Nothing of importance it seems on the surface, but for two things: first, that retroactively Servanne Pain was a cue to *bend my reading*, to *bend the document* away from its literal meaning, that the document may house a strategy other than truthful telling; and second, that some kind of desire was activated by the fact of a midwife.¹⁴⁵ What is the desire that compels this noticing? The silly side-track, this pursuit simply begins a sketch. The details orient. They open the door a crack into something that can never be known. Whatever “known” means. I abandon the contours of this seemingly irrelevant family, each abandoned path there to be taken up if time were endless. Such archival labour, I posit, is necessary to the task of attentiveness to the texture of living. In abandoning Servanne Pain the midwife, I am left nevertheless with the *feeling* of finding her, a feeling that makes, that made her significant.

SERVANNE

Trailing the tax collector

Having abandoned Servanne Pain, we return again to the starting point, that which I am searching to

¹⁴³A *matelot* ranks above the younger *mousse*, who is more like cabin boy or apprentice. *Navigant* is a general term for crew member.

In a typical ship's *armement* (outfitting) record, people are listed in this order: Officers (captain, sub-captain, sub-lieutenant or enseign, surgeon); Matelots (sailors); Mousses; Engagés (indentured labourers, mandatory for transatlantic voyages); Passengers.

¹⁴⁴Baptism, marriage and death records collect Pain family members. One of three Pain men, Guillaume, marries Olive Moysan in 1706 in the cathedral, the son of Jan and of Servanne Robert. Maybe this is our Servanne Pain, née Robert. The groom's brother, François Pain, presides as priest, and another Pain, Jan is present. The bride's mother and brother-in-law are present, as are three other male witnesses, and several other witnesses unnamed. Most of those named sign their names well in the ledger, including bride and groom. If Servanne Pain is indeed née Servanne Robert, she is baptised in 1648 and dies in 1737 at age of 88 years 8 months. The death record says she was married to Jan Pain, *navigant*, and had at least this one son, Guillaume, who was born in 1674 when she is 26. I find baptisms under Pain: dated 1708, a girl Olive named for her mother, Guillaume's wife. I do note Olive's maiden name, Moysan, projecting the possibility of Jewishness onto the phonetic proximity to the Jewish name Moïse. This is Servanne's granddaughter, who dies just over two years later. A boy, François Gabriel, is born in 1709. More baptisms in 1710 (Marie Françoise), 1715 (Charles Jean), 1717 (Nicole Olive), and by now on these birth records, I can see that Guillaume Pain is Sieur Du Jardins. Noble men preside as godfathers to two of the children. Servanne Pain dies in 1737. Her son Guillaume's birth record confirms that Servanne Pain was in fact née Robert, and that his father was Jan Pain. Servanne Robert and Jan Pain had at least one other son, François, the priest. Later, while I am looking through port records, I come across Christophe Pain who captains a small vessel sailing to Bordeaux in April 1737 (AMS 418, 192b). This information represents a sizable labour for an "irrelevant" family.

¹⁴⁵I thank Geertje Mak for suggesting “bend,” which Melina Young also suggested in another context of my writing (Hermant 2014, 61).

corroborate from the original testimony: a baker named Seruane, with whom Brandeau / La Fargue purportedly worked in Saint-Malo. Servanne, baker. I arrive to Pain and the bread trail after I have already tracked, noticed, counted across the particular landscape of names and occupations and streets and building owners inked in the ledger, street by street as the tax collector moved. I trail the tax collector, keeping track for future follow-up. Or an imagined narrowing-down. I keep my eyes open for a woman baker. I am walking around Saint-Malo. I find a woman baker, the wife of Michel Frond, who lives in the same building as a lawyer, a *navigant* and a cook. Who knows if Mrs. Frond is a Servanne. She lives in a house owned by a widow who lives there too with her domestic. A peddler who sells haberdashery also lives in the building. Mrs. Frond lives in the district of the Grand Placitre, today a stone's throw from the city walls, a street or two in from the steep descent to the seashore. In this area was the big market. In another building with eight occupants, four of them are widows. There are so many widows. There seem to be more widows than anyone else. It doesn't take me long to realize that the city of Saint-Malo in 1726 is a city abounding in widows. What if its history were told through *them*?

On Rue de la Diacrerie lives a certain Servanne Martel, widow, *petite marchande*. This area between the Grand Placitre and Diacrerie is noted for “une forte réputation entre 1625–1750”—quite a reputation, especially the street that Servanne Martel lives on, no small thanks to a history of cabaret venues dating to the 1625 venue named “À la Malice.”¹⁴⁶ As I write this now, I recall that while walking in Saint-Malo I was imagining how a young man might gravitate to such houses of ill repute, the districts where abundant life could overflow outside the long hours of labour.

I circle places on my tourist map, tracking only my instincts. I wander, I stop, I look up at the street signs, I make note. Many of these places fall along a line straight through the old town from sea down to inner port, the trajectory from between the Grand and Petit Placitres via the vegetable market down toward the Rue des Cordiers just up from the Grande Porte. The Rue des Cordiers runs along the city wall in Brandeau / La Fargue's time. The street called Rue des Herbes until 1839, now called Thévenard and Hermine, is this main trajectory down to the vegetable market, which itself had replaced a butchery, and was for a long time also the Halle de Blé, the wheat market and the location of wells. In this neighbourhood near the vegetable market was a huge elm tree that lived until the 1980s. The street's name, Rue de l'Orme, dates at least back to the 1600s. A tree that our protagonist might have walked past, or leaned against, or rendezvoused at, still stood 250 years later when it succumbed to disease. Holding a touch across time. A new Halle de Blé had been built in 1711 nearby after the old one had burned in a fire.

I find a girl baker named Janne Thomas who lives right along the Grand Placitre, in the same house as a sailor, a widow, a woman schoolteacher, and a *navigant*. I find a Servanne Duguez, girl dressmaker who lives by the Petit Placitre not far over, a square into which runs the street of ill repute with the cabarets. Further down in the

¹⁴⁶All descriptive information regarding streets in Saint-Malo is taken from *Saint-Malo: 2000 Ans d'Histoire* (Foucqueron 1999), except where I have noted names and occupations of occupants. These derive from reading the 1726 tax ledger (AMSM).

middle of the old town, the Quartier de la Fosse is named for Rue de la Fosse, itself named for a big pit after which was a staircase down to the shore before those ramparts were built. On Rue de la Fosse I find Janne Rebillard, a baker, who lives in the same building as two sisters who are seamstresses, a woodworker, a day labourer and a saleswoman. Janne Rebillard is now the third female baker I have found walking an area of about five small blocks by two. This street ran, and still does, into the market and out the other side as Rue de la Vieille Boucherie, the old butcher's street, which in turn runs into the Grande Rue, the high street at the cathedral. The old butchers' street is not far from the old elm tree. Here on Rue de la Vieille Boucherie I find Servanne Dubourg, a dressmaker living in the same house as a male school teacher, a shipping pilot, a widow who is also a Dubourg, perhaps Servanne's mother, aunt, or sister, as well as a second widow who is a merchant.

I come across Jan François, *nègre matelot*, living on the Rue des Cochons, which it seems was the name given to the old ramparts around where Rue de la Fosse met the shore. A black sailor, he is the first and only person of colour I come across in this ledger. Jan François it seems is a free black person living in a building belonging to a Madame Closrivière.¹⁴⁷ Two widows and a *compagnon* (tradesperson in training) also live there, as does Bertranne Ruaux, flour vendor. A third widow and her daughter live there too. Janne Gilbert lives in the neighbourhood, a widow baker, same house as a sailor and a seamstress. I find Servanne Basse, *vendeuse*, saleswoman. I come across Thomasse Salomon, a girl. Even though old testament names are used by Christians too, I note the possibility of Jewish in her name. I note the widow Boisandré, merchant, just in case, even though she is a vendor and not specifically a baker, and even though we don't know her first name. She lives in a house with two other widows, and a captain.

"Aupres de la grande porte" is where "Seruanne" the baker was to have lived, according to the document testifying to Brandeau's living. By the Big Gate.

I marked the tourist map with the tracings of exactly where I walked, circling places of interest. Suspended time. Urgency. Sudden stop. The feeling of being watched. Desire. I move back and forth between such street wanders, ledger scrolling and an historical index of streets. Streets that gave me pause turn out to be streets around the old Grand Placitre, the bawdy part of town, the vegetable market area, the wheat market, the old elm tree, the Rue des Cordiers where a lot of the sail and rope makers lived, near the old ramparts. Des Cordiers meets the Big Gate at the foot of the Grande Rue, the street where Servanne Pain lived, the midwife, a street that connected the cathedral to the Grande Porte noted as near where the baker of the testimony lived. I find several named Servanne, but they are not bakers. I do find a woman baker whose first name is Janne. Janne, an easy mistake for Servanne? Also I find a girl baker, Janne. Too young to hire help?

Jewish presence in Brittany

Just off the Grande Rue is the fish market, and above it, not far from the cathedral, a stocking area for

¹⁴⁷I have also come across "nègre matelot," free Black sailor, in shipping records in Nantes and Bordeaux, both slaving ports.

wood for the naval building industry. At the far corner of the old town was the Rue des Juifs, where some Jews could stay when the order came during Holy Week at Easter for the city's Jews to clear out, back when Jews were allowed to live in Saint-Malo. In the late 1600s a gate to the city was located by the fish market a few blocks away. A first land filling occurred near here in 1709 that enlarged the town. Jews were present in Saint-Malo in the sixteenth century, along the Rue de Buhen, around the bend beyond the Grande Rue's descent to the main gate. In the 1800s around the same location the name of this street was Rue des Juifs, today Rue Chateaubriand, a stone's throw from the museum of the city's history. Jacques Cartier bought a house on Rue de Buhen in 1540, the equivalent of about four blocks away from the cathedral where he is now buried. Cartier was the explorer credited with claiming New France—which would become Canada—for the French crown in the 1530s. Might Esther / Jacques / Pierre have had access to a Jewish, crypto-Jewish or New Christian network in Saint-Malo?

Historians say that Jews are absent from Saint-Malo in the 17th century, and only reappear when Moïse Petit and Israël Dalpuguet of Bordeaux, Jews from Avignon, set up shop to do wholesale and retail trade in silks and gilding (Toczé 2006, 28-29). The Petits can be found in Bordeaux in records dating to as early as the late 1600s, the Dalpuguets in the early 1700s, cloth and fabric retail merchants, in a community comprised largely of fabric merchants and used clothing dealers (Nahon 2003, 94-102). The Jewish boutique holders of Bordeaux sometimes hired Christians. The Avignonnais were distinct in origin and social class from the Portuguese Jewish community of which Brandeau / La Fargue was a part, a community who set itself in a class above. The Avignonnais Jews faced attacks and accusations from the Christian drape merchants for undercutting prices with cheap materials, and having the audacity to sell ready-made clothing. The phrase “revendeurs de vieux habits” is a phrase that derives in fact from the reality that many Avignonnais lived through *colportage*, peddling. In 1734, the Avignonnais merchants were expelled from Bordeaux and all but a few secured exemption. Two Dalpuguets were permitted to return in 1749, and others followed.

Dalpuguet and Petit faced a long litany of documented trouble with restrictions on their trade and evictions from Nantes and Saint-Malo as well. Fouquieron, under his entry for Rue des Juifs, claims no Jews in Saint-Malo from the seventeenth century until the arrival of Dalpuguet and Petit in 1745 (Fouquieron 1999). Says Toczé, in 1746 Petit and Dalpuguet were expelled by local authorities from Saint-Malo, where they lived. They were given twenty-four hours to quit town, and local merchants were given permission to confiscate their wares. But this was overturned at the higher Breton level because Dalpuguet and Petit petitioned. They claimed to have lived in Saint-Malo for the previous twelve years, trading in silks and gilding, wholesale and retail and that in all those twelve years, they had not seen any others “like themselves” (Toczé 2006, 28-29).¹⁴⁸ They do not specifically say no other Jews. One historian takes this claim as an ambiguous statement that could leave open the suggestion of other Jews in Saint-Malo while they were there (29). Their own testimony would put these two Jews from Bordeaux possibly living in and doing business in Saint-Malo from 1734, when Esther / Pierre / Jacques worked

¹⁴⁸For a history of Jews in Brittany, see Toczé (2006). Fouquieron dates the 12-year claim of residence to 1755. Toczé puts it at 1746.

there for the baker. Jews faced exclusions that came and went in Brittany, from enforcement of a 1731 ordinance restricting Jewish merchants to selling and trading only in the cities where they resided, to selling only on fair days, to periods facilitated by a regional power overruling local wielding of anti-Jewish sentiment. A 1755 ordinance bars these two Jews from living in or doing direct or indirect business with Saint-Malo (31). Despite a polemic against them in Brittany for upwards of twenty years, Petit and Dalpuguet continue to work the trade fairs all over Brittany into the latter half of the eighteenth century, like a handful of other Jewish merchants to be found in archival traces (32).

Their treatment in Brittany reflects a pattern of hostility against Jews who were treated either as vagabonds, since plenty of poor Jews were travelling peddlars, and/or they were considered in the same way as were foreign merchants, even if they had resided in Brittany for a long time (Toczé 2006). Writes Graizbourg, referring to the Jewish New Christian settlement further south in the southwest of France, where Brandeau was from, “The sporadic hostility of French townspeople usually combined fear of economic competition with religious and ethnic prejudice” (Graizbord 2006, 161). Toczé argues that in the case of Brittany economic competition was always a paramount reason for discrimination against Jews. Even where Jews had letters patent permitting their business practices and presence, says Graizbord, this did not preclude discrimination at the municipal level. On the other hand, Anne Zink shows that townspeople in the southwest of France, both Jewish and Christian, could be united in their resentment of municipal authority (quoted in Graizbourg 2006, 180).

Comprehensive studies of Jewish history of Brittany through archival research trace very scant evidence of presence of Jews in the region historically, including the period in question, and indicate a history of frequent expulsions of Jewish populations and restrictions on their economic activity. Eleven Jews appear in the Ille-et-Villaine department (part of Brittany) in the 1808 census that Napoleon initiated for the country, thus out of date for the period in question. However, the location of these eleven Jews that do find their way into inscription in records is significant: seven are in Rennes and four are in Saint-Servan, which is directly adjacent to Saint-Malo proper, a few kilometres inland toward Rennes (Bernard 1990, 123). All are simple merchants. Two families in the same census are recorded in Nantes. Of the latter two families, one man married a Catholic but the children were raised Jewish (130). Though the numbers of Jews cited above are sparse, they can serve as a gauge of sorts, if only as a gauge of invisibility. Invisibility does not preclude presence. This speaks of open or known Jews, not about *Conversos* and assimilated New Christians.

But I have to remember that it is a Servanne, baker, that I am looking for. How many more Servannes do I find in this ledger, this *Rôle de capitations*? And who else do I find while searching for Servanne the baker? I find a *Sieur Farge* in *Place de la Cathédrale*, a jeweller in the same building as a clock maker. Another name to be tracked—*La Fargue*, or *Lafarge* or *Lafargue* or *Farge*. *Jacques La Fargue* is the name of our protagonist, the one outed at or en route to Quebec. In the *Quartier de la Grande Rue*, in the houses under the new city wall, I find many men together in single buildings. The new city wall extends to the right from the *Grande Porte* over to the

Porte Saint-Vincent at the castle, along what is today called Rue Jacques Cartier. Under this new city wall, I find Gabriel Petit, *debitant* (tobacco vendor or pub server), Jacob Labé, merchant, Abraham Petit, merchant. I take note. Jewish names? Jacob and Abraham and Gabriel on the same street. Abraham Petit lives in a house with Guillaume Dubourg Petit, merchant. Any relation to Servanne and the widow, both Dubourg dressmakers on Rue de la Vieille Boucherie, above? What relation to Abraham? Also living there are Nicole Petit *debitant*, and Jan Lemaire, hat cleaner. Remember that Jews are *not* present in Saint-Malo in this period. But then look, here are Abraham Petit, Gabriel Petit, Guillaume Dubourg Petit, and Nicole Petit, all in the same building, and neighbours to Jacob Labé in 1726. As we have seen above, Petit is a name of an Avignonnais Jewish merchant family in Bordeaux, who would be present in Saint-Malo in the mid-1700s officially. It seems there could have been at least one family of five Jews in Saint-Malo in 1726, whether or not they identified as such, established almost a decade before Petit and Dalpuguet claim they had first lived in Saint-Malo. This, if it were true, would be a significant discovery, emergent from entering into the extreme detail of a ledger walking with the tax collector in a way that can allow such a discovery, an entry into the texture, moving in close. If it were true, it would affirm that at the macro level, official absence can conceal nuance operational and detectable at the micro level. My finding these people as possibly Jewish or Jewish descended may suggest that though typically in the history of eighteenth century Brittany, Jewish traders were frequently expelled or limited by ordinances against them, the policing may not have prevented entrenchment, which Toczé also shows with respect to later in the century. He gives the example of a couple named Bernard, Nantes Jews who had to be reminded and repeatedly threatened that they were supposed to have gone, having already been expelled (2006, 36).¹⁴⁹

It is important to ask what constitutes “Jewish” in my desiring search via names here. As we have seen thus far, I am sometimes stopped by a single name that rings Jewish to me, and it is in isolation. Thomasse Salomon, was one name I came across that resonated in this way, for example. The names Abraham, Solomon, Jacob or Gabriel stop me, even as there is no immediate certainty of Jewishness or Jewish descent. Such names were used among Catholics and Protestants too.¹⁵⁰ But here, what we have is the case of a known Avignonnais Jewish name long-since established in Bordeaux—Petit—to be associated with Saint-Malo Jewish traders who are not placed there until later. Even as the same name Petit circulates in France as a Christian name, today one of the most common family names in France,¹⁵¹ we have here this family name for two men with Jewish first names, and further, we have the possibility of a neighbour with the name “Jacob.”¹⁵² An isolated individual with a name

¹⁴⁹We will address later the name “Bernard” given in the testimony for the first captain with whom Pierre Mausiette travelled.

¹⁵⁰In southwest France, Jewish family names are almost all derived from Portuguese, often common Christian family names carried over from the godfather present at baptism, presumably during forced or voluntary conversion. On Biblical names and assumptions of Jewishness, French historian Gérard Nahon, when compiling oldest evidence of Jewish presence in the domains of Alfonse de Poitiers in the mid-thirteenth century (now around Poitou-Charente, La Rochelle, Saintes as well as Toulouse), excludes findings based on presence of Biblical names like Salomon. He calls such claims by an earlier historian gratuitous (Nahon 1966, 190-191).

¹⁵¹Nom-famille.com places Petit as the 8th most common family name in France.

¹⁵²According to Anne Zink’s work on southwest France, even in the 19th century there was just beginning to be movement toward the use of non-Jewish first names, passing first through a stage of double first names (a Jewish and non-Jewish one) (Zink 1988).

that stops me is less convincing than a cluster of neighbours and/or affiliated individuals, all listed as merchants as are these Petits of Saint-Malo.

Finding Servanne, widow baker

I continue to wander with the tax collector in search of Servanne, baker, back and forth between maps, ledger and streets, noting anything that might be useful later. And at last, I follow the tax collector right to the door of Servanne Guillou, widow baker (AMSM 1726, 55). I find in the ledger the first *boulangère* named Servanne. Rue Entre les Deux Marchez, the street between the two markets. Today it appears to be called Rue Broussais. This street connects the Pilory square and top of the Grande Rue adjacent to the cathedral back over towards Rue des Herbes, which runs down toward the markets, the elm street and the Grande Porte, the big gate. Servanne Guillou's street runs at a perpendicular to and initiates at the Grande Rue (which is, incidentally, where Servanne Pain the midwife lives). In 1726, Servanne Guillou's street is one street above the Rue de la Vieille Boucherie, the old butcher's street. The street is three blocks from the Grande Porte. The testimony dated twelve years after this tax ledger tells us that Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue worked for a baker named Seruanne "aupres de la Grande Porte," close to the big gate. Servanne Guillou, widow baker, lives in the house of Sieur Desormes Poittevin, among men: Le Fauvre, a *vitrier* (window cutter); Lhostellier, *navigant*; and in the top room, another *navigant*, Lecordier. Seafarers and a window cutter. She pays ten in taxes. They pay 3, 5, and 12 respectively. The seamen are referred to as Sieur, the *vitrier*, not so. Maybe he is a youngster, or younger at least. In the next house, a pewter or tin potter, and another *navigant*, all Sieur. The potter pays 25 in taxes. In the next house after that, its owner, Le Sieur Gardin lives with his domestic, and pays 106 livres in taxes plus 2 for his domestic.

Until now I have found two girl bakers and five women bakers, two of them widows, none of them Servanne. Now I find the only Servanne baker, a widow. There is a baker in Saint-Malo named Servanne who was alive, widowed and working seven years before the start of Esther Brandeau's adventures outside of the Jewish quarter of Bayonne. Now the task is to see if this baker was alive in the 1730s. If so, this is the first near-conclusive new archival discovery in the tale of Brandeau / La Fargue that can begin to pull the story out from mythology and abstraction and onto concrete terrain. It holds the promise of approaching "the texture of her [his their] living" (Alexander 2005). So begins my voyage into the family tree of Servanne Guillou. Which is a mathematical pruning, really. Grunt work out of which a family network emerges. You start with her, you find a birth record, a marriage record, amass more birth records for that married name, eliminate the ones for whom the parents don't correspond. Or keep track of who their parents were. You look for death records. You appreciate the labour and surveillance of such documentation, and abhor it.

Servanne Guillou was baptized on May 11th, 1670 and married Guillaume Blouet fifteen years later, on March 19, 1685.¹⁵³ She would be around 63 years old when Esther emerges from the house of the Biarritz widow

¹⁵³All genealogical information is compiled from searches in the état civil records of the Archives municipales de Saint-Malo (AMSM) as

Catherine Churiau as Pierre fifteen days after the shipwreck on the sandbar at Bayonne in 1733. Servanne Guillou will be around 68 years old when Jacques La Fargue is outed at or en route to Quebec. She is about 48 years older than Esther Brandeau. She dies in 1749, at the old age of 79. Or, according to her death record, at 84 years, the discrepancy perhaps an error. I come across such discrepancies in the records frequently. Who knows where Esther is—or if she is—in 1749. It makes me think that those who survive their own births through infancy, and who survive childbirth as women, outlive their seafaring men to become elders of towns like Saint-Malo. Servanne's death record lists her husband Guillaume Blouet as having been a "*chirurgien navigant*" (a ship's surgeon), so he would have travelled on merchant and/or navy ships, listed in the *armements* records under the first short list of officers, last in line below the captain, and ahead of the great long list of sailors [*matelots*], then ship's boys [*mousses*]. I don't know when nor where Guillaume Blouet died.

Guillaume Blouet is baptized on January 15, 1663, parents Janne Dupuy and Pierre Blouet.¹⁵⁴ He is around 22 years old when he marries 15 year-old Servanne Guillou. Did they marry so young? Is this the same Servanne? Let's say yes, and see where it takes us. Servanne Guillou's first child, Jean Blouet, is baptized December 16, 1686. The child's godmother is Jeanne Dupuy, which is perhaps his grandmother, and his godfather, Jean Guillou, presumably Servanne's father. This record is confusing because both his godfather and his father are listed as Jean. There is no Guillaume. I come across this inconsistency in fathers' name frequently in records. It is common that people have two given first names, or what we might understand as a first name and a middle name, which are often interchangeable on records in my experience and may account for the discrepancy between fathers' names above. But this never rules out the possibility that the husband is not the father.

This Jean, Servanne's first child, will live to 54 years of age. His mother will outlive him by at least eight years. His death record from 1741 also lists his father as Jan, a different spelling of Jean. It also indicates that he was known as Sieur de la Jeannais, and was a ship's captain who outlived his wife. That this first child of Servanne Guillou's is listed as a Sieur de la Jeannais may suggest upward mobility, and that there were ship captains among the Blouets. Jean would have been 47 years old when Esther Brandeau's adventures began. He would have been alive, and maybe working ships in and out of Saint-Malo when Esther or Pierre or Jacques was in Saint-Malo working for his mother Servanne.

Servanne's second child, René is baptized on January 20, 1689. Servanne is nineteen at the time. Her sister, Janne Guillou, one of two sisters, is present as godmother at the baptism. Servanne's other sister is Charlotte, the eldest, putting Servanne in the middle. One René Morin, relation unknown, is the godfather. Servanne's second child René will be buried only a few years later on May 20, 1693 when he is not yet five years old. Two more children follow: Nicolas is baptized on January 4, 1691. Jeanne is baptized on July 4, 1692 and lives until 1767, the widow of a Sieur Durochet Perré. The death record says this daughter of Servanne Guillou the

well as online through databases of the Cercle Généalogique d'Ille-et-Villaine accessible through membership (CG).
154 Another Guillaume Blouet is baptized in 1677, which can't be Servanne's husband. Too young to be married in 1685.

baker lives to be 80, though the math says 75. Servanne the baker's sister Janne Guillou is also godmother to this daughter Jeanne when she is already godmother to René. Sometime between 1692 and 1726, Servanne's husband might have died, as he ceases to appear in any records. There are many Blouet children born in the early 1700s, but none of these are the children of Servanne. He may have died, or disappeared, or relocated, but he ceases to produce children with Servanne. It may well be that Servanne Guillou baker was a widow already in her early twenties. Perhaps her husband died at sea. Perhaps the sea accounts for the abundance of widows in Saint-Malo.

Of note, François Pain, priest, son of the midwife Servanne Pain I earlier abandoned, signs many birth, marriage and death records during Servanne Guillou the baker's life, including Servanne Guillou the baker's death record.

There are two sets of Blouet parents who it appears are responsible for abundant births in the early 1700s. Servanne Guillou (born 1670), widow yet or not, is godmother to some of these Blouet children. Nicholas Blouet, possibly Servanne the baker's brother-in-law, and his wife Mathurine bury eight of their eleven children in infancy.¹⁵⁵ Servanne buries one of her four children in infancy, and another as an adult. Mathurine and Servanne are both widows of Blouet men when Esther / Pierre / Jacques arrives. Of François Blouet and his wife Marguerite Pogan's eight children, three die in childhood, and two die in their twenties, perhaps both in childbirth themselves.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵Nicolas and Mathurine's first is Guillaume, born in 1694. He seems to live past childhood. Jean-Baptiste is born in April 1697 and dies a month later. Pierre, born in 1700, is buried before his second birthday. Jean-Baptiste is born in 1702 and dies at just over five years old. Ethienne is born in 1703 and seems to live beyond childhood. Jean, born in 1705, dies at six months. Anne Yvonne, born in 1708, dies ten days later. Marie Guillemette is born in 1709 and seems to live beyond childhood. Françoise Hélène is born in 1711 and dies at 6 months. Servanne Nicolasse, born in 1712, dies almost two years later. Josseline Françoise is born in 1713 and dies at four months old. Mathurine's husband, Nicolas Blouet, dies at 66, in 1731. They bury eight of their eleven children.

¹⁵⁶Mathurin is born in 1698, and dies in 1702. Guillemette is born in 1702, and dies in 1728. Marguerite Servanne is born in 1705, and it seems dies at age 22. Jean Jacquette is born in 1708. Twins Françoise Toussainte and Marie Jeanne are born in 1710. Françoise dies at one month, Marie Jeanne few weeks later. Charlotte is born in 1716, and Marguerite in 1718 and they seem to live past childhood. I fail to find Marguerite Pogan in any other records. But in a phonetic search for Pogan in databases made accessible to me through membership in the Cercle Généalogique d'Ille-et-Vilaine, I come across Dogan. Perusing Dogan records—because one record is a portal to an archival labyrinth from which one might never emerge, devoured by its allure—I come across a Guiot marriage to a Dogan in 1697 and a Dogan marriage to a Madre in 1721, both in St-Pierre-de-Plesguen, about 25 km on the main route toward Rennes from Saint-Malo. The name Madre I read as Iberian. *Madre*. Mother. This could suggest presence of Iberian-descended (which could also suggest *Converso*-descended) people in the region around Saint-Malo, and in turn could suggest an Iberian origin to the name Guillot / Guillou / Guiot. These name variations in French can be derivatives from the first name Guillaume. They could also be derived from “Guil”, from a flowing torrent, a river (Dauzat 1951). A relationship between Iberian derivation and French derivation is possible, but the task of a linguist. Dialectology on proper names would map variants to geographical locations. I thank linguistics professor Susana Bejar at University of Toronto for clarification (Susana Bejar, pers. comm.). While a desiring in my reading of Guillou may have caused me to consider Iberian and possibly Jewish / New Christian derivation, this could be taken also or instead as a cue not to Guillou as Jewish, but as proximate to Jewish presence, even transtemporal. In Paris, I ask senior scholar of the Jewish history of the southwest of France Gérard Nahon whether Guillou might be Iberian, but he hears it as more likely Gascon. Gascon was spoken in the region from which Brandeau departed, which would mean a Gascon name in Brittany. Another senior scholar of Jewish communities of southwest France, Anne Zink, writes that Gascon was not so different from Portuguese or Castilian (Zink 1995, 45). It could also be that Guillou is a Gallo-derived name. Gallo is a Latin language close to French, which some argue is a Latin-derived dialect of French, unlike Breton which is Celtic. Gallo is historically in use in upper Brittany where it overlaps with Breton. Gallo is found in a vertical strip bordering the regions of Brittany and Normandy, running from Normandy down to Nantes, encompassing Saint-Malo and Rennes. It is more threatened than Breton. There is debate, sometimes nationalist-inflected, regarding its origins and naming. See for example ar Mogn 2000. Today, Guillou and its variations are uncommon in France, but the fifth most common family name not in Gascony, but in Finistère in the extreme west of Brittany.

Servanne Guillou the baker is listed as the godmother to her granddaughter Jeanne Servanne Blouet, born in 1714, and who dies at age 25 in 1739. Sibling brother Nicolas Jean Blouet is born in 1715 and dies at age four. His godfather is listed as Nicolas Lemarchand, Sieur de la Chapelle. This is a second Sieur de la Chapelle to flag in Saint-Malo, to keep in mind when remembering that Esther / Jacques worked for a retired soldier in Vitré named the Sieur de la Chapelle, even though Vitré is a stone's throw from Rennes, not Saint-Malo.¹⁵⁷ Servanne Guillou the widow baker outlives her son Jean and her son's children Nicolas and Jeanne Servanne. The death record says this granddaughter is the wife of an office major of a shipping vessel, a Sieur Joseph de Tournay. Thus, Jeanne Servanne's grandfather Guillaume worked at sea, her father Jean worked at sea, and so did her husband. Perhaps Jeanne died in childbirth. Servanne outlives this granddaughter and her grandson, just as she outlives her toddler child René, her adult child Jean and her husband.

If one looks at Servanne Guillou's death record in the context of other deaths at the time, one gets a sense of who was dying, besides so many children, and at what age. As a quick gauge, I look at the deaths on the same page as Servanne Guillou's death record, and on the pages immediately before and after. She is the oldest among the dead, if her age of 84 is correct, the second oldest if her age is really 79. Among those 29 other deaths on the pages surrounding her, there are four other widows, one a farmer and the other three widows of seamen. There are eight newborn children, among these the child of an unwed mother who is brought for burial by a midwife (though not the midwife we know.) There are three children, age five, four and sixteen months. There are two women domestics who appear to be unmarried, aged 38 and 20, one the daughter of a cobbler. There are five married women ranging in age from 30 to 54, whose husbands are a day labourer, a butcher, an invalid, a cooper and a seaman. In addition to these twelve women, seven men are among the dead, ranging in age from from 32 to 52. Among them are two surgeons, a knight, a porter [*portefaix*], a sea officer [*officier navigant*], and a sailor [*matelot*].

However peripheral these births, deaths and marriages tracked in the chapter thus far seem to the “real” story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, they help to paint a picture, they generate a frequency, a pulse of a period, give a sense of the life and death that surrounded the widow Servanne into whose orbit Esther Brandeau or Pierre Mausiette or Jacques La Fargue fell—if she is indeed the widow baker in question—for less than a year sometime in the 1730s. A feminist telling is one that is attentive to women's experience, and frames a telling through women's experience. I have here paid attention to Servanne, widow baker, who may well have been

¹⁵⁷The first La Chapelle I find in Saint-Malo is Monsieur de la Chapelle Martin in a house in the Quartier d'en Haut. I find this Nicolas Lemarchand, Sieur de la Chapelle while looking through Saint-Malo shipping records at the Rennes departmental archives. He is listed as captain of 200 tonneaux ship Le Salamon de Saint-Malo, sailing between Saint-Malo, Cadix/Cadiz and Detroit with 39 men in June 1734 (AMS 417, 178-179). Two other records referring to the same ship list its owner as Sieur Longpré Sebire, which in 1735 is captained by Daniel Denis Becard (AMS 643, 62; 642, 48; 418, 65). Sebire also owns La Chetis or Thetis, a 200 tonneaux fishing vessel, which Lemarchand captains in 1737 with 81 men, loaded with salt and headed for the Grande Baye, the Grand Banks off Newfoundland (AMS 644, 18; 418, 178b). Captain Lemarchand also owns his own fishing vessel, which someone else sails for him in 1737 (AMS 644, 40). I also come across a Pierre and Bernard Lemarchand from Saint-Servan near Saint-Briac doing cabotage (coastal trading) in and out of Saint-Malo in the 1730s (ASM 417: 134, 138, 139, 141; ASM 418: 17, 152a, 155a, 157a, 158a, 161b).

widowed from the time she was in her early twenties. She was, in any case, a widow seven years before the temporary worker we haven't found directly there entered her employ, if indeed that is what he really did. These births, deaths and marriages also give, importantly, a sense of the archival labour required to craft a texture to a living. This archival labour, if *narrated* rather than relegated to the footnotes or entirely off-page as it most often is, reveals the desiring that under-girds what is followed and what emerges in the telling of a history, and points to the contingencies of narrating history.

Labour and the eruption of the desiring misread

There is a moment as I am parsing these baptism, marriage and burial records piecing together this genealogy, when I arrive at Nicolas Blouet's death record of 1731. I read his widow's name as Mathurine Pain. In my exhaustion, I have forgotten that this is Servanne Guillou the baker's brother-in-law Nicolas who married Mathurine Adam, not Pain. That my eyes would suddenly read their desire in this moment reveals the extent to which reading records is not just a process of notating their content, nor even the conscious parsing and interpretation of their content. What erupts in this moment is the extent to which the unconscious desires of the reader seep through the process of reading itself, directing the search. Or rather, the spirit with which the reader in body meets and handles the text in order to make it tell. In this brief delusion, the embarrassment continues; I am clearly not willing to let go of Pain. Adam suddenly becomes Pain and I momentarily feel I have discovered a direct connection between the seemingly unrelated Pain and Blouet families, between Servanne Guillou the widow baker who married a Blouet, and Servanne Pain, the midwife. But just as quickly, the puzzle piece disintegrates when I realize my error. My desire, it seems, is to make comprehensible what is not logical, to resolve. The absurd failure is important. The silly side-track becomes something else—an illustration of the power of desire, which may also be the power of what Gordon calls haunting, insisting itself upon the reading. "Haunting is not reason," writes Gordon (Gordon 2008 [1997], 105). It is never logical and, it has its own desires (195). Errors caught like these erupt from time to time throughout my research process. Because of this way that desire can meet a researcher's exhaustion and together satisfy the desire so completely, I mistrust every sudden discovery, even as I hope for it, even as such a discovery might clarify a relationship, yet not the significance of the relationship itself to the life of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue.

Habitus, technologies, textures

When I worked in the archives in Nantes in 2007, longing to comb through shipping records for the 1730s in search of Capitaine Bernard, with whom Pierre sailed from Bordeaux and back, and of Captain Antonio of the Spanish ship, from whom they deserted at Nantes, it turned out that the Archives départementales de la Loire-Atlantique were temporarily under renovation. A reading room was in the meantime housed in a hospital. Up the elevator to the radiology end of the cancer ward. I didn't try to resist the eerie metaphoric in that. You would try to

get your document requests in on time, and off someone would go to some off-site location to find your files. Out of the vault and into the ward would come your requests. You make attempts to sear the truth out of them without leaving a trace of yourself. And back they would go into an ether, a furrow out of sight. Sometimes I wonder if the white gloves you sometimes have to wear are to protect you as much as protect the documents from you.¹⁵⁸

Arlette Farge described back in 1989 the importance of holding the originals in hand, of transcribing them laboriously word for word, an action that is, she says, a vital thinking process for an historian. She warns of what is lost when the documents get digitized and we read them only on screen. She was talking then of microfiche, of an era of barely-internet. My research on the Esther Brandeau story launched me into archives in 2005. My first archival search found me ordering microfiches through inter-library loan from the National Archives of Canada, documents which were themselves digitisations of originals held in France and which I have never seen in the original.¹⁵⁹ It was a wonder to me, back then in the basement of York University's Scott library that a bobbin could arrive from Ottawa expressly because I wanted to consult it. I subsequently followed that up with a trip to Ottawa to read many more microfiches on site at a time when the National Archives had just begun to experiment with the possibility of letting users print images from microfiche. One could even take home a CD of images. That seems so long ago. The original Brandeau record was soon to be made available online.¹⁶⁰

Stepping into the archives meant entering a terrain of logic I had never entered before. My subsequent years of archival research, beginning with a trip to Spain and France in 2007 as an artist before I became a “scholar”, and ongoing until the present, has coincided with a vast, and uneven, shift from material to digital. My own documentation possibilities have also shifted rapidly: from mini video cassettes piled on my shelf from the 2007 research trip, to a hard drive video camera whose files pop off directly onto my laptop in minutes. Now as I play with apps on a tablet, I wonder at the speed of this research had I had an app and tablet when I began, as I do now, that would allow me to type my notes onto a tablet, inserting the photos of documents directly into the notes as I take them according to the time the photo is taken, so that my notes instantly reproduce the travelogue of archival research in a single exportable digital file. No laborious cross-checking between handwritten notebooks in pencil (in those archives where ink is forbidden), and the photo-archiving application that imports photos to

158I have not been back to Nantes. While there, I was arrested by the *mascarons*—stone carvings of heads, some magical, some quite real, like one stone head of an African woman. These ornate decoratives upheld balconies of the luxurious Île de Feydeau homes of slavers, with docks for outfitting slaving ships en route for the African continent. In 2012, Nantes opened a memorial to the slave trade near Île de Feydeau. See <http://memorial.nantes.fr>. Downriver from Feydeau, walking along the water my vision was caught by an eeriness looking at an insignificant wooded shore on the opposite side of the river, which precipitated a ferry ride over. Later, in front of video editing software, I would record the movement of the eye sailing the river as it flowed into and out of Nantes, my eye as if a body-ship moving over water tracking the shore, this video a reach to replicate that sensation of eeriness, this video somewhere between an archival document—a map dated 1759—and the affective resonance I described (AMN).

159With thanks to Nimrod Gaatone for sending me a photo of one original, which he came across while researching in Aix-en-Provence.

160For a reflection on the need to visit archives live and handle records, and how such presence catalyzes in ways that digital removal cannot, see Sentilles (2005), who writes of working with photos in hand: “A picture ... on the internet is impersonal and uninteresting in a way that can never be said about an original *carte-de-visite* in the palm of my hand—especially if I find a bend in the corner or words scrawled on the back. After a few weeks of reading through private letters, I came to know [my subject] in a personal way I did not even try to describe in the book” (155). This non-attempt to describe characterizes most archive stories by scholars who venture toward ethnographies of working in archives. I try to describe the research as a material, bodily process of transtemporal approach.

laptop as a series of events.

Where the microfiche loses something of the texture and materiality of the original record, the colour photograph called up on my laptop allows me to zoom in to the threads and specs of paper as if I could feel their touch through what I see in the movement on my screen, proprioceptive strategies of sensing. I comb over their surface in close-up to try to follow the hand's movement, ink over surface, trying to decipher the letters. Then I zoom out again to make sense of the movement of a sentence. The digital consultation here does not replace the materiality of the original, but rather depends on the physical material handling first, and enhances it. Repeats its presence in a way that the microfiche usually does not. The microfiche is haste, someone else's cropping, limited resolution, contrast only. The photos taken on the iPad when my much higher resolution video camera's battery has died frustrate me. They cannot zoom without pixelating, such is their low resolution. I am limited to one focal length, driven by the need to capture the whole document. Sometimes there is also a close-up of an important detail. But my tablet doesn't shoot the quality that would allow me, in perpetuity, now, to almost touch the paper through the zoom, to do the work of the historian's magnifying glass as she sits, or would once sit, at the long green table with the original ledger, working against the clock as someone's heels click in the distance across a marble or tile floor like Farge describes and like I know so well.

The first time I visited Bayonne in 2007, the municipal archives were located on the second floor of the local library. To access the Jewish archives, held in trust there, I had to seek written permission from the Jewish community, over the bridge and back again with the handwritten note the next morning, where my requested ledgers had been just inches from my fingertips all along, under the librarian's desk, waiting. I took digital photographs of every document I felt might be relevant then. I knew that I would need to stare at them for more time than I could ever afford to stay in Bayonne, or Nantes, or Rennes, or Saint-Malo, or La Rochelle, or Vitré. When I went back in 2012, a whole new beautiful building had been constructed in Bayonne, expressly to house a chapter of the Archives départementales Pyrénées-Atlantique. Waivers had to be signed regarding copyright and use of images. A visitor's card had to be acquired. Only certain items could be brought into the reading room. Everything else into the locker. Access to a texture of a subject's living entails navigation through these varied material and digital textures of archival records and the places—virtual and physical—that house them.

A letter from a widow

Back in 2007, I might have found (a clue to) the other widow mentioned in the testimony scribed at Quebec in 1738, the one named Catherine Churiau (AMB GG 214, 9). In a brief letter addressed to Monsieur Haramboure at the Bayonne cathedral and dated September 28, 1708, a widow named Chourio writes from Saint-Jean-de-Luz to the priest, thanking him for returning a letter she had sent to a now-deceased priest, unidentified. She asks apologies for being so tardy in writing to send her thanks, and explains that she had written to the now-deceased priest about his godson summoned to Martinique. She explains that she had asked the priest Rémy

Augustin to send this message to Monsieur Haramboure, but Augustin had tried twice to find him and was unsuccessful.¹⁶¹ This priest to whom she was writing was likely Pierre Chourio, who was the curé of the Bayonne cathedral. Preliminary research suggests that a de Chourio family produced theologians, with curés in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, Ciboure and Bayonne (Haristoy 1895, 24). Twenty-five years before Esther's supposed departure from Bayonne, this widow Chourio signs from Saint-Jean-de-Luz, though we take from the testimony at Quebec that the widow Catherine Churiau who took Esther in was located in Biarritz. Biarritz is less than twenty kilometres upcoast from Saint-Jean-de-Luz. This, like so many loose threads in the story, requires labourious follow-up in births, deaths, marriages, and tax ledgers. In this simple letter we find a local family whose connections are woven through a church in Bayonne, a church in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, and the ordinariness of transatlantic connection. A woman who outlives her husband, and perhaps her influential theologian brother, writes in her own deference-laden voice in her own handwriting and signs. In addition to the nun at Quebec who briefly recounts Esther's arrival in a letter to a friend, she is the only woman I come across in the research who speaks and inscribes herself into the record with her own pen.

Saint-Jean-de-Luz is a significant location in the Jewish history of the southwest of France. In 1536, as a result of the Portuguese expulsion, this small seaside town near the Spanish border received exiles under the protection of the Comte de Gramont, among them *Converso* priests. Famous among the stories of the New Christian emigrés here is that of Catherine Fernandez, a woman accused of spitting out the host after mass, which led to a local uproar, accusations of crypto-Judaism, and an investigation by the church, which was interrupted by an angry mob of locals who led Fernandez to a fire in the town where they burned her alive, not unlike an auto da fé sentencing of burning at the stake (Darrobers 1992, 289-296).¹⁶² The New Christians who had settled in Saint-Jean-de-Luz subsequently fled, relocating to other communities including Saint-Esprit-lès-Bayonne, where Esther Brandeau was from. Chourio might be a Gascon name.¹⁶³ Like I did with Guillous, I initially heard it as Iberian—Portuguese or Spanish—when I first read it in the testimony, where it is translated to French spelling much as Brandeau's Portuguese names moves from Brandão in Portuguese to Brandon to Brandeau.¹⁶⁴ Further research into the genealogy of Chourios in the coastal region between Saint-Jean-de-Luz and Biarritz to its north would potentially clarify this. If this is indeed another widow found, decades before Brandeau's birth, we enliven our protagonist's movements through a series of encounters with widows, in Biarritz, in Saint-Malo, perhaps in Rennes.

¹⁶¹ Pierre de Haramboure was vicar of Bayonne cathedral who refused to renounce his Jansenist beliefs. When he died in 1734, he was refused sacraments, was not given a service in the cathedral nor burial where he had served (Duvoisin 1861, 105-107, 485).

¹⁶² This is also not unlike a witch-burning or a Protestant burning at the stake. Fernandez's case is an example of one archival detail that Pierre Lasry incorporates into his novel, *Esther : une juive en Nouvelle-France*.

¹⁶³ This was suggested to me by Gérard Nahon in a meeting in Paris in April 2014.

¹⁶⁴ Gascon is considered by some an Occitan dialect, spoken in southwest France and in another variant in Catalonia, and was intelligible to Portuguese speakers. There are no Brandeaus in the Bayonne archives, only Brandons and Brandams.

Choreographing towards networks

In Rennes in 2007, a brand new departmental archive was soon to be opening, the length of several football fields needed to contain all the records, said a director proudly, catalyzing a vision in my mind of the sheer, daunting, obscene accumulation. A shipwreck in paper, one could spend decades adrift.¹⁶⁵ I am nearing the end of my first decade. Only in the La Rochelle municipal archives did I have to sign an agreement regarding photographic reproduction back in 2007. Back then the Archives départementales de la Charente-Maritime in La Rochelle were indefinitely closed. In 2013, up and running out in a corner of the university campus by the sea, the shipping records and much more long-since online, the originals were there to be held and considered.

Unlike Arlette Farge, I do not transcribe every document I find relevant. I take photographs as I hold them, sometimes with my bare hands, sometimes with the requisite white gloves. But I always hold the originals if I can. See a single entry in relation to its whole. Put myself in relation to the document, place myself before the pages as the scribe would have been positioned. An embodied proximity. Perhaps this is the point of Farge's insistence on transcription: embodying the role of the inscriber. This is key to the kind of method I am narrating here. A digital search does not easily translate the reality of the act of recording, of being in the scribe's position in relation to the document, of moving in relation to and within the document as a transtemporal subject, performing a reading.

In Rennes in 2007, at the municipal archives, I was so excited to find that complete tax ledgers for the entire city existed for the entire period that I was interested in (AMR). There was no way to miss the tailor, Augustin, if he existed! When I requested the tax ledgers 1733-1738, half an hour later a shopping cart arrived, its four wheels parked up against the wide green table, full of oversized books each four or five inches thick, about twelve by eighteen inches, an embarrassment. Thousands of pages. An impossibility of sometimes legible handwriting. It takes hours to adjust to each scribe's style. It's like learning a particular choreography. The process is one of gaining proximity, of moving with the act of writing, and of moving transtemporally. It is a proprioceptive experience. The handwriting bound within yellowed leather is a touch across time as you read it. You quickly come to love the perfectionists with the mystically clean pen, while simultaneously fighting your love for the ultimate conformist against whom I would fight as I fight against panoptical control. It is always only so many days before the dust and mould set a-flight with each turning page drive my eye, usually the right one, to infection. The mould, dust and particulate matter that enter my eyes and lungs and seep through my skin are sometimes, literally, infections across centuries.

By 2013, these records, that shopping cart full, had already been digitized. There are no Augustin last names in the indexes to guide me quickly to the right locations. There remains the question of Augustin as a first name. I forget the indexes, and go straight to reading the originals, the rich detail, the neighbours, their occupations, scan quickly over diverse handwriting in search of a name—Augustin—and occupation—*tailleur*.

¹⁶⁵Perhaps we should specifically add archives such as this to the list of Foucaultian heterotopias that includes museums and libraries, spaces that serve as both illusion and compensation, to follow Foucault's explication of heterotopias (Foucault 1984 [1967]).

Train the eyes to these two words. Get a sense of just how many tailors there may have been, what kinds, where. Will I find Augustin? It proves easier to find one Servanne baker in a town of 19,000 than finding an Augustin tailor in a city far larger, but not only for the sheer size of the city's population. Augustin. If indeed he did exist.

The first time I visit Rennes and receive the shopping cart, I randomly decide to start in 1735, and after that 1734. My search is cursory, a first round at sensing the terrain. The city spells itself out to me in approximate districts according to the occupations of people living there, none more clearly than the Rue Champ-Dolent, that street of the stench and crowded grime I felt standing there before I knew where I was. I find thirty-three master butchers, fifteen *compagnon* butchers, eight female master butchers, as well as a few more specific titles, such as one pig slaughterer and one pig seller, on a street that is the equivalent of about three short blocks long. Tanners and porters and shoemakers are to be found on this street too. Though it is dominated by butchers, it makes sense that leather workers are to be found in the vicinity. A tailor named Luc Vaillant lives on this street, 24th house, 2nd floor. Also on this street is Mathurin Morin dit la Coste, porter, and his wife, a water carrier. I recall a René Morin in Saint-Malo, the godfather to Servanne Guillou's second child. La Coste has an affinity in my mind with Da Costa, a *Converso*/Jewish name. I take note, even as I repeat the now-familiar refrain to myself: this could just as easily be a non-Jewish-derived French name. Esther Brandeau's Jewishness, and mine, conjure a Jewish sight in what is just as likely if not more likely *not* a trace of an Iberian history at all.

But as I will later learn, the most recorded of Jewish families in Brittany is in fact the converted Da Costa family of the Portuguese Jewish diaspora, who arrived to France toward the end of the seventeenth century as did many Jewish and *Converso* exiles (Toczé 2006, 26). Jean-Jacques is a trader who settles in Rennes, and achieves noble title in 1761. No date of arrival in Rennes is given by Toczé. A son born in Rennes in 1744 will also rise to prominence, such success and stability predicated on the family's conversion to Christianity. He will go by the name Jean-Francois Da Costa de la Fleuriais. So it was not, after all, a far stretch to have read *Converso* diaspora into "dit La Coste," though clearly Mathurin Morin dit la Coste is not of the same noble rank that Jean-Jacques Da Costa and his son will reach, though they live in the same era.

Further west, skipping over a few streams spilling into the neighbourhood from the river Vilaine, and on the same side of the river as the butcher's street in the Basse-Ville, the lower town, I find Joseph Rogueil, *compagnon tailleur*, 3rd floor, 7th house of Rue St. Thomas, as well as one *maîtresse tailleuse*, the wife of Jacques Gotard and their five children. I also find Olivier Farou dit Laranchise, *compagnon tailleur* at #13, first floor, and Julien Fauvel, *tailleur* who is in the boutique at #10 and newly married. There is also a Toussaint Davy, *maître boucher*, widower, and his three children in the same building. This is in the 1734 ledger.

In the 1737 ledger, three years later on the same stretch of St. Thomas street, I note a Joseph Loyeul, *compagnon tailleur*, a *maîtresse tailleuse* the widow of Jacques Chotard and her five children, a Jeanne Mariage *fille maitresse tailleuse* and *propriétaire*, owner, and an Olivier Furond Lafranchère *compagnon tailleur*. All these indicate my shifting notation based on how I read the handwriting, *and* how different the handwriting was between

tax collectors, *and* how each tax collector spelled these names, transcribing phonetically from what was orally told to him. It seems pretty likely that those paying taxes three years later are the same people. There is one extra, and that is Jeanne Mariage, who is not there in 1734, and now she is the owner of the building. However, I go back and look at 1734 again. There she is, I had missed her, Jeanne Mariage *filie tailleuse* and *proprietaire*. Julien Fauvel is a tailor there in 1734 but he is missing in 1737. I do by chance find him though, on Rue Vasselot, a differently named stretch of essentially the same street, just closer to the butchers' street. In 1737, he is occupying a boutique as labourer, tailor and second-hand dealer. He pays 30 in taxes in 1737, where three years earlier he was paying only 1. One could track the stability and shifts in these neighbourhoods by returning to the tax ledgers year by year, even when accounting for the errors and differences in spelling and missing information.

The tailors that I find in the 1734 Rennes tax ledger are among a vast range of others working other occupations. On Rue St. Georges I find two lawyers, several landlords and landladies “*vivant de leurs rentes*”—living from rental and/or other private sources—religious women, a school teacher, a journalist, a notary, a shoemaker, several porters, a renter of horses, an operator of a home for the sick, pensioners, a pewter and tin potter, launderers, a candle seller, a candle maker, a salt seller, an upholsterer, a surgeon, a hat maker, girl hairdressers, a woman clockmaker, a glove maker, a procurer for the court, and a council secretary to the king. One master tailor is Joseph Guerin, and he is still there three years later up on the second floor. I also find a handful of other tailors on St. Georges in 1737. St. Georges is on a street not far from the Palais de Justice, across the river in the High Town, and way across on the east side, far from the butchers' area. It's a much higher end neighbourhood, judging from the occupations and presence of domestics in households. It is not a neighbourhood that I ever felt any compelling pull while walking Rennes' streets following my intuition. It just happens to be adjacent to the palace and the first street in some of the tax ledgers, including the first one I opened the first time I tackled such archives in 2007.

Eruption in the archive: Rennes and the Augustins

It's almost three o'clock in the morning in Toronto neck deep following the tax collector through Rennes. I laugh out loud at the sheer pleasure of an encounter with what seems like a transtemporal joke. I have found my first Augustin in Rennes. And it is the digs of the Augustin religious order, there over the old town wall on the 1720 map onto which I have been marking where there have been high concentrations of tailors in the city. Even as none of these tailors is named Augustin. The mapping is slow-going. I am slowly memorizing the street names of the entire town as my eyes comb over and over again, my eyes moving first over my lists of all of the tailors in the city pulled from the tax ledgers, and then returning to mark them onto the 1720 map of Rennes.¹⁶⁶ I have

¹⁶⁶This map predates the period in question, but it is what is available for imagining the layout of the city during Brandeau / La Fargue's time. The date is important to note though, because a devastating fire swept through Rennes in 1720, requiring reconstruction. The heart of the fire was above the river. The Basse Ville, where the butchers' district was, was not damaged, though the Basse Ville frequently flooded, was plagued by stench and in need of repair (Place Publique 2011; Cosnier and Irvoas-Dantec 2001, 44-45).

catalogued 147 tailors across the city, men and women, girls and boys: 69 *maîtres* (masters), 16 *maîtresses* (women masters), 23 *compagnons* (tailors in training), ten *filles tailleuses* (girl tailors), 2 *garçons tailleurs* (boy tailors) and 19 *tailleurs* (male tailors that are not specified in terms of level). I lump all those working in tailoring together regardless of rank in the profession, just to get a sense of the level of activity.

I start on the south side of the river, the Basse-Ville, which includes the short stretch of street teeming with butchers. Street by street I mark how many are working in tailoring, as indicated on the map on p.161. If we tally the tailors on the south side of the river in 1737, we have 39 people working in tailoring. Jumping across river to the north shore, I tally more. Where the bridge meets Rue de la Poissonnerie heading to the right and Rue des Juifs heading to the left, I find for instance Jeanne Lafouro or Latouro whose name in the 1734 register looks more like Jeanne Cattouro/Tattouro/Cassouro. She is a *maîtresse tailleuse*. One street in from the river on the north side, sixteen tailors are found along Volvire and Baudrairie running parallel to the river. Then I spend a long time looking for Rue du Pont de Jour because I'm looking inside the old city walls. I finally think to look outside the city walls. Eight tailors on Rue du Point du Jour, which follows the outside of the city wall and hits Place Sainte-Anne, from which Rue de la Reverdias heads north out of the city in the direction of Saint-Malo, home to ten in tailoring. Sixteen on Saint-Michel, and at Place Sainte-Anne and surrounds including the bridge Foulons, eleven more. Running into Place Sainte-Anne is La Pouillaillerie, which becomes La Fracassière, two more there. Les Lisses runs along the outside of the city wall. Here, nine more. Rue Saint-Dominique also known as Rue Saint-Malo, also running out of the city en route north to that city: eight more tailors. And more still.

It's while I am searching the map for a street called Rue Faubourg de l'Évesque—a street with nine tailors—that I suddenly I see the rectangular building whose arced front indicates church: Augustins. I've had this map since 2007 and it is now 2013. Maybe they didn't work for a tailor named Augustin, but simply used the religious landmark as a memory device in the moment of interrogation. Or as a homing device. Or as a protection, telling while not telling. I realize now that I have made in fact two assumptions about the naming of Augustin, tailor, in the testimonial record. First, that Augustin was a person, and less explicit is the gendering in my assumption: that the named person must be a man.

Breton networks and Jewish proximity: Saint-Malo, Rennes and the Guillous

If we look at this stretch of town running in the north-west of the city, including along the outer wall over to the Augustin parish, we find over seventy people working in tailoring. If we then take into account eighteen more close to Les Lisses, but inside the city wall, more still. Could this be a district and the Augustinian order is proximate to if not within it? I go back to my detailed notation of all the tailors on the street housing the Augustins, running west out of town. I notice something. Two women with the last name Guillou are to be found on this street: Jeanne Guillou, widow of Bertrand Le Feuvre, *maître de sel* (salt seller), and her domestic, proprietor of the building she lives in. Jeanne is of course a common name, and Guillou not so uncommon, but Jeanne Guillou is

also the name of the sister of Servanne Guillou the widow baker found in the Saint-Malo tax ledger in 1726. Also notable is the fact that Servanne the Saint-Malo baker's mother's name is Olive Le Feuvre. I recall Le Fauvre, the *vitrier* (window cutter) who lives in the same house as Servanne Guillou in Saint-Malo. Here in Rennes, Jeanne Guillou is the widow of a Le Feuvre. Nearby in another building here by the Augustin church lives the wife of François Guillou, *fillandière* [thread maker]. Husband François is noted as absent. Looking back over the Guillous of Saint-Malo I find a François Guillou, father of at least two children. Charles Guillou and his wife, who deals in starch is here too in Rennes. Suddenly the orbit of the widow baker Servanne Guillou, the only baker I find named Servanne in Saint-Malo in 1726—who lives up from the big gate—reaches out from that single sentence in the testimony at Quebec, far beyond Saint-Malo's small coastal city walls and sketches itself into a possible network between two Breton cities, a network that could have facilitated Esther / Jacques' living, moving and crossing.

As it turns out, this is not the only part of town where Guillous are to be found in Rennes. On the Poissonnerie, which links up with the bridge over to the butcher's street, I find a house owned by Guillous. Jean Guillou, *maître de bois* (master woodworker) is the proprietor and lives there with his wife. Three single labourers live there too, and another with his wife. I go back over my notes to discover that there are more Guillous, sometimes spelled Guillot on the butchers' street, including several widows: In one house on Champ-Dolent, Perrine Jean, the widow of Pierre Guillot is a master butcher. Thomasse Guillot lives there too, she too is a butcher and the widow of Jan le Meur (or could it be Le Feuvre, like Bertrand Le Feuvre above, the salt seller whose widow is Jeanne Guillou). Guillaume Guillou lives there too, a master tanner, with his wife. Perrine Le Clou lives there too, the widow of a Guillou. She is listed as a mademoiselle butcher. Maybe she is young. At the top of this butcher's street, lives Mathurin Morin dit La Coste, like Da Costa, the New Christians who rose to prominence a few decades later. On Rue de L'Isle, the island on the river where Poissonnerie crosses the water to Champ-Dolent, I find Emanuel Blouet, a master fabric dyer, his wife and three children. Remember that the Saint-Malo widow baker Servanne Guillou married Guillaume Blouet?

Was there, and if so what was the relationship between the Guillous and Blouets of Saint-Malo and the Guillous and Blouets in Rennes? That there might have been movement through these families between these cities along a route that moved tailored products to shipment by sea from its nearest port would explain the high concentration of tailors working in the Rennes neighbourhoods adjacent to the road out toward Saint-Malo. As I stare at these fragments of information I have so laboriously amassed, I wonder if I haven't established a possible network between these two Breton cities through these families, perhaps more precisely through widows, two families that may well meet in the person of Servanne Guillou, widow baker in Saint-Malo, with whom Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue or whoever he was claimed to have worked for for six months well into his five year cross-France travels, after having first worked in Rennes.

I am puzzled by my suspicion of possibly finding Jews or Jewish-descended people here, according to the desire of my search and the affective resonance of place in concert with uncertain evidence I find. And of finding

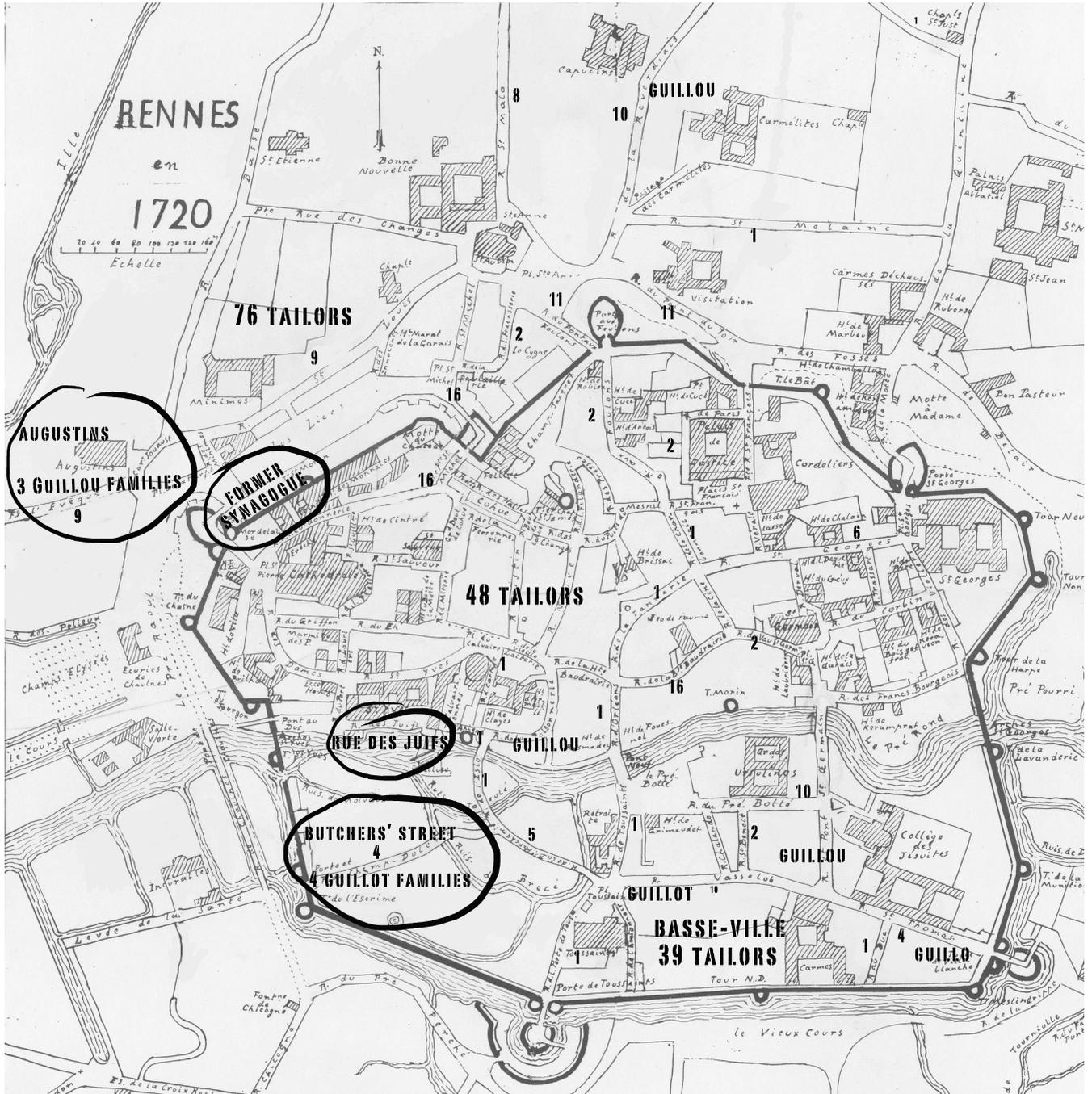
these Guillous / Guillots in the butcher's street, some of them butchers, tanners, or leather workers themselves. Could the crypto-Jewishness of such professions be plausible?¹⁶⁷ Working with meat and leather would require kosher ways particular to Jewish practice, and being a master butcher would require not being Jewish, since the guilds were exclusive. Even if these practices become syncretic, assimilate, become indecipherable, disappear, perhaps a trace is to be found in the geographies of location of clusters of people. The field—the Champ—adjacent to the butcher's street faces directly across river from Rue des Juifs, even as there is purportedly no Jewish community here at this time. Even if these families are neither Jewish-descended, nor directly related to one another, my discoveries suggest the possibility that Esther / Jacques could have had a proximate or direct familiarity with Guillous / Guillots in Rennes, which they then leveraged upon arrival in Saint-Malo later in the journey. I wonder further at the possibility of Guillot / Guillou proximity to Jewish-descended people here in Rennes, remembering as I do the proximity of Guillous of Saint-Malo to the cluster of Petits merchants by the big gate there at a time when Jews were purportedly not living in Saint-Malo.

I cross check some of the Guillous of Rennes to the 1734 ledger. I find Mathurin Morin dit La Coste again. I find Pierre Guillot who is listed as a *maître blanchisseur*, and another Pierre Guillot who is listed as a *maître boucher* and his wife and three children. I find Guillaume Guillot, *maître tanneur*. Launderer, butcher, tanner. In the house next to Guillaume Guillot, I find Louis Blouet, *compagnon boucher*. In the building at the back of the property I find Thomasse Guillot widow of Jean Lemeure or Lemeuve or Lemeuvre—like Le Meur / Le Feuvre above. Thomasse is a butcher, vendor of butter and proprietor of the building where she lives with her daughter. I also find Perrine Le Clou again, widow of a Guillot, also a butcher. On Rue St. Thomas, which is along the river from Champ-Dolent, I find Claudine Guilloia though the handwriting is difficult to decipher. She lives in a building for which she is the proprietor, a widow *gantier* [glover] who sells tobacco, raisins and other goods¹⁶⁸ and lives with her four children.

When I look extremely closely at the make-up of the Champ-Dolent buildings, the butcher's street, I find a tightly intermarried set of families who own more than a third of the real estate, including the Le Clou, Lemeur, Jean and Guillot families. The owners of many of the buildings are widows, among them Guillot widows. This knit series of families also spills over nearby along Vasselot, part of that big arcing street that runs through the Basse-Ville, intersecting with Champ-Dolent along the way. On Vasselot, reading more closely I find a first name Augustin, one of two inn-keepers on this stretch of a street with five *compagnons tailleurs*, two *maîtres tailleurs* and two *tailleurs*.¹⁶⁹ This neighbourhood in the Basse-Ville was known as working-class and described in terms of the filth and stench it suffered from the frequent flooding and lack of infrastructure to protect from such (Patay 2013).

¹⁶⁷I thank Melina Young for pointing out this possibility, shortly after the 3 a.m. laugh. Such imaginative sleuthing work is never solitary.
¹⁶⁸“Danrées” means typically food goods.

¹⁶⁹I do find two more actual persons named Augustin: Augustin Le Dart dit La Roche, master cobbler, lives on Pont des Foulons—the street that cued me to outside the city walls—with his wife and two children. Not a tailor. Augustin Duchesne, master carpenter/joiner, is on Rue de L'Isle, the island between butchers' quarter and the Poissonnerie/Rue des Juifs. I never find a tailor named Augustin.



Map of Rennes in 1720, overlaid with information culled from tax ledgers 1734-1737. Numbers represent all those working in tailoring, by street for the whole city.

Source map: Rennes en 1720 by French historian Paul Banéat (1856-1942), Archives municipales de Rennes.

When I look at the Augustin monastery side of town, I find less frequent Guillous. In addition to those by the Augustin religious order, on Rue Reverdias that leads north out of town, I find Jeanne Guillou, *fille vivant de ses rentes*, living from her rental income or other independent means. Perhaps there is a working-class butchers' metropole of Guillous on Champ-Dolent and vicinity from which some move from time to time for employ? I sketch street layouts according to owners of buildings and names in question, I build a massive database to see linkages either hereditary or proximate. I find at least four extended Guillot families on the butcher's street, and three more Guillots elsewhere in the lower town. Across river from the lower town, I find one Guillot family just down the street from the Rue des Juifs, and possibly two other Guillous a few more blocks away. Nicolas Guillou *dit La Touche, maître tailleur* is on St. Germain in the Basse-Ville, along with his wife and child. I have come across other La Touches. The widow de la Touche who lives in the same building as Servanne Pain, midwife, in Saint-Malo, for instance. I find another Nommé La Touche, *compagnon tailleur* on Rue Bandrerie, across the river from the Basse Ville, perhaps a son of Nicolas master tailor above. Could these La Touche's be Guillous too?¹⁷⁰

La Monnaye is the street on the inside of the wall along which Les Lisses runs on the outside. La Monnaye runs into the Porte Mordelaise, the city gate kitty-corner to the Augustin building. A synagogue would be located between the Porte Mordelaise gate and the Moran tower just north, way back before Esther's time when there was actually an active Jewish community here (Ogée 1853, 470). I notice as I read my notes from 2012 that I had read through ledger entries from 1737, using the street index in its opening pages to leap around intuitively from street to street rather than follow the order in the index. On Rue de la Poissonnerie I found "Jewish" names—Abraham, Abel, Villeman, near where the street meets the Rue des Juifs. From there I skipped directly over to Faubourg de l'Evesque where I later found the Augustins and more Guillous, working intuitively, not with any clear logic. I look at my pictures on my camera and notice my interest in Porte Mordelaise, near where the synagogue would have been centuries before. When I see this now, I feel tracked. The embarrassment of reading this way, heretically, in a different register than archival fact. And yet, yielding to insistence.

A heretical and desiring train of thoughts connects the suspected Avignonnais (crypto- or assimilated-) Jews near the big gate of Saint-Malo to the suspected (crypto- or assimilated-) Jews of the Poissonnerie and the Champ-Dolent in Rennes, two neighbourhoods where Guillous owned and/or lived in buildings they owned, several of them women and/or widow butchers. And then in turn I fathom a connection of these facts to the fact of a butchers' and tanners' neighbourhood in Rennes. The tanneries along the river at Clisson fly into view. Or rather, what flies into sense is the feeling of time slowed as a Clisson historian points out the riverside tanneries that were once there, as we walked down a hill from a convent. Clisson is where Brandeau / La Fargue went after Rennes and worked for a short time as a chore boy for a convent, before heading to Saint-Malo and into the orbit of

¹⁷⁰On St. Georges I find Le Nommé Guillotel, *maître tailleur* and his wife. I find several Blouets. Blouet is Servanne the Saint-Malo baker's married name. On Rue Nantoise, I find a widow Blouet, another master salt seller, and on Rue de l'Entonnoir, Anne Blouet, widow. In a boutique on La Monnaye is André Blouet, his wife a knitter. A widow Blouet is living from her rents on Saint-Louis, which runs from the Augustins to the Place Sainte-Anne. A Blouet master tailor and his family live on Saint-Michel.

Servanne the baker. The river that runs through Rennes, through the butchers' and tanners' neighbourhood flows onwards, east to Vitré, which is a cloth centre, or south to Nantes and Clisson in canals. I remember all the time I spent wandering the canals in Rennes. I wonder, who were the tanners of Clisson? In beginning to get at a deeper texture of Rennes, I begin to feel the possible movements of a person along its streets, through specific networks of micro-migration and migrations at a larger scale, between cities, across provinces.

OF SHIPS, CAPTAINS AND TOMBSTONES

Ordinary trajectories and probable proximities: Bordeaux, *cabotage* and the Bernards

This possible movement of goods and people related to cloth trading that I have pointed to between an inland city, Rennes, outwards, toward a port city, Saint-Malo, and networked through a canal system to the east and south, then intersects with coastal and transatlantic movement, from Saint-Malo, Nantes, La Rochelle, Bordeaux and other ports still. A micro-reading of movements in and out of ports yields yet another texture to the possible story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's living, in movement that begins with my eye on the name Bernard in the original testimony.

The men who captain ships, crash them, arm them, own them, litigate about them, the ships, their cargo and crew. Certain sorts of constellation points in ink, I wrote.

Unlike birth, death and marriage records, which document patriarchal lineage, through which women factor as daughters, wives and widows; and the tax ledgers that find women and men at work in their homes and shops, in shipping records ordinary women barely appear at all, particularly on the smaller vessels plying the coasts. Port records enable mapping proximities of men and their cargoes in motion.

In the testimony, Bernard is the name given to the first captain that Pierre Mausiette set sail with as a cook, between Bordeaux and Nantes. Antonio l'espagnol, the Spaniard, was the second. I have undertaken a search of port records for ships in and out of Bordeaux, and I have uncovered a number of captains with the last name Bernard / Besnard working *cabotage* between Saint-Malo, La Rochelle, other small ports and Bordeaux in the years of Esther / Pierre / Jacques' purported movements, La Rochelle being the departure point for Jacques La Fargue when he set sail for New France in 1738. *Cabotage* is coastal navigation, or trade and travel along the coastal regions in Europe proper, as opposed to transatlantic voyaging. It generally entails smaller vessels than their transatlantic counterparts. I have done a similar search of port records in Saint-Malo. In the Bordeaux records, the years of interest are largely missing, and this is why Saint-Malo records have proven so vital; we can read the intention of travel to Bordeaux even if a Bordeaux port record cannot confirm that.¹⁷¹ Any of the *cabotage*

¹⁷¹ I also consulted Nantes records. Tables 1 and 2 in the Appendix list findings to date.

vessels moving between Bordeaux and up the coast to Saint-Malo in the north could have made stops in La Rochelle and Nantes, two other port cities of importance in the story, and where further work would be necessary to deepen what I am about to lay out.

Detailed work in shipping records allows me to hone in on a very probable possibility for Esther Brandeau's travel at the outset of becoming Pierre Mausiette, so long as I bend my reading. The testimony comes to be a sort of shorthand containing notes toward a truth. Like I move in the streets of Saint-Malo and Rennes, I must now move between ports in my reading, holding a vaster scale of geography in the mind's eye, while zooming in from that holding. I must stay attentive to coincidences in arrivals, stays within and departures from multiple ports. I must work phonetically and get to know the captains and the ships well to keep track of who is doing what. I must get to know physical geographies in considerable detail, working with today's maps to try and toggle back and forth between now and then. The detailed work in shipping records allows me to garner a sense of the frequent co-presence of various vessels in ports over time; the possible family business of running specific routes and cargo using a handful of captains¹⁷² mostly from what I propose is the same family; the patterns of connection among the various ports; and the extent to which vessels from all over the Atlantic coastal regions of Europe met each other repeatedly in various ports. According to the testimony, early on Pierre Mausiette is said to have travelled from Bordeaux to Nantes and back to Bordeaux with a captain Bernard, and then returned to Nantes from Bordeaux with a captain named Antonio, l'espagnol (the Spaniard). He then deserted in Nantes and made his way to Rennes perhaps into encounters with Guillous, then to the Clisson convent, then to Saint-Malo—perhaps into more encounters with Guillous—then to Vitré, and finally to La Rochelle, from whence departure to Quebec.

I conducted a detailed search for captains with first or last names like the two captains named in the testimony—Bernard and Antonio, L'espagnol (the Spaniard)—for the years 1733-1734 in Saint-Malo and Bordeaux.¹⁷³ From these I parse a cluster of Bernard / Besnard captains and the ships they sailed.¹⁷⁴ This allows

¹⁷²In *cabotage* records, the term used is *maîtres*.

¹⁷³See Tables in Appendix. Bernard was and is a very common non-Jewish French name. Today, it is the second-most common family name in France, according to *nom-famille.com*. Interestingly, Bernard is also a francization of the Hebrew name Isaachar, meaning bear. It becomes among French Jews the family name "Bernard," and its variations Baer and Bernhart (Bernard 1990, 56-57).

¹⁷⁴The majority of my information pertains to Bordeaux and Saint-Malo, where I have been able to do more detailed work (ADG, AMS). However, I have also done some work in Nantes (ADLA). Between April and December 1733 in Nantes, I find in port two captains with the first name Bernard. Of those with the last name Bernard, I find three or four *matelots*, two second captains, five *mousses*, a surgeon and a carpenter. (Please see Table 2 in Appendix). Thus, 14-15 encounters with the name Bernard in the masses of lists of crew members on vessels arming to depart on transatlantic journeys in Nantes in the year Brandeau purportedly boarded at Bordeaux and sailed to Nantes, back to Bordeaux and back to Nantes. I roughly inventoried the following numbers of large ships in the same year in Nantes, most headed for transatlantic voyages: January (6), February (10), March (7), April (9), May (14), June (10-11), July (13), August (12), September (11). These would have 20-40 crew members from captain down to mousse, typically three *engagés* (indentured labourers) and four passengers. Of the many sailors headed to the colonies or the African coast from Nantes in 1733-1734, I find no other captains named Bernard. I also come across names that sound like Jacques La Fargue. On June 15, 1733 I find a *matelot* named Jacques La Farge (or Barge), 27 years old, from a village east of Dijon on board a ship in Nantes bound for Guadeloupe (ADLA C1214, 161). This is the first Jacques La Fargue I find. In mid-August, 1733 I find another *matelot* on a ship bound for Cap Saint-Domingue named Jacques Le Feuvre from Nantes, the second name that sounds like Jacques La Fargue (11). In August 1733 there is a Guillaume La Pergue/Fergue from Bayonne and Gabriel Bernard from L'île D'Yeu who are *mousses* on a ship bound for Cap Saint-Domingue (17) In November 1733, on a ship bound for Martinique is a surgeon named Jean Fargue (66).

me to see the overlap with captains who sailed some of the same vessels, and to propose that several of these men were likely of the same family.

I hone in on a “main family,” a group of Besnard / Bernard men from Saint-Brieuc, a small port on the Breton coast just to the west of Saint-Malo.¹⁷⁵ Joseph Besnard / Bernard sails between Saint-Malo and Bordeaux fifteen times over the five years 1733-1738, on one main vessel out of Saint-Brieuc, the *Janne-Marie de Saint-Briac*, and two others that he sails twice out of Plassac, a town downriver from Bordeaux. His cargoes include salt, or ballast, or grains, or cloth and canvas, and once, wood strips for barrel-making. Sometimes other merchandise not detailed is listed along with the main cargo. François Besnard sails sixteen times on three different vessels in the same period, two vessels out of Saint-Brieuc. Jacques, Julien and Yves Besnard / Bernard each sailed a few times on vessels out of Saint-Brieuc. Julien in fact sails Joseph's main vessel. Louis Bernard sails the same boat out of Plassac that Joseph also sails a few times, the *Françoise de Plassac*. Another captain, Pierre Garnier also sails this same boat, indicating that it is not always in the family.

One key point of overlap that emerges in my compilation is between Bernard captains and those named Lespagnol. Recall that Pierre Mausiette travelled with a captain Antonio, l'espagnol (the Spaniard) from Bordeaux to Nantes. There are in fact two Lespagnol men who also sail vessels out of Saint-Brieuc, and one of them, Jan Lespagnol, it seems sails Joseph Bernard's main vessel, the *Janne-Marie de St-Briac*. When we look chronologically, we see that Gabriel Lespagnol and Joseph Bernard were on vessels registered in port one day apart in Bordeaux in September, 1734. Jan Lespagnol and Joseph Bernard were on vessels registered in Bordeaux one week apart in November, 1734. In 1736, Joseph Bernard is in port in Bordeaux in March, 1736 with his main vessel, the *Janne Marie de St. Briac*, a few weeks before Jan Lespagnol is in the same port on this same vessel, in April, 1736. These men were probably often in ports together, knew each, and sometimes sailed the same vessels. In my searches of the Bordeaux and Saint-Malo port records I also find a family of Lessieux captains from Saint-Brieuc, the same place of origin of our Bernard family. They travel to and from Saint-Malo much as the Bernard captains do, including frequently to Bordeaux and often at overlapping times. I note this to paint a picture of a possible network of captains that Brandeau / La Fargue may have gained access to first by sailing with a “capitaine Bernard.”¹⁷⁶ It is this *cabotage* network that I have uncovered through micro-to-macro reading of, or moving with, shipping records, a network of men that moved between Bordeaux and Saint-Malo and presumably the cities and towns in between (such as La Rochelle and Nantes) through which I believe Brandeau / La Fargue travelled.¹⁷⁷

On a ship bound for Léoganne in December, Joseph La Verge/Ferge is a 37 year-old surgeon. I haven't come across this name in the records outside of Nantes. Perhaps Nantes is where Brandeau sourced the name used to travel to Quebec.

175 Saint-Brieuc is written most commonly as St-Briac, and also as Brilleuc, Dabreill etc. Spelling varies between Bernard and Besnard, suggesting interchangeability, different styles of handwriting, or different names entirely. But that Joseph Bernard, Joseph Besnard and Julien Besnard all sail the *Janne-Marie de St-Briac* suggests we take these as the same family name.

176 Jan, Julien, Joseph, Barthelemy and Pierre Lessieux of Saint-Briac sailed between 1734-1738 (AMS 417: 145, 190; 418: 4, 11, 22, 26b, 28b, 47b, 51a, 67, 69a, 75b, 83a, 90a, 91b, 98b, 103b, 129a, 145a, 147b, 152a, 156b, 162b, 163b, 172a, 181a).

177 A captain Paul Bernard Lizon is in Saint-Malo in May 1736 with *La Marie Julienne* of Saint-Malo, headed for Amsterdam with a cargo

Detailed port investigations also reveal the contact and familiarity that a person accustomed to travelling the *cabotage* routes would have with the paths of transatlantic movement. There is one Captain Bernard who isn't doing coastal *cabotage*, but transatlantic fishing. Guillaume Bernard is leaving Saint-Malo for "le petit nord," meaning the north bay at the top of Newfoundland, with a cargo of salt to preserve fish from the fishing expedition, in May 1733, on a boat of 150 *tonneaux*, quite a bit bigger than the vessels that are doing *cabotage* between ports along the coast. He is in Saint-Malo again in May 1734 with the same ship ready for another fishing venture, an annual event repeated in 1735, 1736 and 1737.¹⁷⁸

Brandeau / La Fargue would have had knowledge of the slave trade too through movement between ports, knowledge which they perhaps would not have had had they worked only in Saint-Malo, for instance. Unlike the dominance of the port of Nantes by slaving vessels and vessels bound for the colonies, in Saint-Malo's port records I come across only one ship headed to Guinea (AMS 417, 181-182). In Nantes, which Brandeau / La Fargue claims to have arrived at twice before deserting for Rennes, I come across several ships and captains of interest, foremost among these a captain named Bernard in his early thirties, who sails out of Nantes on a transatlantic voyage in October 1733 to the French colonies, to Cap Saint-Domingue (present-day Dominican Republic), returning in July 1734. This is Bernard Gabaston, and he is originally from Bayonne as is his second captain, pilot, and a young *mousse*. One of his twenty sailors is also from Bayonne.¹⁷⁹ Were Bernard Gabaston's voyages known in Bayonne and Saint-Esprit? Were they known to Esther?¹⁸⁰

This detailed work paints a small, moving world of ships, goods and people. There are several captains I come across in my search with the *first* name Bernard, and one I note for the kind of coincidence that emerges when one carries the memory of a search of genealogical records from one town (Saint-Malo) into the *cabotage* searches. A captain Bernard Lemarchand / Lemarcant sails a small boat along the coast leaving from Saint-Malo every few weeks in January and February 1734 and in December 1736.¹⁸¹ He may be related to Nicolas Lemarchand Sieur de la Chapelle. Recall that Brandeau / La Fargue worked for a Sieur de la Chapelle at one point. We have also already seen that this Nicolas Lemarchand Sieur de la Chapelle is the godfather of one of Servanne the baker's grandchildren.¹⁸² Notably, this Nicolas Lemarchand registers in port in Saint-Malo around a week before François Bernard does so in June 1734. And again, Lemarchand registers in Bordeaux on the same day as Joseph Bernard does in March 1737. Perhaps this suggests an additional point of contact that the Bernard network might have offered to Esther / Jacques. I have not found any captain by the name of Antonio—the name

of rock, oysters and other goods (AMS 418, 130a). He heads to Lorient in October 1736 (418, 148b) and to Sables d'Olonne in January 1737 (AMS 418, 164a). This indicates how far a small *barque* could travel, linking some of Brandeau / La Fargue's territories: he sailed between the Sables near La Rochelle; Saint-Malo much further north, around the Finistère peninsula, and to Amsterdam. 178AMS 417, 51; AMS 417, 171a; AMS 642, no.37; AMS 643, no.46; 418, 53ab; 418, 125a; AMS 644, no.51; AMS 418, 196a . 179ADLA 1214, 47; ADLA 1215

180I also find in mid-May 1733, a captain Bernard Chassignon from Nantes in port there, captaining a ship called *La Reine Esther* set to head for Léoganne in the colonies (Haiti) (ADLA 1214, 140).

181 AMS 417: 134, 138-139, 141; AMS 418, 158a

182See the section of this chapter entitled "Finding Servanne, widow baker."



A transtemporal map: Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue's purported movements between 1733-1738 overlaid on a Google map of the region. Dark coloured place markers locate sites referred to in the record of interrogation. Light coloured place markers map *cabotage* ports, which in addition to the large ports, emerge in the identification of the Bernards and Lespagnols captains working out of Saint-Brieuc.

*Noisel's location has not been confirmed.

given for the second captain in the testimony—neither in Nantes, Bordeaux nor Saint-Malo records, but as we have seen, I have found Lespagnol captains.¹⁸³

I propose the phrase “probable proximities” to characterise the encounters that I have suggested were of importance to Brandeau / La Fargue's living as multicrosser. This phrase captures the work in Archival Sense: painting a texture while displaying the contingency of evidence. Those trajectories of possible movement we build emerge from what we might call notes toward a truth recorded in the third-person voice testimony. Probable proximity suggests to me that Joseph Bernard and one of the Lespagnol captains from Saint-Brieuc, doing *cabotage* in and out of Saint-Malo and Bordeaux and surely elsewhere, could be the two captains named in the testimony. These “discoveries” might affirm a truth to the testimony, yet not exact to the details contained therein. Servanne becomes a first name, the Spaniard as a descriptive becomes a last name, Lespagnol. Perhaps she had said “captain Lespagnol” under interrogation, and the next day as the scribe scribed the testimony retroactively, he converted a last name to a descriptor, and added a name. Or perhaps his memory tricked him. Or maybe there was a language (mis)communication issue. Or maybe she strategically recounted. Contingently then, I propose our subject moved through the ordinary trajectories of the likes of the Besnard and Lespagnol captains, and becomes part of this ordinary business. These ordinary trajectories and ordinary overlaps in ports give us a texture of Esther / Pierre / Jacques' quite ordinary movement.

Did that shipwreck happen?: Geoffroy, the telling misname

There is no captain named Geoffroy in the Dutch shipping records of the period (SAI). According to Brandeau's testimony, the Dutch ship left Bayonne for Amsterdam “dans la lune d'avril ou de mai”—in the moon of April or May—with Brandeau on board, sent to Amsterdam by her parents, about five years before Jacques La Fargue's outing at or en route to Quebec in 1738. The ship was lost, purportedly, on the Bayonne sandbar. Did the shipwreck actually happen? Did this claimed adventure *actually ever start* as the record of interrogation actually claims? Did Esther's parents put her on a ship, as Esther? Did she put herself on a ship as Pierre Mausiette already? Lost as in wrecked? Lost as in lost its way? One can never leave ones doubts behind, for doubts propel the search, talk back, undermine, seduce.

In searching in the Municipal Archives in Amsterdam and then in the Royal Library in Den Haag¹⁸⁴ for ships that travelled between Amsterdam and Bayonne, I come across Focke Bakker, a captain who made an insurance claim on a ship he was sailing from Bayonne to Amsterdam in November, 1736, a ship named the *Juffrouw Brigita*— the *Miss Brigita* (SC; SAV 2828, 71-74; SAN 9702, no. 887). This would be a few years later

¹⁸³Interestingly, I did come across one captain named Diego Delcolado, in July 1738, arriving from London to Bordeaux a few weeks after Joseph Bernard is registered in Bordeaux. Delcolado's ship with a crew of seven and a cargo of salmon is called the *St-Antoine de Reina Sevilla*. Antoine would of course be a francization of the Spanish Antonio, here a ship's name with a Spanish captain, rather than “*capitaine Antonio, l'espagnol*.” Sleuthing might reveal his patterns of movement, which could change my proposal above.

¹⁸⁴The Amsterdam shipping news for the period 1733-1735 were missing in the Stadsarchief in Amsterdam in 2011, so I consulted the missing years in the collection of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in Den Haag.

than the testimony collated at Quebec claims the shipwreck happened. I also find an Evert de Weerdt who also captained the *Juffrouw Brigita* and ran into trouble with this ship on the bar of Bayonne on January 17, 1732 (SAV 2831, 164; SAN 6432, no. 32). This is earlier than but closer to Brandeau's claimed departure, but months away from April or May.

Thirty-four boats and/or their cargo were reported damaged travelling between Bayonne and Amsterdam and other sites in The Netherlands from 1700-1739. Seven of these were in the 1730s, the period of Brandeau / La Fargue's journeys.¹⁸⁵ All of these journeys took place between the months of November and February, nowhere near April or May when Esther Brandeau purportedly left Bayonne. Of the records pertaining to these seven captains, only one attributes damages sustained to cargo or ship to an incident with the sandbar of Bayonne, and that is in the case of Evert de Weerdt in 1732.¹⁸⁶ Could this have been the captain, or the ship?

A notary record dated February 10, 1732 places on de Weerdt's single-masted ship six people, among them at least three crew in addition to the captain, and a cargo of wine that spilled into the river near Bayonne in January, seventeen clients' cargo of wine in fact, including some belonging to the captain (SAN 9432). That the ship arrived back to Amsterdam allows us to question an assumption that has travelled through the centuries from the first inscription of Esther Brandeau dated 1738: that there was a shipwreck. The ship lost on the sandbar has been interpreted, by myself included and by McKay, Lasry and others, as a wreck rather than an unmooring or other disorientation or trouble of weather complicated by negotiating the sandbar. The sandbar in fact was the subject of much outrage and frustration in Bayonne in the period, as a series of documents attests. A letter to Bayonne's magistrates and merchants dated December 12, 1733 makes reference to "les fréquents naufrages"—the frequent wrecks—on the bar (AMB EE 60, 15). The author blames the accidents on ignorant, possibly drunk and/or opportunistic and unregulated pilots. He proposes a chain of command to reduce wrecks. A royal ordinance from 1740 mandates that French vessels cannot be given preference over Dutch vessels, suggesting that perhaps Dutch vessels had been more likely to face danger on the sandbar because of preferential treatment given to French boats (EE 60, 56). Those appointed *pilotte* seemed to change every year in the early 1730s and problems with the sandbar are recorded as early as 1731 (*ibid* 3, 4, 6, 7, 16, 48). New rules were mandated for pilots of the sandbar in 1738. The testimony says, "... que le navire s'étant perdu sur la barre de Bayonne..."—that the ship having been lost on the sandbar of Bayonne. It goes on to say that Esther was "... sauvée à terre avec un des membres de l'équipage..."—saved to land with one of the members of the crew. The ship may not in fact have wrecked; these Amsterdam shipping records show that the same ship subsequently sailed, even though the trouble it got into was common and it may have required unloading or rescue of its crew and passengers, and loss

¹⁸⁵These captains and dates of travel during which damage was sustained were: Evert de Weert [Waerdt] January, 1732 (SAV 2828, 71), Job Ijsbrandtz December, 1734 (SAV 2830, 75), Focke Bakker November, 1736 (SAV 2831, 164), Theunis Brouwer November, 1736 (SAV 2831, 139), Jean La Foucade December, 1737 (SAV 2831, 179), Charles de Brocq January, 1737 (SAV 2831, 121) and Tjeerd Theunis February, 1738 (SAV 2832, 5). Tjeerd Theunis seems to sustain damage in port and to have never departed.

¹⁸⁶De Weert also captained the *Cornelius* travelling from Bordeaux to Amsterdam, and made a report of damage sustained in December, 1732 (SAV 2829, 30v.), a mere month before damage sustained to the *Juffrouw Brigitta* on the Bayonne sandbar.

or wreck of cargo.

A declaration by three of the crew members on Evert de Weerd's ship claimed there was a cargo of wine and some *zoethout*—licorice—and that cargo was lost because of a storm encountered, not because of any faulty issue with the ship, and that upon arrival in Amsterdam everything was unloaded and delivered with the exception of some licorice and some wine. The ship therefore made it back to Amsterdam with some cargo. The three members of the crew declare that they didn't keep anything of the cargo for themselves, and that they don't know anyone else who did. It's not clear how much cargo was missing, but there is some added text by the notary between lines in the report, which raises suspicion about additional people on board not named. We know that there were six people on board, of whom we know the captain and these three crew members who testify. Two are unnamed and perhaps suspicioned in these crew members' declarations to the notary, presumably with regard to suggested disappearance of cargo that did indeed arrive to Amsterdam. Were these two passengers? Was one of them Brandeau? Why my focus on *this* ship and captain? After all, the testimony says the name of the captain was Geoffroy. This is Evert de Weerd. And this is in 1732, a February claim to a notary, not in the moon of April or May.

In fact I believe the names of the ships of the above captains can give us unexpected evidence. The ship could have been the one both Focke Bakker and Evert de Weerd commanded, the *Juffrouw Brigita*, and the captain could have been Evert de Weerd. Why do I make such a claim on the one-masted *Juffrouw Brigita*, when the captain was named as Geoffroy in the testimony and no ship name was given? First, the Amsterdam shipping news of April 15, 1733 puts Evert de Weert in port in Amsterdam on this same ship the *Juffrouw Brigita* about to head for Bayonne (SC), therefore in “la lune d'avril ou de mai”—the moon of April or May—claimed in the original testimony, just over five years before Jacques La Fargue erupts into knowability at Quebec in September 1738. But what of his name? Perform the first word in the names of this ship, a common word in ship names,¹⁸⁷ out loud in Dutch. Then perform out loud in French the name Brandeau purportedly gave for the captain of the ship—*Geoffroy*—who was to take her to family in Amsterdam. Phonetically you have something so similar—across the drag of five years' memory and the translation of that drag across languages, one possibly unknown to Brandeau / La Fargue—as to be almost the same word to that ear, theirs, and certainly to mine. The supposed shipwreck bends the text of the testimony toward an answer: Yes, there was a Dutch ship, yes it travelled between Bayonne and Amsterdam, yes she could have been on it. It was in port in Bayonne in late April or early May 1733. It was also in Bayonne four months prior, headed for Amsterdam when it ran into trouble with the sandbar. Where did it go after, or were the ship and its captain and all but one of its crew disappeared? This ship and captain constitute inconclusive evidence, but this is the one ship that travelled between Bayonne and Amsterdam that had trouble on

¹⁸⁷ Job Ijsbrandtz sailed the *Juffrouw Maria*, and Tjeerd Theunis who never left port sailed the *Juffrouw Wilhelmina Catharina*, but these were in the winter. It is possible that they also sailed to and from Bayonne in “la lune d'avril ou de mai” but did not claim damages or incident with the Bayonne sandbar. I do not have records of Bakker and de Weerd's travels without incident, which could have been frequent. More detailed work in the Amsterdam shipping news for the early 1730s could clarify, but remains to be completed.

the sandbar, and claimed damages. It is possible that damages were not claimed later—in the moon of April or May, for instance—but that the story of prior damage was in circulation and utilized. It is also possible that our protagonist misremembered timing. We can't know.

If this is indeed the vessel and the captain, this would be another piece of evidence to anchor¹⁸⁸ the story in the testimony to a texture of living, alongside the evidence of the widow baker Servanne Guillou found in Saint-Malo, and the Besnard and Lespagnol captains in found in Saint-Malo and Bordeaux. Here the phonetics of names and all the yielding to insistence and bending of evidence we have thus far followed prepared my ears to “find” Geoffroy. I would end this section with a return to the small-town French *cabotage* circuits of the Bernards and note that lo and behold, I find again the *Juffrow Brigita* in Saint-Malo, captained by Focke Bakker on June 24, 1739. The boat is registered as *Le dogre la demoiselle Bregida d'Amsterdam*. Yves, François and Jacques Besnard are still active in and out of Saint-Malo at this time. They might well have been familiar with the *Demoiselle Bregida* and its captains. Might such probable proximity between captains have posed a danger to Brandeau / La Fargue? With the Dutch captain she was a woman, with the Besnards, a man. This could be the kind of risk that kept the multicrosser on the move.

“Findings”

Driven by desire and productive of speculative “evidence,” what I call a “heretic methodology” posits the presence of “what isn't there” in locales quite peripheral to the known Jewish communities of the day, such as Bordeaux and Bayonne. Further it posits a central role for widowed women, duped or not by the multicrosser, in order to facilitate their living and movements. The heretic methodology of the amateur in the archives also posits the possibility that the multicrosser moved into contact across Jewish communities often imagined as distinct though living alongside one another in for instance Bordeaux: Avignonnais, Tudesques and Portuguais, Jews and New Christians among each (Nahon 2003, 104-105). How did traces of these groups converge in places peripheral to the main centres, traces made through expulsions and through the rural wanderings of travelling salesmen in search of clients throughout Brittany?

My heart races as I feel myself standing on the Champ-Dolent again. I remember noticing the Rue de Juifs on the other side of the river. I feel again the rush of suspect names rediscovered as I map them to locations populated by Guillous, this emergent from the laughter of the first Augustin I find, a monastery on a street and in a neighbourhood rife with tailors. And each of these feelings cycling me back over the streets, the maps, the names, the occupations, the numbers, the puzzle as it vibrates up from under ink to flow in space and course through me. I feel a kind of love renewed for, in service to, this subject of mine. I feel a kind of generosity seeping from the

¹⁸⁸The pun was unintentional, but the suggestion of the word “anchor” is more complicated than the implication of securing, if one imagines a ship anchored yet violently tossed like in the storms that Evert de Weert claimed to have faced trying to navigate the Bayonne sandbar, and the ice and storms he and his crew suffered en route back to Amsterdam near Texel (SAN 6432, no. 32). Focke Bakker described similar *contrarie-winds* and stormy weather as the basis for his claim of damages (SAN 9072, no. 887).

unreliable traces and the insistent sense together left like bread crumbs to allow me to follow, to stay with her / him / them. I wonder about a fear of discovery in tension with a need to be discovered after successful disappearance. I think of protections enacted in the giving of testimony, and how perhaps, these reached further than a single life. Did they protect what could have been networks? Were they protecting themselves by protecting these networks? The revealing of a widowed-woman-centred network, crypto-Jewish or Jewish-descended or not, proximate to Jewish presence or not, between Saint-Malo and Rennes would be ground-breaking if it weren't so contingent. It seems it can only be claimed as a suggestion. But the persistence of improbable fragments crafted from affective sense, haunted feeling, these make it, for me, more than "mere."

These networks are imagined into being not from the total clarity of textual evidence, but from their fragmented *possibilities*, however "improbable," stitched together by a 21st century body moving through space, sensing through transtemporal and physical proximity. This is an historiographics of proximity, proximity that both catalyzes the acquisition of tacit knowledge and summons an embodied tacit knowledge into motion, as it enacts the archive.¹⁸⁹ Tacit knowledge, the knowledge of habitus. (The latter tacit I initially mistyped, aptly, as tactic.) What occurs is multifold. Even if a single archival document were to shift "the entire story," seeming to undermine the tellings thus far told, the process that I have described accumulates and is catalyzed by hauntings to such a degree that the fetish object, the archival document, is asked to answer under the weight of other knowings (Smith 1998, Intro para 18). Perhaps the "entire story," which can never be known, exists most completely in the simultaneously held, multiple, incomplete and often contradictory possibilities.

Geoffroy. Juffrouw. I find my subject's negotiation of their circumstances through my own negotiations in the archives. I look not just for traces like a sleuth in the shipping records, but for how to bend traces when they seem on the surface to be nothing at all. I am able to do so by feeling through ephemera, for that excess which moves, transtemporally, through some kind of affective resonance nearly impossible to explain, other than to say it is the past insisting upon the present, and it is desire (Gordon 2008 [1997]). Something sometimes momentary, sometimes seething in its presence functioning perhaps not just transtemporally but across vast geographies. The testimony becomes, in this amalgam of ways of reading, a record of a way of thinking, of negotiating, of moving through a textured living. An agency of *theirs* emerges at the interface between *performing a reading* and *what is read*, even as we do not definitively "find" them.

After this, the fact of a tombstone

Long after I compile the bulk of this chapter and assemble it into telling, I learn that there is a stone, recently uncovered, in the Bayonne Jewish cemetery, excavated by Philippe Pierret of the Jewish Museum in Brussels, Belgium. His yet incomplete project is a multi-year labour of unearthing from beneath a foot or more of earth the tombstones that have for centuries been invisible. The tombstone in question dates the death of one

¹⁸⁹I thank, again, Melina Young, whose own work on tacit knowledge, informs this notion of the proximate.

Esther Perreira Brandon to August 30, 1744, 26 years old if this is our Esther.¹⁹⁰ There is also the tombstone of a male named David Perreira Brandon, who died on August 19, 1759. Esther Perreira Brandon could be our subject. David Perreira Brandon could be her father. They could just as easily both be children, and neither connected to the story at hand.¹⁹¹

But what if this deceased in August 1744 *is* her? Twenty-six years old, approximately, at the time of her death, just shy of six years after arrival in New France. I am sitting in Philippe's office and we are searching the inventory together in front of his computer. Esther Perreira Brandon. The moment of what could be discovery is complex, contradictory. The elation of possible discovery is utterly incompatible with a simultaneously conflicted feeling associated with finding. A series of violences flashes through me at the thought of such an early death. In childbirth? Through illness? Long? Painful? At her own hand? Someone else's? Finding as finale, its own kind of violence; one would expect relief, no more searching to be done. That is that. She is found. Beneath stone and the earth of centuries on top of it, now pulled away. But instead, dread enters the tension I have navigated thus far, forming a triangle: doubt, desire, dread.

I find two daughters of a David Perreire Brandão listed in the Dotar—the Amsterdam charitable society that pays dowries for needy girls, and supports widows and the poor, in Amsterdam and much farther afield. David Perreire Brandão is listed as from Amsterdam. His daughter Ribca first appears in 1729-1730 and is there until 1732-1733.¹⁹² Judit is there between 1736-1746.¹⁹³ Judit is 20 years old when she is first listed as the *orphan* rather than daughter of David Perreire Brandão, according to her handwritten petition in 1738.¹⁹⁴ In 1742, she is still petitioning for support, as she is in 1749.¹⁹⁵ In the years 1733-1736, the first years of our Esther's adventures, the Dotar registers no daughters of David Perreira Brandão. Could it be that this disappeared daughter, Esther, is sibling to Judit and Ribca who live in Amsterdam? Is Esther from Bayonne illegitimate, as McKay's narrative assumes? This can't be the same David Perreira Brandon buried in the Bayonne cemetery in 1759, if a daughter claims her father dead in 1738.

The fact of a tombstone does little to restrain the multiplying possibilities.¹⁹⁶ "The fact of a tombstone" is a phrase that echoes the title of a poem and a collection by Adrienne Rich, "The Fact of a Doorframe" (1984):

190Pierret provided me with the unpublished inventory-in-progress in March 2014. The record of this tombstone says this is a woman. No date of birth nor age nor parent's name is given. It is likely that the indication of "femme" stands simply for "female." Of the more than 2000 gravestones inventoried, none is attributed to a child. Lasry chooses a Perreira lineage for his fictional Esther in his novel.

191 Rachel Perreira Brandon dies on December 26, 1744. Other Perreira Brandon females die in the period 1750-1775 in Bayonne, but none are named Esther. Esther Silva Valle Brandam dies on January 16, 1779, at 61 years old if this is our Esther. There are no Brandeaus nor Brandãos in this inventory. Brandam and Brandon are possible names for our subject, who comes to us as Brandeau, a translation made in New France.

192SAD, Termos D, 796, 825, 836.

193SAD, Termos E, 65, 74, 86, 95, 110, 123, 143, 157, 169, 184.

194SAD, 1155B, 060-061, 704, 922-923.

195SAD, 1156A, 19-20, 389. In 1742 Judit names herself as daughter, and in 1749 as orphan.

196I have found several David Brandons (spellings various) in Amsterdam records, from many locations, such as Hamburg, Amsterdam, Baeza in Spain, Mogadouro in Portugal, and Bayonne. A review of the relationship between these Perreira Brandons in the Dotar, through cross-listing with death records in Amsterdam and Bayonne registries might help clarify lineages between the Perreira Brandon men whose daughters are in the Dotar. Clarifying these extensive family trees is beyond the possibilities of this dissertation.

The Fact of a Doorframe
*means there is something to hold
onto with both hands
while slowly thrusting my forehead against the wood
and taking it away*
...
*Now, again, poetry,
violent, arcane, common,
hewn of the commonest living substance
into archway, portal, frame
I grasp for you, your bloodstained splinters, your
ancient and stubborn poise
—as the earth trembles—
burning out from the grain*

From Adrienne Rich, *The Fact of a Doorframe: Poems Selected and New 1950-1984* (1984: iv)

There are holes between the fact of a tombstone and the life of the multicrosser, gaps navigable through doubt and desire and also dread, compelled by the demand for a telling, a just telling. The tombstone is a fact and an opening even as it proposes closure. I wonder why this tombstone comes at this precise moment. I wonder what I would *not* have encountered had I found the tombstone at the outset of the research. The possibility of grief becomes a new driver.¹⁹⁷ Whose grief, facing a tombstone?

A fact, a tombstone, a doorway: material seeped through with transtemporal touch, evidence of scathing making its demands, and the one leaning, longing.

Summary

Doubt and Desire has been both an investigation of a way of doing, as much as it has been a laying out of new pieces of possible evidence pertaining to the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. The archival search yields both a catalogue of the sensed improbable, and possible evidence more classically understood as evidence. Reading the archival sources as I did is a form of autoethnographic performance of enacting the record, as we will see in the next section. Let us now revisit in closing what findings I have proposed because of, or some

¹⁹⁷ Writes Carla Freccero, “[I]t can be said that the ghost arrives both from within and from without as a part of the self that is also – and foremost – a part of the world. The ghost’s return is, in other words, not quite material yet phenomenal nevertheless and ... its appearance is the “material and immaterial evidence” of grief” (2013, 349).

might argue despite, the ways I have worked. The documentary proposals are as follows: Servanne Guillou, the widow baker in Saint-Malo; the possibly Jewish Petit family of Saint-Malo, whose presence in my findings predates accepted historical accounts of Jewish presence there; a widow Chourio in Saint-Jean-de-Luz who could be of the family Churiau accounted for in the testimony, and who represents one of the only female first person voices in records I have searched; the Guillous of the butcher's quarter and tailoring quarter near the Augustins religious order in Rennes; the Dutch ship the Juffrouw Brigita and contesting whether or not there was an actual wreck of the ship bound for Amsterdam; the Bernard / Besnard and Lespagnol families of *cabotage* captains with whom I propose Brandeau might have travelled in and out of Bordeaux, and who may have provided access to networks in Saint-Malo as well; the Perreira Brandon sisters found in Amsterdam Dotar records, daughters of David, perhaps siblings to Esther; and a tombstone in Bayonne's Jewish cemetery that could be that of our multicrosser. Through reading along and askance, I have revealed the original testimony to be possibly a record of strategic telling. I raised the possibility of a widowed-centred network that facilitated our protagonist's movements, one bolstered by networks and knowledge gained through the *cabotage* networks. I suggested the possibility of Jewish or formerly Jewish proximities in locales in the story where they might not be expected. None of these are conclusive findings, but discoveries as proposals that open the story to a texture of living. Through all of this, most importantly, I have shown that even in the absence of an abundance of conclusive evidence pinpointing the subject in place and time, tracing the search, however unconventional or because unconventional, can produce a rich texture of an historical subject's possible living.

Doubt and Desire has entailed a telling which destabilizes the certainty of documentary fact through working with other kinds of knowing and knowledge in order to read documentary and other kinds of evidence. Such a method is attentive to and foregrounds how *the way* we read shapes what is told. This has been an effort in not relegating to the untellable that which confounds or contravenes convention. In the next section, which serves as a bridge between Part II: Archival Sense and Part III: Becoming Archive, I will dwell on the methodology I have just enacted, and its relationship to interventions into the notion of "evidence" in historical practice. In what follows, we will address the methodology I have followed, through the notions of haunting and desire as queer, feminist and decolonial strategies, thereby providing the literature review and conceptual attentions that underpin the sensate telling that has been presented thus far.

The Bridge: An Epilogue – Prologue

The archive is radically transformed when it becomes a *different kind of performance*. A kind of transformation happens, I hope ... when that [archival] knowledge is completed by or opens to or is exceeded by that second seemingly unspeakable kind of knowledge. It's way more knowledge. ... The difference between "working in archives" and *being* or *embodying* archive ... for Jacqui Alexander is spirit. The power of the archive — its discursive power, its power as knowledge — is diminished, or changed through this kind of performance of it. There is a relationship though between the knowledges, it's not a question of abandoning one for the other ... that's what I'm interested in.

Heather Hermant, Draft email as journal entry, April 2, 2012, in response to "Revelations," a reading by M. Jacqui Alexander, William Doo Auditorium, University of Toronto, March 23, 2012

Introduction

In *Along the Archival Grain*, Ann Laura Stoler describes her experience of working in the Dutch colonial archives, looking for and reading letters that travelled between the Dutch metropole and colonial Indonesia (Stoler 2009). The researcher's body moving through the national library in Den Haag brings into conversation two separate dossiers of materials about the same people, dossiers that have been there for decades or longer but on separate floors (241). Without Stoler's body moving, these dossiers collecting dust would never meet each other. She makes them proximate through partly accidental encounter, and a story falls forth. This most literal illustration speaks to the broader question of the telling of history: the link between "evidences," and their interpretation and arrangement into telling, is the teller herself.

In *Archival Sense* I enacted a dramatic shift from Part I of the dissertation, *Eruptions into Knowability*. The switch in style and tone, in genre, has the effect of retrospectively queering that voice of the first part of the dissertation, so different as to be strange, so different that it seems to have been authored by another author, so different that it might queer the voice to come. This is both the move toward autoethnography and toward the voice multiple. It is concurrently a move from seeing toward touching. This Epilogue serves as a bridge between the heretic methodology through which I enacted the archival record in *Archival Sense* and what will transpire in Part III, *Becoming Archive*. I moved from reading in Part I to touching or sensing in Part II. I will embody or become in Part III. This Epilogue, then, also serves as a Prologue to Part III: *Becoming Archive*, where I consider my performance work based on the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue.

Here in *The Bridge: An Epilogue – Prologue*, I explicitly lay out some theoretical links between the erotic, desire and haunting in their relationship to historical practice. I do so through the notion of affect as evidence. My purpose is to theorize the methodology I have enacted in *Archival Sense* as a proposal in answer to the central question of the dissertation: How can one perform a queer, feminist, decolonial reading / telling of the tale of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue? The proposal lies in validating multiple kinds of evidence. Herein I give the theoretical basis for working across what we might understand as disparate yet entwined genres of evidence— affect and document. To lay out the links between the erotic, desire and haunting in their relationship to historical practice, I do the following: I ground the heretic methodology of *Archival Sense* as an amateur methodology of disidentification (Muñoz 1999); I follow a link between amateur and queer, qualities that characterize this methodology (Dinshaw 2012, 1999); I do so against a backdrop of the gendered history of the discipline of History (B. Smith 1998); I lay out the centrality of desire to the heretic methodology that I have enacted, through Audre Lorde's understanding of the erotic (1984); and of haunting according to Avery Gordon's rendering of the social in the burgeoning field of spectrality studies (2008 [1997]). While this may seem an overwhelming additive list of theorists and concepts to draw from, what I am intending to show are the inherent overlaps between these concerns, links that I conclude are necessary to a queer, feminist, decolonial approach to the tale at hand. I make these moves then in order to deepen the understanding of the methodology that I have performed, one that

pushes acceptable limits of desire and haunting in historical research beyond simply self-conscious awareness of positionality, to their use as central methodological tools. My contribution is precisely in demonstrating these links as they underpin the case study of my own archival research into the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. In doing so, I also innovate through the application of disidentification not to popular culture as Muñoz does, but to the practice of archival research on 18th century history. I propose a queer effect of doing such disidentificatory history, which I have already introduced in *Archival Sense*: I approach the person who is my subject while allowing them continued movement, I thicken the landscape of possibilities, which is to say I approach the texture of their living while not capturing them. Herein I elaborate more explicitly on how affect as evidence can function in relation to other forms of evidence.

This laying out of theoretical terrain serves to retroactively affirm and to situate the methodology enacted in *Archival Sense*, against the typical arc of scholarship where the theory usually comes first. Here, the methodology is enacted in such a way as to produce through and to document the sense(s) of it—as in, the way in which I have worked through bodily sense—and this enactment is in turn entered into conversation with theoretical landscapes more explicitly. I enact first and then move to theoretical grounding in order to have a concrete autoethnographic illustration of how these notions of haunting, affect, the erotic, and desire actually play out at the interface between evidences. This may be a rare elaboration of what I referred to at the outset of this *Bridge* in citing my email as journal entry in relation to the work of M. Jacqui Alexander: the vicissitudes of working with unconventional, difficult and dangerous to name knowledges. These elaborations allow me to make the links that can clarify my heretic methodology as it relates to queer, feminist and decolonial practices.

Troubling knowledge: Eros, amateurism and archival autoethnography

What has just transpired in *Archival Sense* draws from several key impulses, each of them in some way or another pointing to instability, to contested and situated knowledges, in the plural, to the centrality of the subjectivity of the researcher to the knowability of her subject, and to the erotics underpinning the search in the work of the historian. The aim has been to demonstrate how an archive itself is an enactment, is performed into being by the one who activates it, in my case by combing through records, by turning the pages, by immersion in documentary evidence, by the desire and as I will elaborate below, the haunting that compels the search. It is a demonstration of one tactic of *how* one can work with archives, not relegating methods deemed “amateur” or “not rigorous” or “scandalous” as unworthy of recounting, of not accepting that only hard archival facts merit telling, of not demoting “intuitive” and other modes of knowledge to secondary status or mere speculation. Colin Davis, in writing about working with the spectral—that is to say with the ghostly, with haunting—places what he calls the “most daring” deconstructive work within a tension between patient attention to existing texts i.e. close reading on the one hand, and “exhilarating speculation” on the other (C. Davis 2013, 56). I hope that what I have accomplished thus far is a demonstration of the productivity of residence within that tension, which in *Archival*

Sense I have called a tension between *doubt* and *desire*, a tension infused with dread and a yearning for justice. It is a question of not relegating to the other side of the frame *how* what erupts into the frame comes to be knowable.

Troubling the archive and accounting for the *how* of archival research is certainly not new to the practice of history.¹⁹⁸ Antoinette Burton introduces *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, by describing the papers by historians in the collection as “self-conscious ethnographies ... narratives about how archives are created, drawn upon and experienced by those who use them to write history” (Burton 2005, Intro para 6). The collection, she writes, stems from

... a move in the Western academy (and also beyond it) to recognize that all archives are “figured.” That is, they all have dynamic relationships, not just to the past and the present, but to the fate of regimes, the physical environment, the serendipity of bureaucrats, and the care and neglect of archivists as well (ibid).

Further, she notes that archival experience is shaped by national identity, gender, race, and class, as well as by training and status (Intro para 11). She highlights that such archive stories reveal “the varied economies of desire—those systems of material and symbolic power which structure experiences of yearning for and seduction by “the past”—at the heart of archival encounters” (para 13). Clearly Burton's collection addresses concerns and challenges I put forth about working with archival material. But the difference here is in my pressing against acceptable limits in the discussion of the status of desire and haunting not merely as requiring self-conscious acknowledgement but as vital methodological tools, even though or because they are interfering forces.

With a view to historical / archival research as (also) *ethnography*, I demonstrate the *autoethnographic underpinnings* or impulse of archival research itself and the possibilities such a view might offer in the way of knowledge production. Such an orientation troubles any presumed detachment of the ethnographer from those she studies, any claim of the researcher as not entangled with the lives or subjects she studies. I look precisely to the power of erotic entanglement as a means through which to deepen knowledge of the subjects researched. I take seriously as an invocation that “...new knowledge is part of the stuff that the erotic is made of...” (Wekker 2006, 16).¹⁹⁹ Here I understand the erotic as desire operating on many levels (not just the sexual as it is often taken to signify). Eros in its etymology encompasses love, multifold. Desire is its expression. Desire for justice has an erotic underpinning. Desire to approach my subjects from/in eras not my own has an erotic underpinning. Audre Lorde writes of the erotic as a source of power containing the energy for change. “The erotic,” she says, “... ”

¹⁹⁸I will address meanings and deployments of “archive” in Part III. Here, I am generally referring to archives as documentary records.
¹⁹⁹Wekker's *The Politics of Passion* is one of few anthropological studies that goes beyond a self-reflexive participant-observer status and practices erotic entanglement and deep immersion within the community researched, as methodology. In Wekker's text, the erotic underpinnings of knowledge production are central (Wekker 2006). See also Newton (2000).

is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing” (Lorde 1984, 54). She calls the erotic an assertion of life force and creative energy, that which connects the political, spiritual, mental, emotional and physical through the sensual (55-56). The erotic precedes the discourse that names it. It is, Lorde argues, the nurturer of knowledge (56). As Carolyn Dinshaw puts it, “love and knowledge are as inextricable as the links in chain mail” (2012, xiv). Dinshaw highlights, in fact, that the root of the word “amateur” is “love” (xv), which suggests that to privilege the detached position in research may be to suppress the erotic. The erotic becomes associated with the amateur. A heretic methodology takes the erotic seriously. Sense before it enters consciousness and naming—what some would call affect—is a driver of the search. I will soon draw links between the erotic, and haunting, but first I consider how erotic entanglement has fared in scholarship.

It has been in anthropology where the position of the researcher and the dangers and taboos of entanglement in relation to “the field” have been most urgently confronted. History is not immune to this need. Historical anthropology, as exemplified by Ann Laura Stoler, gives attention to the historical archive as an ethnographic field for the study of its inscribers (Stoler 2009). In recent decades, anthropology has abundantly problematized the position of the researcher, but the taboo against the researcher’s erotic desire poses greater risks, particularly for women researchers (Kulick and Wilson 1995). It is a risk here too, to talk of entanglement. If what Haitian historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot writes is true—that “the historian’s position is officially unmarked: it is that of the nonhistorical observer”—then the amateur marks herself, her work is marked as ideological, and it is thus dismissable (Trouillot 1995, 151). What if we were to look at the terrain of archival research as an ethnographic field in which desire is deeply implicated? What happens when we interject a queer Jew-ish female desiring subjectivity into the act of archival research?

In what typically counts as academic production, the body and experience of the researcher/translator tend to be absented from view.²⁰⁰ Ann Laura Stoler’s analysis of Dutch colonial bureaucrats’ experiences, with which I began this Epilogue, is an interesting scholarly example to consider. Hers is an important analysis concerned with the “affective registers of imperial governance” in the colonies and the metropole (2009). Stoler is an historical anthropologist who maintains some distance from the story at hand. But occasionally she erupts into intimate presence. On page 182 of *Along the Archival Grain* she comes across a single mislabeled letter that throws her previous knowledge into question. We feel her excitement and disbelief, and we may know intimately through similar experiences how contingent our archival knowledge really is. On page 273 of her 278-page analysis, she suddenly erupts her own affective registers into intimate view by citing from her own journals her frustration with one of her subjects: “My own marginalia escapes my efforts to temper judgement and remain observant, to not let my impatience get in the way.” It is the only time Stoler explicitly and directly references the emotional experience of doing her research, and the only time she quotes from her journal. And yet, that judgment fought against, that desire and anger and resonance, underpins her telling. What I find so striking about this

²⁰⁰In performance, the researcher/translator is, contrary to this, in full view, as we will see in Part III: Becoming Archive.

moment of quoting the journal in *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* is just how jarring it is. Suddenly the author, whose reasoned scholarly investment is clear throughout the book, becomes intimate with us. She exposes the visceral emotionality of the archival journey, the personal investment and longing of the researcher, and it seems so out of place. Perhaps because it is rare. It is unusual for scholars of history to put themselves so squarely in the frame.²⁰¹ Historians and other scholars often shy away from self-inclusion. Those who do not shy away are often faced with the perception that to do so is quaint or worse, indulgent, narcissistic. Feminist scholarship—standpoint theory, intersectionality, queer of colour critique—has shown the vital significance of the researcher's position in the means and outcomes in production (or suppression) of knowledge.²⁰² Attention to the researcher herself is a feminist concern. I assert that one can maintain *multiple* observances, and produce from the often fraught transit between, through narration of that very dialogue.

Queer time and amateur sensibility

Carolyn Dinshaw argues in *How Soon is Now?* that *queer* and *amateur* are “mutually reinforcing terms” (2012, 5). Dinshaw's source materials are early medieval English texts, and her principal concern is temporal being, and the considerable differences to be found in how time is lived and experienced, as multiple times. Her purpose is to show disjunction in temporality as time's queerness, which she does through the figure of the amateur reaching across eras, longing across eras, and in a sense, becoming across eras. Dinshaw writes that the amateur is not only amateur for not knowing and adhering to the tenets of whatever it is so-called proper historians do, but also for the attachments to her subjects, which follow from and which feed living multiple time frames concurrently. Dinshaw writes:

For modernist time, time-as-measurement hitched to Western European concepts of progress toward a singular goal is also ... the time of specialization, expertise, professionalization; amateurism is everything the professional leaves behind on the modern train of forward progress (2012, 20-21).

Attachment to the object of attention characterizes amateurism (22), says Dinshaw, “attachment in a detached world” (31). Such attachment, she suggests, is the stuff of living a temporal queerness. It means living within multiple temporalities, asynchronous times.

²⁰¹ Stoler uses the metaphor of the watermark on the digital photo as suggestive of embeddedness of affect within the grain of the story, suggesting what seeps through a protective absence. In this journal moment, Stoler's own fingerprint comes into the foreground.

²⁰² The bibliography on these movements within feminisms plural is enormous. To name just a few, see for example Crenshaw (2012) (who is credited with first deploying the term “intersectionality”), Collins (1990), Harstock (2004), Harding (2004, 1986), Haraway (1988), (the latter four credited with contributing “feminist standpoint theory,” Haraway having deployed the phrase “situated knowledges”), Lorde (1982, 1984), Minh-ha (1989, 1991), Moraga and Anzaldúa (1984), Rich (1986).

For Dinshaw, an amateur sensibility is one worth nurturing for its potential productivity: “[I]f modernity depends on (among other things) a subject-object split, then one approach to non-modernity (which comprehends “the past”) involves trying to explore subjective attachment rather than objective detachment” (32fn129). She fosters what she calls queer historiographies, where touching across time is understood as a grounding for knowledge production, and is an expression or effect of this attachment. This touch would erroneously be assumed to mean wholly identifying with the subject who is transtemporally touched; this touch entails a sense of connection to but also a sense of difference from the subject of another era (ibid). Dinshaw's is a pursuit of historical analysis through “a queer historical impulse, an impulse toward making connections across time” (1999, 1). This impulse, she says, stems from queer desire for a past, one which can “extend the resources for self- and community-building into even the distant past” (ibid). Queer histories, says Dinshaw, “are made of affective relations” (12), including relations across time, that can make “new communities with past figures who elude resemblance to us but with whom we can be connected partially by virtue of shared marginality, queer positionality” (39).²⁰³ Dinshaw privileges amateur as queer in so far as the amateur lives time queerly in her examples, and in so far as the amateur functions through desire, through attachment. She sees amateur and queer as critical orientations toward time and to the heteronormative. The purpose of the queer reach of radical attachment across time is to work consciously and reflectively with the compulsion to touch across time, to stay attuned to the impulse and consequences of the reach rather than to universalize identitarian concerns across eras. Doing history queerly requires an amateur sensibility, Dinshaw seems to say, and doing history of eras prior to the modern might require operating with a non-modern sensibility, however impossible. Operating from an amateur sensibility may be one such means, a means dependent upon affect, upon sense, upon the body.

I am compelled by the following question as a matter of methodology: What happens if the archival

²⁰³Dinshaw extends her umbrella of “queer” to subjects who lived outside of norms of their own eras, with particular attention to norms of desire not necessarily sexual, while also living according to non-normative senses of time. Here, I am understanding queer as to be found in the transtemporal touch that Dinshaw works with. Further, I understand queer as a research lens of the researcher, myself. It may seem I am extending an identitarian umbrella of queer to Brandeau / La Fargue themselves, anachronistically. First, we cannot know whether and how this subject performed their sexuality, nor can we know what their desires were. To speak of queerness in/through/with the archive is not to speak exclusively and necessarily of sexuality, nor is it—and this is important—to speak exclusively of the subject studied. It is also importantly to speak of the entanglements of subject *and searcher*. We should understand queer as an orientation in living, in reading, in material circumstances in relation, and which has temporal dimensions. I produce Brandeau / La Fargue into queerness *in concert with and because of* the queer transtemporal desire that my looking at this multicrosser seduces. This entanglement is the effect of radical attachment. It is possible to understand Brandeau / La Fargue's living to be anachronistically understood as “queer” though, despite a certain contradiction inherent in doing so given how I have contextualized their story; that is, I am attuned to a possible contradiction between having called 18th century cross-dressing among women a “tradition” in early modern Europe, while at the same time assuming that to cross-dress would be against norms, or cause one to be marginal. Something that may have been a “tradition” in the sense of common, need not be taken to mean in sync with expectations of the time. Further, I have shown that we need to take crossing here as multicrossing, for their crossing was not only across gender. I make the transtemporal assignation of “queer” fully aware of debates within queer historiography, sexuality studies and literary studies particularly of the co-called pre-modern, about the pros and cons of the impulse to create continuity and/or similarity between practices across eras. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to delineate debates around historicism/unhistoricism, particularly as it has played out in lesbian, gay and queer studies. For a recent critique of “queer unhistoricism” in what scholars like Muñoz, Freccero and Dinshaw call queer historiography, see Valerie Traub (2013), along with responses by Carla Freccero and Madhavi Menon and by Traub to these (Freccero, Menon and Traub 2013). For an overview of historicism, periodization and lesbian, gay and queer studies, and an overview of the promise of a queer historiography she calls fantasmatic historiography, see Freccero (2011).

scholar is viewed as a performer, a translator and an enactor who takes story and source in through body through the lens of her locational experiences, her dispositions, judgement and impatience, rage and resonance, her transtemporal desire for her subject, that which haunts her, in order to tell? Foregrounding such a question while avowing my lack of training in and endorsement by what Trouillot calls “the historical guild” (19) makes me an amateur in the archives, patiently attentive to the archival record while driven desirously by other forms of evidence that compel speculation, that compel approaching the subject of my search.

Gendering and coloniality in the practice of history

Having laid out how amateur and queer are linked, we can turn to the history of the practice of history to see the gendering of amateur, and the amateur's investment in the colonial lens. There is a gendered history to the emergence of Western European historical practice as a discipline, in which women amateurs figure prominently, as Bonnie G. Smith argues in *The Gender of History* (1998). The practice of History emerges through colonialism which it continues to reproduce, as Trouillot demonstrates (1995).²⁰⁴ Smith historicizes the practice of history at the point of its emergence in the nineteenth century, demonstrating the ways in which the discipline has been built upon a fetishizing of the document (1998, Intro para 17). Its emergence entailed a disciplining away from the amateur and literary traditions done largely by women writers, eclectic in their methods, modes of telling and intents, and *toward* the male erudite, expert and detached, while wholly dependent upon an appropriation of women's unacknowledged intellectual labour and the knowledge gleaned through their amateur practices (Intro para 14).

Smith revisits and legitimizes such trauma-laced post-French Revolution tellings as those of the difficult character of Germaine De Staël, whose research and writing Smith calls narcotic, erotic baroque history, given De Staël's prolific production under the influence of opium, "promiscuous" sexual practices and a sense of herself being inhabited by ghosts always immanent (1998 ch 1; 1996). De Staël's histories are seeped through with the recent trauma of revolution and death of the French Revolution, says Smith, who lays out the ways in which such historiographies driven by recent trauma offer a kind of access to historical context and content that conventional intellectual (male) histories of the time, and perhaps still, do not.²⁰⁵ Smith's project of historicizing the practice of history is a kind of ethnography of the white Western male intellectual, and those who lie at his margins, central to constituting the centre.

There is also the question in the emergence and solidification of the practice of history as to what of history has merited telling, and this of course depends on who is doing the telling. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, for example, documents colonialist silences in the practice of history through the example of historical treatments of

²⁰⁴Write Tlostanova and Mignolo, “[C]oloniality is the hidden side of modernity ... coloniality is constitutive of modernity ... there is no modernity without coloniality” (2009, 3). Late modernity coincides with emergence of history as a discipline that Smith analyses.

²⁰⁵In spectrality studies, this trauma as source Avery Gordon might identify as the seething presence of absence, as we will see later in this chapter (2008 [1997]). It is important to note that Smith does not hide the fact that some amateur historians were plain bad historians, and that De Staël's oeuvre should be read for attentiveness to its glaring colonial gaze.

the Haitian Revolution. He catalogues the relegation to oblivion of the events of the Haitian revolution as well as the silencing of slavery as subject matter in both French historiography and accounts of world history, from the 1780s to the time of Trouillot's writing in 1995. Trouillot writes, "What we are observing here is archival power at its strongest, the power to define what is and what is not a serious object of research and, therefore, of mention" (Trouillot 1995, 99). Trouillot includes De Staël among those French historians across the eras who have been part of "the massive disregard that French historiography shows the colonial question, and by extension the Haitian Revolution. ... The list of writers guilty of this silencing include names attached to various eras, historical schools, and ideological positions" (101).²⁰⁶ We can see a constitutive colonialist orientation seeping through the silence. That silence is also produced by the appropriation of the knowledge produced by amateur female writers who are then relegated to the margins in the establishment of history as a male endeavour (Smith 1998, Intro para 14). Both the ways of doing history and the definition of subjects that merit telling are questions of epistemology thoroughly traversed by power and its hegemonies.²⁰⁷ Archival Sense is an attempt to forge, or perhaps simply to centre, a way of doing and in so doing, it attempts to reframe what matters to, or merits, telling.

Heretic methodology as disidentification

We have laid out links between amateur and queer in historical practice. Further, we have laid out the link between amateur practice, its gendering, and the amateur's marginalization in the emergence of history as a discipline, even as those constitutive amateurs wrote through colonialist lenses that edit what merits recounting. I now want to delve more deeply into queer historiography as both an engagement with history as a practice, and as a troubling of history as a practice. I do so through performance studies scholar José Esteban Muñoz's concept of "disidentification" (1999).²⁰⁸ "Disidentification," as Muñoz articulates it, is a strategy that racialised people and/or queers and other outsiders enact vis-à-vis popular culture. Disidentification entails appropriating and occupying popular culture in order to critique and resignify its manifestations in the service of articulating other worlds.

Disidentification gives me a language to address a certain paradox in arguing for the visibility of the multicrosser. The paradox is to be found in multicrossing as enabling passing into undetectability, implying assimilation, a certain kind of disappearance. My readerly stance would allow for reading in multicrossing a resistance to assimilation, to read in passing a kind of disidentification. But what I want to address here is how my

206 Other historians Trouillot names include de Tocqueville, de Lamartine, Michelet, Mathiez, Guérin, and Soboul (1995, 101).

207 Many more examples of marginalized ways of knowledge production can be catalogued, including Indigenous methodologies, arts-based methodologies and spiritual practices. Often marginalized ways of producing knowledge are tied to stories and perspectives of those people who have also been marginalized from accounts. I draw on the examples of Smith and Trouillot to point to these patterns, though of course many have addressed these questions. Further, it is important to note that troubling history is not new within the discipline of history. In a comparative consideration of early 20th century historian Marc Bloch, and British historian Eileen Powers, Natalie Zemon Davis documents their investments in interdisciplinarity and the comparative for showing how what is natural or habitual is made so, and to generate questions and judgements about their present (N. Davis 1988, 22).

208 José Esteban Muñoz passed away in December 2013 at 46, while I was writing the first draft of Archival Sense. This came as a shock. Our paths had not crossed. I am indebted to the ethics driving scholarship, the critical hope, anger and humour that fed his work, the centrality of artists to his thinking, and the compass of subaltern queer community he was guided by and responsible to.

heretic methodology functions as a strategy of disidentification from what constitutes acceptable historical practice. In *Archival Sense*, I deploy disidentification specifically as a stance in relation to the expectations of and judgements of evidence in the practice of history. This disidentification does not entail rejecting the value of documentary evidence; in fact, I immerse myself in documents with a hope of finding. The specific condition that I work from is that there *is* in fact archival evidence to work with, unlike the absence of archival evidence which drove Alexander to what we might call spectral or spirit based methods of research in order to approach the texture of the living of an enslaved woman in Trinidad. I work to immerse myself in that archival material, I work it collaboratively with other modes of sensory, affective evidence. Disidentification, as I deploy it, is a tactic of working *between* genres of evidence, of working between the contemporary body, affective resonance and historical documents as equally vital, entwined tools.

As most historians know well, the laborious process of parsing through archival records can often lead to an accumulation of dead ends and no conclusive documentary evidence. But here the failure to conclusively find does not preclude a telling. Failure, or impossibility to find undeniable “hard facts” is entangled with, or a consequence of the kind of life at the heart of the search: that of the multicrosser, who is partly in the archival record, but largely escapes it. The telling relies heavily—by necessity—upon the work of affective resonance through the contemporary body. The texture of living I produce demonstrates, in a sense, how I “find” from a failure to find.²⁰⁹ Reading here is a transtemporal, visceral feedback loop through body, place and text, archival labour and/as affective labour. What counts as proof? Proof imposes a constant struggle with the seduction of its mainstream meaning, embodied in the hunt for the archival trace as fact. The methodology performed and documented in *Archival Sense* poses a challenge to this supremacy of the documentary archival trace as the preeminent measure of evidence, *and* to its autonomy; instead, *Archival Sense* exposes the reliance of the documentary trace upon other forms of knowledge. My contribution here is in offering disidentification as a framing for a methodology for telling histories, a methodology predicated upon and validating multiple genres of evidence, and one which aims to produce texture of living instead of solely pinnable fact, instead of capturing the subject.

The past that is not yet

In Muñoz's later influential work *Cruising Utopia* (2009), he takes up among other issues the question of queer historiography, driven by the notion that “the past does things” (ch 1 para 19). He makes a case for the presence of the past within the present, and explores the place of affect in leveraging past in the present toward what he articulates as queer utopia, ever on the horizon. The past is a means of critiquing the present, “propelled by a desire for futurity” (ch 1 para 28). This desire for futurity refuses what he and other queer theorists call “straight time”—a past, present and future aligned in a linear reproductive logic of heterosexual lineage, kinship and power, where naturalized heterosexuality, nation-state and capital are entwined, and in their entwined

²⁰⁹Failure to find something (someone) definitive might be history shot through with queer aesthetics of failure (Halberstam 2011).

formulations, produce and enforce some lives as marginal.²¹⁰ Muñoz is driven to a historiography in service of changing present circumstance, and to doing so outside of the constraining demands of heteronormativity. The baptisms, marriages and burials I relentlessly parse in search of my subject and of those people purported to be in their orbit appear to be precisely lodged in what we might see as straight time, *avant la lettre*, but these were church records that placed people in God's time in an era before (re)production signified capital. Leaving aside (or embracing) this temporal anachrony, these eighteenth century records heterosexually inscribed kinship networks through which rank and status were safeguarded, transmitted, improved upon or locked. Progressive linear time overlaid upon (a Christian) God's all-encompassing time.²¹¹

The utopian futurity Muñoz envisions is where it will be possible for queers to live on our own multivalent terms.²¹² Thus he defines queerness as a *horizon* always not yet upon us.²¹³ This casts queerness as also a temporal orientation, stemming from an intersectional experience of marginalization and/of desiring. Writes Muñoz, “Queerness as utopian formation is a formation based on an economy of desire and desiring. This desire is always directed at that thing that is not yet here, objects and moments that burn with anticipation and promise” (ch 1 para 15). Queerness, he says, can be thought of “as a temporal arrangement in which the past *is a field of possibility* in which subjects can act in the present in the service of a new futurity” (Intro para 25 my emphasis). Central then to Muñoz's approach are desire, and the interrelationship between past, present and future, as simultaneously temporal and identitarian orientations. From a consideration of the past, he gestures toward the future that is not here, a practice he calls “utopian memory,” which leverages “a force field of affect and political desire,” a structure of feeling that he calls “utopian longing” (ch 2 para 6). Dinshaw's transtemporal touch, then, could be understood as stemming from this utopian longing, which in fact reaches in multiple temporal directions. A radical *attachment* to, rather than *detachment* from one's subject, is at the heart of the transtemporal touch stemming from utopian longing. In my own excavation of a life that is not yet and perhaps is never to be *definitively* found—that of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue—I enact a *past that is not yet*. Thinking the past as a field of possibility, which I am construing as *not yet* is about a deeper entwining of utopian future with the longing reach to the past, grounded in an understanding that “the past does things” (Muñoz 2009, ch1 para 19), that it is we accessing it who make it *do*, who enact its linkages. We can yet produce a past, a past left open to movement, multitude and unfixedness, a

210 On queer time see also Elizabeth Freeman (2010, 2005). Freeman's book is entitled *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (2010). Her more explicitly named paper that predated it makes the link between queer temporality and the erotic: “Time Binds, or Erotohistoriography,” which became chapter three of *Time Binds* (Freeman 2005).

211 One might say queer in the sense of Dinshaw's heterogeneous/asynchronous temporalities in the *now* (2012, 5), but not at all queer in the sense of queer as a relation against the controlling logic of such forces.

212 Multivalent is a scientific term that refers, in chemistry, to having a valence of three or higher, and in immunology, having several kinds of antibodies. I use it here to gesture toward the vast field of multiplicity contained within the word ‘we’ who define an imagined futurity as and through a vast array of acts of resistance. I use the term influenced by the fact that Muñoz' writing in *Cruising Utopia* mainly considers the work of gay male artists and writers, the AIDS crisis and its impacts. The AIDS crisis was the era of my youth, when several influential gay male role models became ill and quietly disappeared, without explanation nor opportunity for mourning.

213 Important to note is Muñoz's reaction against Edelman's *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004). Muñoz rejects the lack of hope in this figuration. See Caserio, Edelman, Halberstam, Muñoz and Dean (2006). De Lauretis posits queer as “a discursive horizon, another way of thinking sexuality,” hence queer as thinking toward what is not yet (quoted in B. Schneider 2011, para 4).

past responsible to queer, feminist and decolonial imperatives.

Distrust, affective remains and queer historiography

We have considered the longing touch across time as forming the basis of a queer historiography. *But how exactly does this queer touch across time function, or manifest? What exactly is affective evidence? What does it look like, or feel like, on the ground, so to speak, in the thick of things?*

It is that temporal slowing I described in *Archival Sense*, lived on a hillside in Clisson. It is the archival record becoming a character that goads into misreading. It is the insistence of misreads that I yield to. It is the inchoate psycho-geographic wander through a city in search of a feeling, to be pinned to a nearly 300 year-old city map. It is the chaos of the erotic impulse. I argue that these operate as and through what Muñoz refers to as ephemera, key to understanding and working with the longing touch across time and queer utopian memory practice. In order to commit to a queer, feminist, decolonial practice, I argue, one must account for, value and work with ephemera. Ephemera have everything to do with affect, sensation and desire (Muñoz 2009, ch 4). Ephemera are something distinct from a material trace, which like a reference in an archival document, is there tangibly, an inscription. Ephemera, in Muñoz' rendering, seem to disappear—an encounter, something witnessed, an event—or seem not to have or to no longer have materiality, though their remains linger in affect.²¹⁴ Muñoz proposes that queer history be written through ephemera, what remains in affective residue. He writes of queer distrust of the notion of evidence as follows:

Queerness has an especially vexed relationship to evidence ... [It] is rarely complemented by evidence or at least by traditional understandings of the term. The key to queering evidence, and by that I mean the ways in which we prove queerness and read queerness, is by suturing it to the concept of ephemera (ch 4 para 1).

It is this notion of working through ephemera as affective evidence that I believe I have attempted to do in *Archival Sense*. While in the above Muñoz does not necessarily argue for the rejection of inscribed evidence wholesale, he suggests that queering the notion of evidence means giving less weight to inscribed or documentary evidence, that queerness is to be found and affirmed in ephemera. Where Muñoz is not wholesale rejecting inscription or documentary evidence, he is taking such evidence and using ephemera to queer it, to bend it, to make it strange, to (re)appropriate. My own contribution is my insistence that working with material evidence is in fact *guided by, reliant upon*, ephemera, upon affective evidence, and this is the case independent of whether one is looking to make present queerness, or not. I take Muñoz's notion of distrusting evidence less as an argument against documentary evidence itself and the need to queer it, and more as understanding distrust as part and parcel of affective evidence itself, affective evidence with which I approach and make live documentary evidence

²¹⁴Muñoz refutes performance theorist Peggy Phelan's notion of performance as undocumentable, as disappearing, by claiming such affective remains as documentation of sorts (2009 ch 6). See Phelan (1993). This is further taken up in Part III: Becoming Archive.

in concert with other forms of evidence. This distrust is, I believe, part of what Muñoz calls “the ghostly presence of a certain structure of feeling,” which we will consider in more detail below (2009 ch 2, Ghosts and Utopia para 2).

Muñoz’s work is primarily concerned with gay men and gay men of colour in particular, queers, recipients of colonial violence, marginals, women, outsiders who he says have reason to doubt the concept of material evidence, either because such evidence has systematically been deployed to control, to enact violence, or to systematically erase, or because such evidence fixes, sears or trivializes. It is indeed a troublesome reckoning that many of the stories of marginals and outsiders from eras long past come to us from police, medical and other records of outing and betrayal, as is the case with the eighteenth century multicrosser at the heart of this dissertation, whose outsider or marginal status I can never know for sure, but which I speculate by virtue of the life recounted in a colonial record. In the case of the eighteenth century, what we might call marginals and outsiders are actually *more* present in archival records than your everyday cobbler or farmer’s wife. Earlier still, the Inquisition did a great job of entering gender and sexual outsiders into written evidence, however much Inquisition records are to be distrusted.²¹⁵ It is more a question of how evidence arrives, what the conditions of its arrival are, whose voices do the recording, and to what audience and what ends those inscriptions are directed. Trouillot has demonstrated that even when presence is clear and abundant in archival records, there are still many opportunities for silence, as his example of French historiographic disregard for the Haitian Revolution indicates, as noted earlier.²¹⁶ This points to an aporia: hyperpresence performing erasure or silencing in the archive.

Whether or not so-called marginals are present in archival records, there is the larger question regarding absence of self-inscription, and if self-inscription is to be found, how it is mediated through other voices and forces and directed to particular ends. This distrust of documentary evidence that Muñoz expresses can be seen as stemming from both the evidence of lived experience, and the evidence from an unwritten (or mis-written or deleteriously written) past pressing upon the present its ethical insistence. Affective remains are where that unwritten is documented, the means through which it is known.

Haunting, the archival search and catalogues of the sensed improbable

Thus far I have articulated textual evidence as it is commonly understood standing alongside what I will call bodily sense, a sense based on the idea that body itself is both archive and sensor.²¹⁷ I have introduced

²¹⁵For examples of such “marginal” lives, see Burshatin (1999); Dekker and van de Pol (1989); Erauso (2002; 1996); Velasco (2000); Wheelwright (1989); Steinberg (2001). Importantly though, as Mak has shown for a later era, it is not so clear cut in the record that marginals are forced to or are betrayed into outing by greater powers, but that subjects also volunteer themselves. In Mak’s case she is talking about nineteenth century hermaphrodites in Europe (Mak 2012).

²¹⁶ Of silences in historical production, Trouillot writes: “Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of sources); the moment of fact assembly (the making of archives); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of history in the final instance)” (1995, 26).

²¹⁷This will become more central in Part III. I am not concerned here with elaborating how the body knows outside of language, though this is an important consideration. Brazilian scholars Christine Greiner and Helena Katz developed the notion of ‘corpomídia’ to conceive of body as communicator and mediator through process always engaged within the ecology of its surrounds. See Rosa (2011) for a review of Greiner and Katz’ ideas in English. Greiner and Katz sought to get away from the Cartesian notion that the body is because a subject inhabits it. Mol articulates the body as made in practice (Mol 2002).

Muñoz's notion of ephemera as evidence that functions in the affective realm. The sensing body is vehicle, activator, sensor, site of ephemera. I have suggested that a pressing of the past that is insisting on the present does so in the affective realm, where this kind of evidence is recorded. Now I want to continue to trace my question about affective evidence, how it feels, how it is actually lived on the ground, through engaging with Avery Gordon's notion of haunting (2008 [1997]).

Like Muñoz's corpus, which draws on hers, Gordon is driven by a profound sense for what is not seen, what (who) is not there, and the ethical call they make to the present out of a desire for justice. Gordon calls haunting a seething presence that appears to be not there, and which is a constituent element of modern life (7). Haunting is a means by which this ethical call is made. The disappeared of history are present, she asserts, in the realm of hauntings. Hauntology is "a way of thinking and responding ethically within history, as it is a way of thinking ethics in relation to the project of historiography by acknowledging the force of haunting" (Freccero 2006, 70). Haunting, the spectral, the ghostly, are means by which the past makes its insistence felt, the means by which demands are made on us for attentiveness to historicity (ibid). Decolonial practices are by their very nature hauntologies.²¹⁸ The insistences that factor into historical research can be complex, entangled, multitemporal, specific and general, as has been my experience of the insistences that press upon my reading of Brandeau / La Fargue.

Gordon builds from Toni Morrison's assertion that "invisible things are not necessarily not-there" and that this leads to a call to investigate "how that which appears absent can indeed be a seething presence" (17). Gordon looks to literature and other creative forms of "fiction"—as have many queer theorists, scholars of the histories of colonisation and the slave trade, and the creators of those fictions themselves—to seek, compile or enliven evidence, as well as to find forms that can give space to diverse evidences. Gordon's project is to take seriously this experience of sensing the ghostly, the absent, and entering into work with it in a kind of collaboration. Entering into this collaboration, I propose, is precisely what has transpired in Archival Sense.

How does Gordon describe how sensing the ghostly transpires?

The ghost—which need not be taken as an actual ghost but rather as a symptom (63)—makes itself known to us through haunting.²¹⁹ The paradoxical experience of seeing what isn't there is the cue that haunting is occurring (107).²²⁰ The ghost "pulls us affectively into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience

218For Gordon on what she calls psychoanalysis' lost opportunity to see the social in the repressed, at its founding, see especially chapter 2 (Gordon 2008 [1997]). A psychoanalytic read on the ghostly / haunting is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but is prominent in the emergence of the expansive field now called Spectrality Studies, which often takes as its starting point Jacques Derrida's *Spectres of Marx* (1993). See Blanco and Peeren (2013) for an introduction to the field, encompassing psychoanalysis and trauma studies, sociology, literary studies and cultural analysis, and which now amply acknowledges that spectral phenomena are culturally specific and encompassing or understood as *spectropolitics*, everything to do with the present (19). Importantly, Arjun Appadurai addresses criticism of speculation as mere contemplation, and argues that spectrality is not a form of passive contemplation, but immanent critique that is deeply engaged in the political, social, so-called real world (Appadurai 2014, 209).

219I take this to mean that when haunting manifests, when the symptom of what is missing materializes, it can be variously interpreted, for example, as psychic consequence; as some aspect of the subconscious; as literal appearance of the ancestral or of spirit, etc.

220She draws on Barthes' notion of the "blind field" here.

as recognition" (63). The ghostly pulls us affectively into a structure of feeling called haunting recognition. The ghostly presses. I experience that insistence materially, in body. I recognize that insistence. In that recognition, I am in a certain haunted structure of feeling. Knowledge is made from being in this structure of feeling. There are, Gordon writes, three characteristic features of haunting. First, it carries in its wake the effect of strangeness and thus unsettles "the propriety and property lines that delimit a zone of activity or knowledge" (ibid). Second, "the ghost is a symptom of what is missing ... What it represents is usually a loss, sometimes of life, sometimes of a path not taken. From a certain vantage point the ghost also simultaneously represents a future possibility, a hope" (ibid). Third, "The ghost is alive, so to speak. We are in relation to it and it has designs on us such that we must reckon with it ... Out of a concern for justice would be the only reason one would bother" (64). "Haunting," she writes, "is not reason: it is being carried away and into the forces that are more powerful than you" (98). It is "an encounter" with "a force that combines the injurious and the Utopian..."(134).

Gordon characterizes haunting recognition as a special way of knowing what has happened or is happening (63). She calls it, importantly and poignantly, "a remembering which seems unwise" (169). She inverts the idea of remembering as me in the present looking back to a past to be remembered. In the flip, the past, figured, takes on a material agency in and asks of the present for something to be done (185). Thus, unwise perhaps because of the heresy of it, of such agency, such presence, but also she is referring to the ghostly as having its own motivations and desires that are beyond the control of those haunted. We cannot know what will happen. She notes two counter-intuitive features of haunting: first, that you cannot take a moment of haunting and trace it back to a singular loss or trauma or particular event, to a single source let's say, and second, that as noted above, "the ghost has its own desires, so to speak, which figure the whole complicated sociality of a determining formation that seems inoperative (like slavery) or invisible (like racially gendered capitalism) but that is nonetheless alive and enforced" (183). The effect of haunting, she says, "does not usually look very much like context, influence, reflection. It looks like a structure of feeling" (198). Structure of feeling, as Raymond Williams first articulated it, is a "practical consciousness" in the present, is always emergent, and deals in "social experiences *in solution*," where solution is to be understood as a structured formation "at the edge of semantic availability" (Williams 1977, 132-134). Structures of feeling concern "meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations between these and formal or systematic beliefs" (ibid). They are about "specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought" (ibid).²²¹ Haunting as a structure of feeling, Gordon says, is "emergent" (Gordon 2008, 201), "notifies you of your involvement" (205) and "always harbors the violence, the *witchcraft*, and *denial* that made it, and *the exile of our longing*, the Utopian" (207 italics in original).

History, it would seem, is a haunted practice par excellence. When I place Gordon's cycling, repeating and

²²¹Williams had difficulty finding terminology. He chose feeling in lieu of experience because he wanted to underscore presentness and process, and to distinguish from ideology and world view. A structure of feeling is socially produced, shared, and is in doing.

multiple definitions of haunting and ghostly matter alongside Muñoz's project, his call for history to be written through ephemera, I see haunting as the ghostly demand for materialization, for an accounting, for inscription, against a landscape demanding "fact." I see utopian longing as stemming from haunting as it erupts through lived experience in the social present. Gordon writes of her target of sociology, but perhaps the same critique could apply to the expectations of historical practice: "To the extent that sociology is wedded to facticity as its special truth, it must continually police and expel its margin—the margin of error—which is the fictive" (26). Gordon calls for method which is attuned to that margin, to "what is elusive, fantastic, contingent, and often barely there" (ibid). To do so is about "a way of negotiating the always unsettled relationship between what we see and what we know" (24).²²² The affect Muñoz writes of that lives in/as ephemera, and what Toni Morrison's fiction in large part emerges from, according to Gordon, are "symptoms of what is missing" in our accounts of life, of history, of the social (63). Haunting is sensed, overwhelms through the senses. It is a form of memory, in body and accessible through body, says Gordon. I would add to this that haunting, and the accessibility to memory it catalyzes, are tied to place, are entwined with geography and catalyzed through relation to and movement through space, as my territorial movements within and without archives delineated in *Archival Sense* demonstrate. What is barely there but which summons so forcefully through the body as it is connected to place defies description, because it defies not sense but "common sense." Like, or perhaps as an erotic force, preceding discourse. What I have attempted to do in *Archival Sense* is work with an attention to force that insists upon the present, upon me, a force that *makes sense*—as in *produces material bodily consequence*, however strange, almost always destabilizing—of/in the archival record. The archival search yields a catalogue of the sensed (im)probable.

Muñoz's ephemera are the stuff of Gordon's dangerous remembering. Dinshaw's transtemporal touch as constituent element of queer historiography, is a longing touch, touch here as effect—in body—of approaching the past through desire. If such a reach is open to haunting, it may be a response that haunting calls for, a something to be done, through dealing in affective evidence, the ephemera as remains, haunted traces. Perhaps queer feminist decolonial historiography is historiography realized through an eros sutured to haunting recognition, just as Muñoz's queer visibility in history requires suturing ephemera to the notion of evidence. As we will come to see in *Becoming Archive*, this requires attention to genre, to form.

Conclusion

Through an autoethnographic account of work with doubt, desire, error and haunting as research tools for practicing historical research, Part III: *Archival Sense* immersed the reader in an archival research journey. A "heretic methodology" was demonstrated, in which all that might typically reside in footnotes or not at all in a telling of history took centre stage. Two intertwined concerns were at the heart of this undertaking: to corroborate or to

²²²Taking up Gordon, Freccero writes, "Thinking historicity through haunting thus combines both the seeming objectivity of events and the subjectivity of their affective afterlife" (2006, ch 5 para 15).

refute claims found in the existing archival records that bring us the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue; and to produce, after M. Jacqui Alexander, a texture of this subject's living. As I traced my archival research through close attention to archival details, and doubts about them, what emerged was the contingency of what we call "evidence," and the role of the researcher—her body, desires, and all that presses upon the research process—in what is ultimately "found." I demonstrated how an archive comes alive and comes to mean only through its enactment by the researcher. Further I demonstrated that even in the absence of an abundance of confirmed archival fact, it is possible to narrate a rich texture of the life of an historical subject precisely through working with the erotic, with desire, haunting and the side tracks and errors these yield. I showed how working this way generates new information pertaining to the story, however contingent. I anchored this archival journey in theoretical elaborations of "queer historiography," in which radical attachment to the subject researched is fundamental. Rather than maintaining an "objective" distance from the subject, queer historiographers work through "transtemporal touch," troubling the separation between present and past, and embracing what might be deemed amateurism in historical practice. I characterized my own heretic methodology as a disidentification with conventional historical practice, a disidentification which remains profoundly committed to archival research yet also elevates affective evidence, or ephemera sensed through the transtemporal body. I affirm that ephemera are as vital to the production of the texture of a life of an historical subject as is a document found in an eighteenth century colonial Intendant's correspondence with the Crown.

What does this heretic methodology, as I name it, mean for queer, feminist, decolonial practice? First, it allows generating texture of living without capturing or freezing the subject. To not aspire to capture or freeze affirms that a) we cannot know everything, we cannot order and own the world, the past, the definitive narrative and b) that we can know much without repeating, in the case of the crosser, the violence of outing, that we can respect the passer's desire to pass. Second, it allows leveraging the affective currents resident in the kind of deep yearning for identification with an historical subject without overwhelming or appropriating them, rather remaining attentive to the interplay between researcher as subject and historical figure as subject. This gives us a way of acknowledging and working with these deep longings for historical trajectory that many people can relate to, in such a way that we cordon off neither the researcher herself, nor the researcher's time as autonomous from the historical subject's time. Third, in searching through synchronous communities, the process supplants the supremacy of the patriarchal lineage logic underpinning historical records of the eighteenth century (and of other eras), thereby queering the archive itself, producing otherwise with and from it. Fourth, this approach allows dangerous and difficult to name knowledges their rightful, acknowledged place in historical knowing.

Part III: Becoming Archive

Overview

I suspected that the heretic methodology that produced a texture of my subject's living in Archival Sense was informed or enabled by my practice as a performing artist. My own performances of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue on stage predated and continued throughout producing this dissertation. Part III: Becoming Archive follows my suspicion, and sets out to investigate how performing Brandeau / La Fargue on stage unfolds a particular reading and telling of an eighteenth century figure. I undertake this investigation from within Performance Studies, using the following concepts: incorporation (Connerton 1989), repetition (Connerton 1989; Schneider 2011; Taylor 2003), and historical reenactment (Schneider 2011).

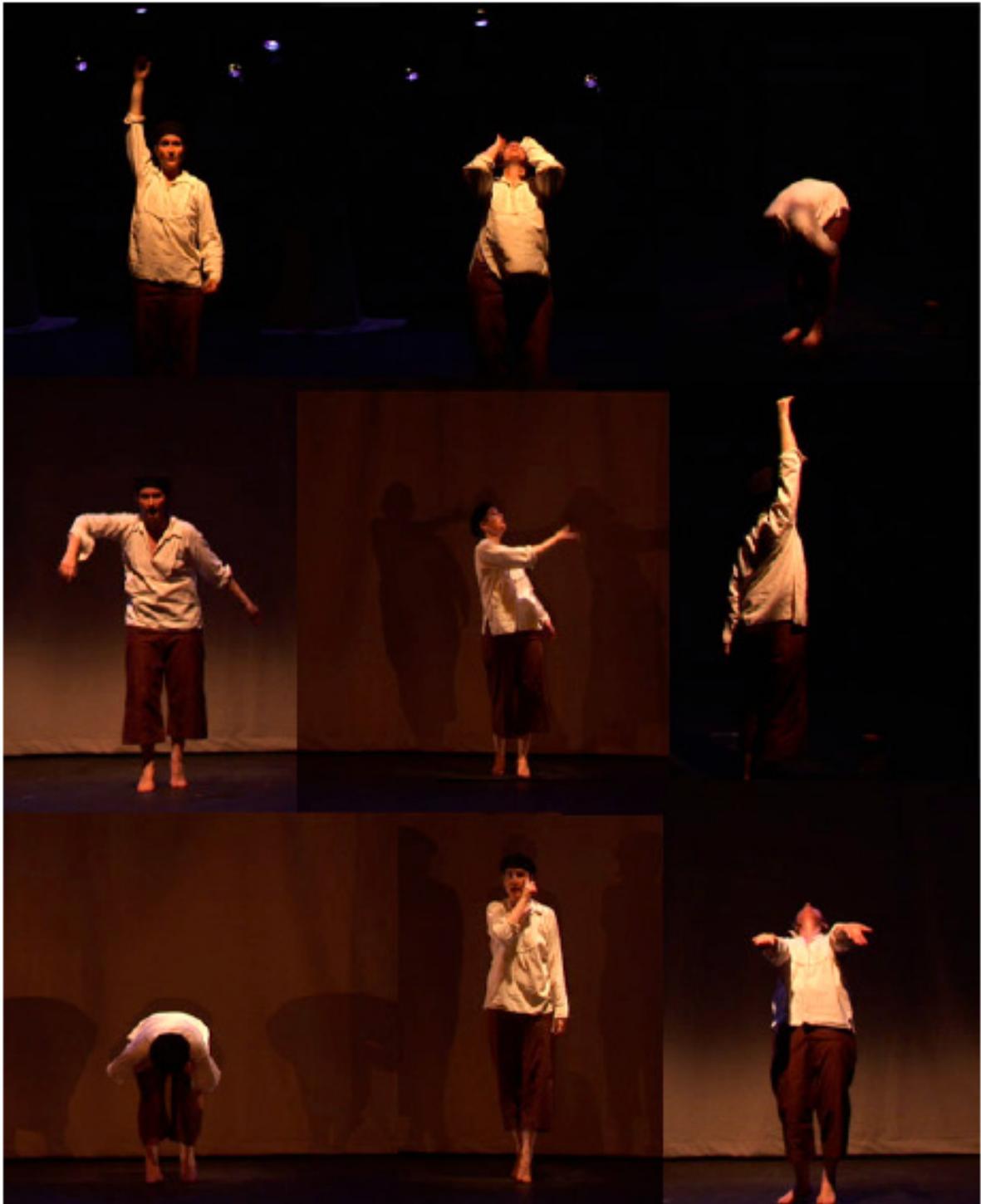
Two of my performances are at the heart of Part III: Becoming Archive. The first is the 70-minute interdisciplinary theatre work entitled *ribcage: this wide passage (thorax : une cage en éclats)*. I attend to an excerpt from *ribcage* in which I use physical gesture as its own language to translate the text of the archival record. The second work is the one-to-one durational performance *Aujourd'hui / This Day 1738*, in which I stage the interrogation of Brandeau / La Fargue as an encounter between myself as Brandeau / La Fargue, and an audience member as interrogator. Finally, I attend to the extreme bodily labour of a research process in which I walked for two weeks along a Christian pilgrimage route, taken as a route of Jewish exile. I frame these performance-based practices as historical reenactment, after performance theorist Rebecca Schneider (2011), ones which critically reiterate what Diana Taylor calls culturally sedimented "scenarios" (2003, 53-78). My insights contribute to scholarship in Performance Studies on historical reenactment by examining the relationship between documentary / material / inscribed history and performance-based modes of remembering, as a scholar of reenactment who actually does reenactment as a performer.

Part III transpires as two parallel texts. The "Supertext" along the upper half of the page consists of staging the excerpt from *ribcage* noted above and the one-to-one durational performance *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738*. The Supertext is its own kind of theorizing that to a certain extent performs the impossibility of translating into the discursive the performance experience and the knowledge t/here produced. Along the bottom half of the page, the Subtext deals in theoretical concerns and analysis of a more "conventional" scholarly nature pertaining to performance, the body and historical knowledge. In the toggle between Supertext and Subtext is to be found echo, interruption, expansion, confounding, repetition and completion. The intention of the juxtaposition is to move the reader into sensing performance, and into sensing moving between multiple, entwined ways of doing.

The Subtext along the bottom half of the page delves into theories of performance as they pertain to historical knowledge. First, I revisit the important theoretical contributions to Performance Studies from memory theorist Paul Connerton and performance theorist Diana Taylor, against a backdrop of different scholarly understandings and attentions to the notion of "archive" across disciplines and turns. I work with Connerton's notion of "incorporating practices," through which he examines the mechanics of bodily memory making. I work with Diana Taylor's language of the material "archive" and the performance-based "repertoire" to understand the

stakes in thinking performance, archive and historical truth claims (2003). Taylor's and Connerton's ideas form a vital ground for understanding Rebecca Schneider's contribution to the study of performance and memory through analysis of historical reenactment (2011).

Ultimately, I offer what I term "becoming archive," a practice comprised of historical reenactment techniques that, I propose, provide a means for becoming a transtemporal body, a body through which multiple times erupt, a body that touches across time. This becoming can open one to transtemporal touch in the archival research process. Thus, I theorize a relationship between the heretic methodology I undertook in *Archival Sense* that leverages desire, doubt, error and haunting; and a performance practice that engages with the story of *Brandeau / La Fargue* through reenactment techniques of extreme labour, memorizing and translating, and direct collaboration with audience members.



Gestic translation machine in *ribcage: this wide passage / thorax : une cage en éclats*, AKI Studio Theatre, Toronto, May 3-5, 2013. Videography Shahin Parhami and Melina Young. Video stills by Heather Hermant.



ribcage: this wide passage, 2010-2013. Photo credits: Tim Matheson (top left; page opposite); Simon Rossiter (top right); Video stills: Heather Hermant (bottom). Used with permission.

Preamble: The primacy of performance

I work between genre extremes—or at least, they appear so: academic writing and performance. I have been unable to do one without the other. When I encounter a block while sitting before the computer, processing archival research, conducting a painstakingly close reading of a novel, or connecting the dots between the so-called literature and the so-called evidence, I return to studio or stage, which sometimes includes the street. I return to explicitly embodying the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. Such return unlocks another mode of doing, of thinking, which is written. Returning to stage and street though is more than character work—development of a character for the stage in theatre—as I hope we will see as I explore my performance works within the frame of historical reenactment.

I began the dissertation using what were to me new technologies of knowledge production: narratology and literary analysis, for example, which I applied to the original record of testimony and its interpretations in several creative works. These technologies were accessed and produced after immersion in performance-based ways of knowing, technologies of knowledge production that were more familiar and practiced to me.¹ The dissertation thus moves toward its past, performance having guided the archival research and the analytical writing encountered in Part I: Eruptions Into Visibility and Part II: Archival Sense. “Becoming archive”—a practice within which performance is central and about which I will elaborate in the pages to follow—predates the beginning of this dissertation.² In fact, it enabled the dissertation, which ends at its beginning. Performance came first.



For years predating and continuing throughout the duration of producing this dissertation, I worked with this story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as a poet, and with barely a poet's word. I was confronted with the seeming inadequacy of poetry as a form. The story, it seemed, was refusing a genre, the genre I knew as a self-taught spoken word artist untrained in any artistic discipline. The story became a narrative in search of its creative form. Where spoken word was failing me, movement, rhythm and sound, site-specific intervention, video installation, my body gave me access to tellings. The story seemed also to be refusing English, my first language. Words in English eventually appeared, but like the outer layers of an onion witnessing an interior that was neither English nor French, not language, in fact, but body in motion.

Sitting on a chair, I ritually bind my torso, a sacred act, not a ruse, like the binding of the arm of the Jewish male in prayer, body tipping to horizontal, reaching as it is bound. I make video poems out of gesture staged site-specifically. I emerge out of Lake Ontario, shed skirts, corset, scarves, transform myself into a male ship-hand and disappear into a crowd, a body of witnesses, my audience on the beach. I walk through a snow-covered forest in handmade leather boots, over and over again. On my video camera, waves crash against a distant rocky outcrop in Galicia. An old man walks away from me, slowly, on crutches, along a Portuguese port wall. I loop my breath against a Hebrew melody, an old nursery rhyme in Dutch about a cross-dressing sailor.³

ribcage: this wide passage ultimately became an interdisciplinary black box⁴ theatre piece, its creation process and form a foreshadowing of the multigenre research practice to come. *ribcage* combines spoken word, archival narration, storytelling, song and physical theatre, set within a live-mixed video installation

I am not willing to discard the document. Instead, I consume it. Occupy it. Repeat it. Repeat it. Occupy it. Repeat. Pass it through my translating body. If the pass is a transaction of reading, what is its sense?^a Its sense is in the labour.

First, the testimonial document in French, and related colonial correspondence translated to English. Second, these translated to body/through body through simultaneous gestic translation. Make the archival document strange. Treat its language as beats, sound, rhythm, inflection, shape of the mouth. I translate gestically each recurrent syllable, sound, inflection, perform this simultaneous with recitation live. I begin downstage flat footed reciting-translating. Move upstage, back partially to audience, standing on imagined high heels, my body destabilizing delivery of gesture and text. Text doing violence to me. I fight the text. Move within and against it as I speak it. Larger than life shadows of my performing labour, sometimes in duplicate or triplicate, follow behind me on a screen. I merge into these shadows as they merge into each other as I move away from the audience.

Through this labour, I become the text. Text is visceral. Body now exceeds the textual inscription it has consumed, has appropriated, has deployed. Passing the document through. Multiplies it.

I type it now, “Aujourd’hui, 15e septembre, 1738, par devant nous Commissaire de la Marine...” and know exactly the place of impact in my body from ingestion/translation. This is how I incorporate it, remember it, think it, transmit it. I cannot transmit the text verbatim to you in the live outside of the gestic machine I have created. Will the words one day disappear, saved in the gestic?

How I ingest the document influences how you receive its translation. The labour of your reading, slowed, as you attempt to follow the gesture in superscript. Do you follow the superscript? The “main” text? Eyes shift? Backtrack? The body in labour is the document’s activation.

and is performed by myself with a musician playing fiddle and looping pedals live on stage.⁵ I begin with my own ancestral stories and walk with these into the archive—the diverse archival records that surround and transmit the story of Brandeau / La Fargue, the landscapes as archives upon which this life story purportedly unfolds—to become archival story found there. My ancestral and contemporary experiences are the tools that enable me to read my way into the archival story out of which I emerge in the end, poet and storyteller.

The diasporic movement of my settler ancestors. A grasped-at family tree that maps Esther Brandeau’s absence, my handwriting tracing archival details in projection behind me, then chalking frantically onto the floor, lines of maps and family trees soon to pull me into the video projection itself, pull me into the story. My own walk of exile-meets-pilgrimage from Portugal through Spain toward France, delivered through an enveloping live-mixed soundscape and moving video projection environment. The story of Indigenous territory that is settled and settled and settled is told through collaboration between live-mixed video of me, a figure in hand-stitched boots walking through a winter forest and seeming never to arrive, and the soaring sounds of live violin, my performer’s body witnessing from within the audience. Those waves crashing against the coast of Galicia, behind which I move, a detectable shadow visible through mesh fabric onto which the crashing is projected. Archival text, waves in projection, me between these. Three layers of story. The old man on crutches walks away in projection into a larger than life suspended dress reminiscent of tunics worn by those found guilty by the Inquisition, a dress that haunts the stage, which I climb into while singing kaddish.⁶ The sacred act of binding is the central foundational image, pivot point between Esther and Jacques, the only

Stage left, facing audience.

Aujourdhuy [head flung back, chokes sound], quinzième [head flung back, chokes sound] septembre [bent knee, hand slaps raised thigh, gathers air into fist] mil sept-cent trente-huit [head flung back, chokes sound] par [step forward, arms straight in front, right fist a ball, left palm exposed, fingers push downwards] devant nous [fist into belly, collapse over] Co [stand up, head flung back, chokes sound] missaire [lean left, both arms float wavelike to right] de la Marine chargé [right hand over heart, soldier's stance] à Qué [head flung back, chokes the sound] bec [head flung back, chokes the sound] de la police des gens [right hand over the heart, soldier's stance] de mer [body leans left, both arms float wavelike to right] est com [head flung back, chokes sound] parue Esther [body leans left, both arms float wavelike to right] Brandeau [right arm reaches up straight, hand on high ledge] ...

Stage left, 45 degree turn away from audience.

I [right index finger framing outer edge of left eye] do not [bent knee, hand slaps raised thigh, gathers air into fist] think [head flung back, chokes sound] one ought [bent knee, hand slaps raised thigh, gathers air into fist] to believe the entire [up on tip-toes, right index finger framing outer edge of left eye] sto [drop down from tip-toes] ry [head flung back, chokes sound] of Esther [body leans left, both arms float wavelike to right] Brandeau [right arm reaches up straight, hand on high ledge] who came [head flung back, chokes sound] to Canada [head flung back, chokes sound] last year [full body turn 45 degrees to the left, straight pivoting axis] ...

Textual score of the gestic translation machine in *ribcage: this wide passage*, as published in *Tusaaji: A Translation Review 2.2* (2013).^b

act of “outing” staged, staged as sacred crossing, from “female” to “male,” from Jewish to Christian, from my 21st century present to an eighteenth century I cannot know. I become Jacques.

The work transmits through several genres in collaboration, together generating a form not easily called a play, at least not theatre with a narrative through-line. I have named the form otherwise: ceremonial archival performance; performance installation⁷; a series of interlinked interdisciplinary poems (not only comprised of words); performed historical non-fiction embodied as autobiography; a meditation or *midrash*⁸ on the archive; a performance that archives its process. In the space of a single stage I triangulate several stories, move them through space. The story is the story of these intersecting stories, enabled through the collaboration, intersection and interstitial spaces between genres, or forms.

What can performing the archive on stage tell us about time, the body, reading and telling an eighteenth century multicrosser? What might be the relationship between a performance practice that engages with historical reenactment and the performative nature of historical research?

Rewind: Defining Archive

Let us return to a central term: “archive.” Consider a series of images documenting the kinds of archives I have worked with in my search for evidence of Brandeau / La Fargue. Among these are documents predictably understood as archival records: the three-page third-person voice testimony, translating into a condensed version what Esther Brandeau, doubly outed, was purported to have recounted; colonial correspondence between officials; a circumcision log book; shipping records; insurance claims; tax ledgers;

Ingest. 1. to take, as food, into the body. 2. Aeronautics. to draw (foreign matter) into the inlet of a jet engine, often causing damage to the engine. Latin *ingestus* past participle of *ingerere* to throw or pour into.^c

Gest. 1. a story or tale. 2. a deed or exploit. 3. Archaic. a metrical romance or history. Middle English < Old French *geste* action, exploit < Latin *gesta* exploits, neuter plural past participle of *gerere* to carry on, perform. From Old French, from Latin *gesta* deeds, from *gerere* to carry out. Latin *gesta* “actions, exploits,” neut. pl. of *gestus*, pp. of *gerere* “to carry on, wage, perform”.

“Ingest” as a drawing in. “Gest” as story, tale, deed, or exploit (like stories, tales, deeds and exploits recorded in archival records?) To take forward, to carry on (to keep repeating?). To wage (as in war?) or to perform. Geste as action. Gesture.

How compact is the gestic, how it sediments the text but never fixes it to stasis. Opens it up. That the document hails, after Althusser,^d is what makes it live. In the passage to live the document meets, it is, it becomes. I enter the hailing document to consume, interrupt, incorporate, exceed the distinction between being interpellated by, and resisting that process of interpellation. The document I consume becomes, cannot be before the sensing, social, haunted viscera of bodies, in its inscription, in its telling and retelling, in its enactment. In meeting you here now, brought in close.

No amount of language can completely translate what theory is alive in that gestic translation live under the lights nearing the end of 70 minutes of performative labour. You were not there where others were watching, yet here.

notary records; ordinances; ledgers of births, deaths and marriages; a widow’s letter to a priest. Some I read on microfiche and online. Others I hold in my bare hands.

We can distinguish here between “archive” as a documentary record, a material artifact; “archive” as an institution that houses such materials; and “archive” as a particular collection of materials housed within such an institution. Ann Laura Stoler further distinguishes between archiving-as-process and archives-as-things. She describes what has been called the archival turn as the moment when archive-as-source is no longer its only use.⁹ She distinguishes between “the archive” of historians — the material documentary records that historians work in—and “The Archive” of cultural theorists (Stoler 2009, 44-45; 2002, 93). These, Stoler says, have arguably been “wholly different analytic objects” (2009, 45). “The Archive” is “a metaphoric invocation for any corpus of selective collections and the longings that the acquisitive quests for the primary, originary, and untouched entail” (ibid). In this distinction, we see records become objects of study not just for the “facts” that might be found there, but the longings that drove the collection into being, and/or which drive the searcher’s search. Stoler thus encourages looking at archives as sites of knowledge production, rather than as simply extractive sites, and that how one reads be an “agentive act” where “a focus on the politics of knowledge is a methodological commitment to how history’s exclusions are secured and made” (ibid). Stoler encourages not just ethnographies in archives, in the sense of using archival records to do what I have earlier attempted: produce a texture of living. She encourages what she calls “ethnography in an archival mode” wherein the logic, longings and actions of those who produce the records are brought under analysis (ibid).

the **entire** [up on tip-toes, right index finger framing outer edge of left eye] **sto** [drop down from tip-toes] **ry** [head flung back, chokes sound] **entire** [up on tip-toes, right index finger framing outer edge of left eye] **sto** [drop down from tip-toes] **ry** [head flung back, chokes sound] **I** [right index finger framing outer edge of left eye] **will un** [fist into belly, collapse over] **derta** [step forward, arms straight in front, right fist a ball, left palm exposed, fingers push downwards] **ke.** [head flung back, chokes sound]

The gestic translation machine in English, transcribed above, changes when translated to French, below.

the **entire** [up on tip-toes, right index finger framing outer edge of left eye] **sto** [drop down from tip-toes] **ry** [head flung back, chokes sound] **l'histoire** [left elbow pulled out to side, forearm hung limp perpendicular to floor] **en** [fist into belly, collapse over] **tière** [lean left, both arms float wavelike to right] **à racon** [fist into belly, collapse over] **ter en an** [fist into belly, collapse over] **glais** [right hand cups below chin, follows sound trajectory out from mouth] **d'abord puis** [head flung back, chokes sound] **en fran** [fist into belly, collapse over] **çais en Fran** [fist into belly, collapse over] **ce et au Québec** [step forward, arms straight in front, right fist a ball, left palm exposed, fingers push downwards] **c.** [head flung back, chokes sound]

Edward Saïd uses the phrase “the great cultural archive” to show how works of art and literature of an era and/or place together comprise an archive of attitudes and dispositions, ways of being and relating, aesthetic tools and techniques, and so on (1994). He shows how culture affirms imperialism. This is a broad extension of the notion of archives to include the whole of a cultural heritage in its diversity of inscriptions beyond things most typically understood as archival records. Saïd and Stoler suggest that we look to the broader cultural behaviours, practices, products and relations surrounding material records and discursive histories, that we inquire into how power circulates through practices of archiving, archives and inscription as these shape (diverse forms of) remembering (and forgetting).

In the list with which I opened this section, I tended toward specifically material artifacts—documents, sources—housed in institutions called archives. But there are other “archives” too. Consider, for instance, photographs of doorways and stone walls in Old Québec City. A porthole in Saint-Malo—home of Jacques Cartier¹⁰ and the place of his burial, where Brandeau as Pierre Mausiette is purported to have worked as the assistant to a widow baker—which frames a view to the sea and an island you can walk to when the tide is out. The stone-carved *mascarons*—head of an African woman, head of a sailor—adorning buildings in Nantes that border the river where the slave ships pulled up, where Pierre abandoned ship.¹¹ A gate he is purported to have lived near, still standing today. The grassy slope away from a convent as it runs to meet a river bend near what was once a tannery, the convent where they may have worked. The barely legible name on a Sephardic tombstone sunk beneath the level of the river’s flow, in the Ouderkerk Sephardic



thorax : une cage en éclats, AKI Studio Theatre, Toronto, May 3, 2013.
Videography Melina Young and Shahin Parhami; Video still Heather Hermant.

cemetery outside Amsterdam, the tall grass against bare skin. What if the land itself were an archive?¹² (It is.) What to make of a notarial record unrelated to the story, but which I happen upon in a Breton archive: the unexpected signature of my own Jewish last name circa 1727 certifying payment from a craftsman for his official standing? My body (shaking) as it meets the archive. My hand holding that record. A name I will later learn at the moment when I am premiering the French translation of my theatre piece, is in fact a translation, or blatant replacement, of our “real” Jewish name. Hermant – Gertzmann, hard H.¹³

Above, I have listed architecture and landscapes. I have recalled an archival encounter that reminds us of the affective realm made alive where a record meets a body. There are other sources still, which move beyond documents and even beyond architectural and topographical forms and into the realm of what Paul Connerton calls “social habit-memory,” that is to say, how bodily practices and ritual acts sediment memory through repetition, how bodies and bodies in collectivities remember (Connerton 1989, 35). The sound of the Basque language as it encounters French in the streets of Bayonne. Semana Santa processions passing behind me, men in pointed hats that rattle me as I discover the apparently appropriated source of Ku Klux Klan attire. My recording these as I move. Take pictures. Audio record. Videotape. My body as it responds viscerally, takes in information, archives it in body-memory.

Diana Taylor contributes “repertoire” and “archive” as terminologies that have been a vital contribution to performance studies, to memory studies and to historiography (2003). Taylor distinguishes the repertoire as “a nonarchival system of transfer” that is distinct from artifactual remembering—which refers to documents,

There is a table between us. There is paper on a table between us.

Sara Ahmed elaborates her queer phenomenology through the table, the philosopher's gendered table, table like the one I type at, facing out the window, your back to the context that allows the sitting. The reading. Ahmed materializes and stories the table.⁶
The table is the story. (Makes the table itself a (dis)orientation device.)

photographs or bones, which together comprise what she calls “archive” (xvii). “Repertoire,” writes Taylor, “enacts embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproduceable knowledge” (20). The repertoire, then, is a form of knowledge. The embodied memory that is sustained through repertoire is “live”—live as in alive in the moment performed, in body—and is that which “exceeds the archive’s ability to capture it” (21). Taylor characterizes the repertoire as a means of sustaining embodied communal memory. Repertoire “keeps and transforms choreographies of meaning,” she says (20). “Repertoire” marks the kinds of practices that remember in a non-inscribed way, where knower doesn’t stand apart from known, the way an historian can hold a document, or scroll its digitally available version, 277 years later.¹⁴ Taylor underscores the relationship between the artifactual “archive” and the performed, ephemeral “repertoire,” as “hav[ing] always been important sources of information both exceeding the limitations of the other ... They usually work in tandem ... Materials from the archive shape embodied practice in innumerable ways, yet never totally dictate embodiment...” (21) She suggests that bodies and documents might “retain what the other “forgot” since they are “systems that sustain and mutually produce each other; neither is outside or antithetical to the logic of the other” (35-36). However, despite the constant interaction of archive and repertoire, she says, “the tendency has been to banish the repertoire to the past” (21).

Taylor argues for performance as a crucial mnemonic mechanism that sustains communal memory against and through what she calls the “scenario” of discovery underpinning acts of conquest in the Americas

Enter the room.^f

There is a chair.

On the table is a script you are discovering for the first time, preceded by instructions.

Put the cloak on that is draped over the chair.

You may sit at the table and/or walk around.

Please do not touch the performer.

You are Gilles Hocquart, Colonial Intendant of New France, at Quebec City, 1738...

(53-78). What does she mean by “scenario”? She uses the scenario of discovery to elaborate her definition. Scenarios, she says, are “culturally specific imaginaries—sets of possibilities, ways of conceiving conflict, crisis, or resolution—activated with more or less theatricality” and which construct objects and viewers within a particular interplay (13). Colonial scenarios of discovery, conversion and conquest, she says, are reactivated in various guises across time. Scenarios remember through the repertoire, and are sedimented through repetition in the cultural archive that Saïd defines. They are “meaning-making paradigms that structure social environments, behaviors, and potential outcomes ... [whose] portable framework bears the weight of accumulative repeats” (28). The scenario is “formulaic, portable, repeatable, and often banal” and it “activates the new by conjuring up the old” (54). Because a scenario “makes visible ... the ghosts, the images, the stereotypes,” it haunts us, it is a hauntology (28). Scenarios remember through enactment, through their (re)performance and constitute sites of critical intervention through reiteration.

We have moved above through a revisiting of the notion of “archive,” taking us through a series of understandings that ends with bodies in performance, and the transfer of and through scenarios as means of social memory that is non-discursive, non-inscribed. Taylor’s ideas build from memory theorist Paul Connerton’s theorizations of the relationship between bodily habits, practices of commemoration and historical memory. Connerton’s thinking about the body and how it, in essence, becomes memory, or is history, is a key piece of thinking in Performance Studies, but one often remarked upon only in passing.¹⁵ Below, I return in depth to Connerton and to Rebecca Schneider, because together they offer me tools to understand the mechanics of my own performances of *Brandeau / La Fargue*, and how they might be

The task that preceded these tasks is a task of imagining the lines of questioning that would yield the answers in your script. Your script is held up by the table and performs backwards toward before the moment of inscription of the testimony from which it leaps, imaginatively. The testimony where only purported answers are to be found, translated to she. She said. She is. She went. With the exception of inscription of a recalled question that proposes the document as a record of interrogation. ... De nous dire quelle raison elle a eu de deguiser ainsi son sexe pendant cinq ans.

intertwined or catalytic of the heretic methodology enacted in Archival Sense. Ultimately, I will be arguing that my performance strategies perform not just tellings of the Brandeau / La Fargue story, but perhaps more importantly they perform a telling about the nature of time, the process of memory making and the relationship between body in performance and archive.

We will first use Connerton's notion of "incorporating practices," to investigate how my own staging of the archival record moving between text and gesture deploys repetition as a deliberate disciplinary practice that sediments memory in the body. Connerton allows me to enact as well as to witness the habit-making process at the heart of historical memory as housed in and accessed through the body. Schneider, on the other hand, attends to the transtemporal dimension in historical reenactment, itself a practice of repetition, that makes the past erupt into the present. In my appropriation, I investigate the mechanics of that eruption by staging the archival record in a collaborative performance context that foregrounds affective transmission between bodies. Schneider allows me to pursue historical knowing as constituted in and through the seemingly non-material and transient qualities of performance. Lastly, I use Taylor's notion of "scenario" to cast my various reenactments of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue as critical reiterations of scenarios of exile and outing, a criticality I do not find available in Connerton. I do so as a rare case of a scholar who engages directly in reenactment as a means of producing, disseminating and reflecting on the production of historical knowledge. Ultimately my purpose is to show the interanimate relationship between performance and archival research, through the relationship between historical reenactment and "heretic methodology."

You are to interrogate an individual who...

Everything is derived from a single existing interrogation record in the French colonial archive.

Our task is to perform this transcript, written in the third person voice, as a dialogue in order to investigate the believability of what an 18th century colonial scribe noted under the direction of you, Gilles Hocquart. Our aim is to understand how this person was read, and subsequently written. We will put the document on trial.

Paul Connerton: bodily habits, incorporating practices

In *How Societies Remember*, Connerton situates the body in practices of memory first by laying out three types of memory: personal, cognitive and habit memory (Connerton 1989, 21-25). A personal memory claim would be, for instance, recalling an event that happened to me as a child. A cognitive memory claim would be, for instance, remembering the meaning of a word, or recalling a particular joke. Cognitive memory's distinction from personal memory is that a personal memory requires "a past cognitive or sensory state of oneself," while a cognitive memory does not need to reference a past context of learning to remember the thing learned (22). A habit memory requires simply "the ability to reproduce a certain performance" without usually remembering how or when or where that ability was acquired (22-23).¹⁶ Writes Connerton of habit-memory, "the better we remember this class of memories, the less likely it is that we will recall some previous occasion on which we did the thing in question" (23).¹⁷

Habit-memory interests Connerton most. Writing over twenty-five years ago, he is particularly struck by how scholarship had historically ignored habit-memory, with little attention given to the significance of habit as what he calls an "accumulative practice of the same" (34). The repetitions accumulate, and sediment as habit. Identifying habit-memory as a bodily practice of accumulation and sedimentation leads Connerton to look at the relationship between the social sphere and the sedimentation of memory in body through repetition, when he further distinguishes what he calls "social habit-memory," where groups remember through repetition in the social. Just as habit-memory is performative, social habit-memory, he says, is

The table is a border. A horizon. A barricade.

The table holds the text that mediates the distance
between you and me.
Us and them.

You do not undress.

social-performative (35).¹⁸ Connerton argues that images of the past and recollected knowledge of the past are conveyed and sustained through social habit-memory practices, which consist of particular bodily-social “acts of transfer” (38). Through attention to commemorative ceremonies and ritual practices, he singles out practices of repetition in the social as they make possible communal memory. He cautions against reading exclusively for the content of such practices, and suggests a focus on their forms. He highlights reiteration or reenactment of past events, and reiteration of particular bodily practices like gestures, postures and spatial relations. These both sustain communal memory and are a means through which change can be enacted and inscribed into the social. We see an overlap of individual habit-memory and social habit-memory in, for instance, particular gestural ways of speaking or accentuating speech, which are learned from immersion in community. In such gestures as well as in the ritual gestures of ceremony, bodies “keep the past” through the ability to perform actions (72). Sedimentation, the “accumulative practice of the same,” is a vital concept here (34).¹⁹

Connerton helpfully distinguishes between inscribing practices and incorporating practices, the latter as the means to the sedimentation of the past in body. Inscribing and incorporating practices, he says, are fundamentally different social practices. Incorporating practices are bodily practices in which message is imparted by means of body in action. Transmission of message in incorporating practices occurs “only during the time that ... bodies are present to sustain [a] particular activity” (72). Inscribing practices, on the other hand, require that we do something in order to store or trap information so that it is available long after the

Your script is a series of questions. You may choose the French or the English script. Please begin when you feel it is appropriate, and continue to subsequent questions as appropriate. The performance is finished when you hear a knock at the door, or when you reach the end of your script. Please remove the cloak and leave, closing the door behind you.

These are your lines.

The interrogation begins when you deem it appropriate.

informing person has ceased to do the informing (73). Writing, photography, archival records derive from inscribing practices. The example of an incorporating practice that Connerton gives is the learning of a specific posture, which involves an awareness of the appropriateness of certain postures for certain things, contexts or occasions (73). Posture is not verbalized, he explains, but depends on the presence of others in posture in order to learn. An example: I learn how to “(not) sit like a lady” by absorbing through witnessing and proximity how others sit like, or resist sitting like, or do not sit like a lady. I speak with my hands in a way that is recognizably like others in my family across generations, what Connerton has theorized as gestural lexicons, which “tacitly recall their memory of ... communal allegiance” (80). I cite what those around me do by mimicking and repeating it. These are examples of what performance theorists call the citationality of all behaviour; no notational movement of my hand nor position of my body in a chair is new, because each cites from prior movements of hands and positions in chairs. Performance theorist Richard Schechner famously called this “twice-behaved behavior” or “restored behavior.” He calls all performance “twice-behaved” in the sense that it is foundationally about repetition (Schechner 1985, 36-38).

In elaborating habit-memory and social habit memory, Connerton is describing what he calls a “mnemonics of the body” (74). Incorporating practices rely on body-to-body proximity and witnessing as mechanism of transmission, and repetition as a means to “lose history” of/as sedimentation. I cannot pinpoint when I learned (not to) sit like a lady, nor when I learned to notate my speech in very specific ways with my hands. The past is “kept in mind by a habitual memory sedimented in the body” (102-104). The defining feature

I am scripted too.

Across this table the participant-as-interrogator sees them, calls and responds to them, all this
suspended in the all-encompassing still (ness) of shadow before you, from them.

The room is dark.

There is a table lamp making the script just barely legible.

The table holds the lamp that makes readable the leap back before the moment of inscription.

There is a single spotlight against the wall opposite the table.

A body sits on a stool.

Or stands in a corner.

Or paces.

The light casts this body into relief, as shadow larger above on the wall behind.

Opposite the table.

The shadow is a still image that moves.

The shadow is live.^g

There is more than you and me here. There is the shadow that is its own figure, witnessing.

The shadow sears this body into relief. The shadow hails.

Insofar as the text hails, interpellating us, it is live.

The light catches the body and the clothes stand, draped with items.

A skirt, a corset, a coat, trousers, a headscarf, as the case may be.

The table demarcates distance, reach.

of incorporating practices, says Connerton, is that they “cannot be well accomplished without a diminution of the conscious attention that is paid to them” (101). There is an element of paradox in that a practice serves as a remembering of history precisely through a certain kind of forgetting that history; the practice becomes habit, forgets its will to remember and therefore remembers. Habit, Connerton makes clear, is knowledge, and when we cultivate habit, our body is doing the understanding. In habit, the body remembers.

My particular interest in Connerton’s incorporating practices is as a tool in demonstrating incorporation as it is and feels in process for and in performance, a conscious play in what Connerton so clearly articulates as non-discursive, almost unnoticeable processes, or processes that fall from conscious notice as they are remembered. Connerton offers us an attention to the mechanics of how bodies remember through habit. Taken as a given in Connerton is the body’s capacity to store, to be and to enact historical information. Below I will consider an archival text and gesture translation practice from my performance *ribcage: this wide passage*, in which I deploy reenactment as a strategy for simultaneously retrieving memory and sedimenting memory through repetition. My practice of repetition serves as a mnemonic technology that suspends somewhere before the always-already-sedimented that Connerton’s formulation of habit memory implies. I intervene in this “always already” by proposing that the reenactment techniques I deploy stage incorporation itself, stage the production of bodily memory. But Connerton does not really allow me to think about time as other than progressing forward. I turn to Rebecca Schneider for this reason.

Today, September 15th, 1738, we have here before us at the Maritime Police at Quebec... Your name?

Your real name?

Beware your answers. Your age?

Said individual boarded at La Rochelle on the ship St-Michel, captain Salaberry, in boys' clothes.

Father's name?

Occupation?

Place of origin?

And how did you get from Bayonne to La Rochelle?

Yes?

Rebecca Schneider: debating disappearance

Let us revisit the debate in Performance Studies that is in essence Rebecca Schneider's entry point into questions of time, bodies and remembering. In theorizing the nature of performance, Schneider problematizes the linear temporality that underlies Connerton's conceptualization of historical remembering and points to modes of affective transmission in the making and sustaining of historical memory that remain unseen in Connerton's understanding of habit-memory. Where Connerton gives a frame for understanding the mechanics of physical habit formation through the notions of incorporation and sedimentation, Schneider allows me to articulate a mechanics that integrates the physical process of memory formation with the (supposedly) immaterial or ephemeral registers of historical transmission. My aim is to articulate this mechanics through an analysis of my one-to-one performance reenactment of the interrogation of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue.

One of the ways that performance is easily dismissed as containing any historical truth claims is that performances purportedly do not leave material remains, and therefore exist only in the now, not in perpetuity like an archival record. Schneider dwells on this assumption that performance disappears, a key debated claim in Performance Studies. In a much-cited passage written by feminist performance theorist Peggy Phelan, disappearance is foregrounded as the constitutive characteristic of performance. Phelan writes:

Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded,

Sometimes Jacques La Fargue. Should only say Esther.

They answer these questions.

There is often silence.

Sometimes there is eye contact.

The body starts to sway from centre, a lean.

The reach of the table presses the gaze.
It depends which table. How far the reach.

documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations; once it does so, it becomes something other than performance ... Performance's being ... becomes itself through disappearance (1993, 146).

While Phelan's work opened the way toward exploring the immateriality of performance, her scripting performance as constituted by a kind of loss or vanishing has been amply disputed.²⁰ Taylor's argument for "repertoire," for instance, as a valid system of knowledge and memory transfer suggests, in contrast, that performance features persistence (too) rather than (just) disappearance or loss. Coming from outside of performance studies, Connerton's elaboration of bodily practices as mnemonic systems shows too that performance produces acts of retention rather than of loss, which the word disappearance conjures. Phelan's definition implies that once a show is over and the audience goes home, there is no remainder nor can there be a repeat; in the simplest sense, the video recording is not the performance, and the re-staging or repeat performance is not the so-called original. This disputed fact of performance's disappearance would pose problems for making historical claims using performance practices as evidence in a dominant landscape in which documentary evidence, or Taylor's "archive" reigns supreme. In *Archival Sense*, I took up the work of performance theorist José Muñoz, who insisted that for marginalized communities who either do not appear in inscriptive memory or whose inscriptions there are not to be trusted, affective evidence, which he terms "ephemera," constitute remains—of past lives, of encounters, of historical transpirings, of performances.

Oh? And what was the name of the ship?

I realize that you are as vulnerable as I was,
that I also have control.^h

And who was the captain?

I don't know.
It was a Dutch ship bound for Amsterdam.
Geoffroy. That was his name. The captain.

And why were you sent on this ship?

So this was in 1733 that you left. And this ship was bound for Amsterdam...

Ephemera, he argues, is evidence (2009). I demonstrated that the ephemeral/immaterial actually has bodily consequence/effect, which is very much material, in the sense of felt in body. In *Archival Sense*, I elaborated on how certain structures of feeling work through such ephemera to make evidentiary historical claims.

Schneider's challenge to the notion of performance as disappearance hinges on the possibility of connecting ephemera as remains in the affective realm with the body in performance as a venue and vehicle for what she calls "re-appearance" (2011). In my appropriation, her challenge to disappearance offers an avenue for integrating habit-memory and ephemera in a single articulation of a mechanics of historical reenactment, or a mechanics of the historical body. Schneider comes to her ideas by observing contemporary U.S. Civil War reenactment on the one hand, and re-performance of performance art on the other, the former of interest for my purposes.²¹ She observes a range of approaches to Civil War battle reenactment, often characterized by extreme fidelity to the so-called facts through archival evidence such as photographs and written accounts, an extreme attention that might be called, in theatre, method acting. Schneider is struck by the uncanny sense of touching another time through such meticulousness, which the reenactors also often feel. Through her reflections on reenactment, Schneider wonders about the logic that maintains that archives are the only authentic traces of the past, and critiques the notions that the living body itself cannot stand as a record; that the live cannot record; and that the body is only remembered in the lasting detritus that outlives it. Essentially, she is asking what if a live body in the present is that detritus, or brings alive that detritus? She writes: "When we approach performance not as that which disappears ... but as both the act of remaining and a means of re-appearance and "reparticipation" ... we are almost immediately forced to admit



The body's lean suspends, nearing parallel to the table.

Becomes unsustainable.

And falls.

Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738, Bukovac, Serbia, June 2012. Video still Heather Hermant.

that remains do not have to be isolated to the document, to the object, to bone versus flesh" (137). The body through performance is "not only disappearing but resiliently eruptive, remaining through performance like so many ghosts at the door marked "disappeared" (ibid). Times erupt into each other in performance, she says, thereby throwing into question the "habit of linear time" (36; 55).

Schneider argues that not only is the archive a kind of performance, or what I referred to in *Archival Sense* as an enactment, but that there is a causal relationship between the notion that an archive records and that performance does not. She asks, "Should we not think about the ways in which the archive depends upon performance, indeed the ways in which the archive performs the equation of performance with disappearance, even as it performs the service of saving?" (134) The archive, she says, "performs the institution of disappearance," rather than serves simply as a repository for that which is lost or has passed (140). Further, she says, archives come alive only through their (re) performance, pointing to the entanglement of what Taylor calls "archive" and "repertoire."

Schneider is interested not just in contesting archive logic, but also in undermining thinking about performance that assumes "presentism, immediacy and linear time" (19). Ultimately, she wants to understand the ways in which one time appears in another in performance (20), to "explore the ways that past, present and future occur and recur out of sequence in a complex cross-hatch not only of reference but of affective assemblage and investment" (54). She asks, "Can a trace take the form of a living foot—or only the form of a footprint? To what degree is a live act then as well as now?" (58)

Schneider arrives at a redefinition of performance through Phelan, and through the Civil War reenactors

There was a shipwreck.

Who? Who saved you?

Read the lines.
Observe you.
Self-conscious in my role.

I'm sorry, sir. What was the question?

Who? Who saved you? Where?

What was the name of the widow?

The realism. Your binding. The sewing.
When you were about to cry. The locked gaze.

So you stayed with Madame Churiau.

Sitting in judgment, I wonder about the effect of

And after fifteen days?

A ship from Bordeaux?

and performance artists she studies, arguing that rather than becoming itself through disappearance, "performance becomes itself through messy and eruptive re-appearance" (137-138).²³ This follows from her assertion that the body is "resiliently eruptive," which suggests that it houses (access to) the past. The body, she seems to say, has some quality which allows it to "store" a dormant past, and to serve as a vehicle for that past's eruption in the present, its recurrence. This eruption of one time in another occurs through remains that are, or are accessed, t/here in the body. Finally, Schneider says, we might also want to recalibrate Phelan's notion with attention to our habituation to the ocular: performance, with that recalibration, becomes "that which cannot remain to be seen," but which nevertheless remains (133).

But how, precisely, does this reappearance function? What are the mechanics of ephemerality, we might ask, in this reappearance? And what do these mechanics have to do with the mechanics of habit memory that Connerton articulates? In examining my reenactment of Brandeau / La Fargue through one-to-one performance, I bring into conversation the workings of ephemerality with the physicality of repetition that Connerton puts at the core of habit-memory. This allows me to arrive at an integrated understanding of the mechanics of the historical body, one in which material physicality is decidedly affective, and one in which ephemerality is decidedly material. To do so, I make explicit what I see as a missing link in Connerton and Schneider, which is transtemporal haunting.²⁴ A closer attention to Schneider's views on "repetition" will lead us in that direction.

They are grabbing things, clothing. Sits. They start to undress.

Back to me. You. Their back is to you.

Repetition – Recording

Repetition is a term that comes up with Connerton's incorporating practices, as we have seen; it is the mechanism that allows habit memory to become sedimented. Repetition is also prominent in Schneider. For Schneider, repetition can be understood at differing but often concurrent scales: repetition as in reenactment or (re-)staging of an entire Civil War battle; or repetition as in the reenactment or repeat of a single gesture, pose, or action (50). There is an ambiguity around whether and when she is talking about micro or macro scales. One might tend to see re-performance of a past event in its entirety as a "reenactment" and "repetition" as operating on a smaller, bodily scale like memorization of a truism or a bodily gesture, but I have identified that Schneider blurs such distinctions in the slips and slides between these words, and others such as "mimesis."

In Schneider, repetition in performance is articulated as a mechanism for the eruption of one time in another. She sees repetition as a means to play across and with time, or as she puts it, to play with "the replay of evidence ... back across the body in gestic negotiation" (23). She writes, for instance, that placing bodies in "gestic compositions" in reenactments places reenactors in a circumstance of recurring sedimented acts of those soldiers who played those gestural compositions prior (24). In fact imitation (used here as synonym for reenactment and repetition) "may even be a kind of syncopation machine for the touching of time" (51), syncopation meaning that present time and past time punch into tactility rhythmically in the reenactment. Mimesis, she says, can be "a potentially powerful tool for cross- or intra-temporal negotiation, even (perhaps) interaction or inter(in)animation of one time with another time" (51). Interanimation signals how one might

And how did you get yourself on this ship bound for Nantes?

What if I can say this later? What if I wait? Is she going to do something else? Something more?

Who was the captain?

And once in Nantes?

It made me nervous trying to get it all right.

And did you continue to sail with this captain Bernard?

Which ship? Where to? And you stayed in Nantes?

You went all the way to Rennes! And what did you do there?

Name of the tailor? For how long? And after?

All the way to Clisson. And in Clisson?

Which religious? You left for where? Saint-Malo? Who was this baker in Saint-Malo?

Tell me, where did this Servanne live in Saint-Malo?

And how long did you work there?

From Saint-Malo to Vitré. And what did you find in Vitré?

A lackey for whom? What regiment? What was this soldier's name?

You left and...?

I was willing to believe the story had happened.

I saw two people and I believed too.

animate the other, and/or be found in the other.²⁵ In Schneider, repetition is seen as a tool for challenging the very existence of a fixed, singular pinnable past. Through bodies in reenactment—through repetition—past and present lose their logical order, because the past, it suddenly seems, reappears in the present, the past and present seem to be in negotiation, in contact.

Importantly, she notes that there is a degree of difference through repetition, such that repetition not be understood as exact replica. A body in reenactment can be “evidence that something can touch the more distant historical record, if not evidence of something authentic itself” (137). Here she is noting that the evidence that the body performing reenactment provides is not an exact replica of the past, but evidence of access to the past, evidence of proximity to or approaching the past. The body in repetition is a vehicle for that proximity (*ibid.*). We could say that the body in reenactment is evidence of the inter-reach of the present into the past and vice versa.

She does caution on a distinction between the notion of exact replica, and the reappearance of the past in the present through reenactment. While many reenactors she witnesses and interviews claim minute faith to archival details, she notes that

Reenactment is not ... one thing in relation to the past, but exists in a contested field of investment across sometimes widely divergent affiliations to the question of what constitutes fact ... [E]ven though a reenactive action might “touch” the past...

that touch is not entirely co-identical to the past nor itself unembattled. It is both /
and ... (82).

Reenactment, she says, features anachronism and functions through manipulating anachronism, in order to touch time (79). Repetition, she says, “manipulates error in relation to an authenticity that invites, even demands revisions...” (61). Schneider invokes this difference in reenactment, in repetition—this “error”—as a means of preservation. First, she notes that a repeated act, through and in its very repetition, remains, and we can see this as a definition of repetition, through its effects: “An action repeated again and again and again ... has a kind of staying power—persists through time—and even, in a sense, serves as a fleshy kind of “document” of its own recurrence” (58). She draws on Amiri Baraka’s description of jazz as remaining the “changing same,” when she notes that “performance, too, preserves by way of difference, again and again” (94fn21). Here we recall a sedimented act, as in Connerton, where the body is evidence of the whole history of that act, now lost. But it gets interesting for me with Schneider when she begins to talk about transmission between bodies in the context of historical reenactment, for this is when she begins to speak of those seemingly immaterial registers that Muñoz would call ephemera (2009). She suggests that there is more to it than learning gestures and poses, and moving across battle fields precisely according to historical documentation. In reenactment, she says, “the place of residue is arguably flesh in a network of body-to-body transmission of affect and enactment—evidence across generations” (135). Residue is the stuff of time’s reappearances, resident in and activated by bodies as evidence. She suggests that the “hard labor of affect”

I wanted to be meaner. I wanted to be a torturer.
I wanted to go slow and make you squirm.
I didn't know how much I wanted to commit ...
I wanted to have more.

You were arrested. Where were you arrested? What were you arrested for?
A mistake. And once released?
Where you boarded the ship Saint-Michel as a passenger, yes?
And why, tell us, did you find it necessary to disguise your sex for five years?

I lived as a woman until 23 and have been living as a man. It's "my" story.

Because when you were saved from the shipwreck and you stayed with the widow?

It was startling to hear that the person claims to have hid because they were Jewish.
Would people understand passing as Christian more than passing as male?

Today, September 15th, 1738, here before us, appearing at the Maritime Police at Quebec we have Esther Brandeau, of the Jewish religion, daughter of David Brandeau, merchant of Saint-Esprit, Bayonne, diocese of Daxe, Jewish by nation.

You want to be a girl, you want be a boy, do whatever
you want. You're Jewish. I'm going to have to address
that.

in reenactment is one thing that is transmitted (158), which elsewhere she refers to as "the affective stain that ... passes between bodies and across time" (178). All of this tantalizingly points toward of the workings of ephemera. Key to this is Schneider's description of the uncanny quality of reenactment, where this passing of affective stain between bodies and across times occurs:

[D]espite or perhaps because of the error-ridden mayhem of trying to touch the past, something other than the discrete "now" of everyday life can be said to occasionally occur – or recur [in reenactment]. This something other is well known in practices linked to theatre, art, and ritual, if more alien to practices such as historiography that profess to privilege "hard" facts or material remains over "softer," ephemeral traces such as the affective, bodily sensation or (re)actions of those living too far into the future for proper, evidentiary recall (29).

In other words, something weird happens sometimes in reenactment. That weirdness has something to do with a trip-up in time, and is evidence of cross-temporal engagement.²⁶ Reenactment, Schneider says, "trips the otherwise daily condition of repetition" (ibid), as in trips up taken for granted bodily habits; in reenactment the repetition goes into a "reflexive hyper-drive, expanding the experience into the uncanny" (30). Reenactment, she says, often generates the feeling of being strange while also being familiar.²⁷ Reenactors, says Schneider, may make Richard Schechner's "twice-behaved behavior" available for recognition, and she suspects this

is made possible through this sense of “the right but not quite right” that characterises reenactment. In other words, something about reenactment makes recognizable the fact that bodily habits are the consequence of repetition, of citing prior gesture over time. It makes the process of incorporation recognizable (25).

We have seen in Schneider and Connerton the importance of repetition as a mechanism for sedimenting memory, and we have seen in Schneider repetition as a means of surfacing differences that preserve the past, while also troubling distinctions between past and present, and between document and body in performance. Schneider, in other words, goes beyond Connerton, by casting the body in reenactment as a vehicle for eruption of one time in another; that the body in repetition is a means to preserve through difference; and through the difference of reenactment, one finds the means to “touch time.” But how, precisely, can we pursue this mechanics of remembering across time, time’s travels beyond the physical act of gesture into habit? What might be a transtemporal sociality in remembering, made evident by practices of reenactment? This we will pursue in analysis of my own performance works of reenactment, in a set of reenactment techniques, which I call “becoming archive.” I want to look at this weirdness, this uncanny quality of reenactment that Schneider identifies, and name it explicitly as a site of (evidence of) haunting, an aspect entirely absent in Connerton, and which is not explicitly pursued in Schneider, as constitutive of the effects of repetition, even as it may be implied in the notion of reappearance. I will do so principally through reflection on my one-to-one (re)staging of the interrogation of Brandeau / La Fargue. First I will consider the distinct experience of being on the inside of the practices that both Connerton and Schneider theorize.

The interrogator gets up to leave. The cloak is coming off.
An unscripted insistence arrests the (former) interrogator:

Do you believe me?

Je suis Jacques La Fargue.

L'empire is more present in French.

The interrogated asks again, just as the door is reached:

Do you believe me?

Who is asking who?

Vous me croyez?

Ça ne fait aucune différence.

Things were unclear in a very interesting way, that
exchange of looks.

Me left silent, simply because there was no more text for
me to read.

What does it matter what I think?

And what will you do sir, what will happen?

Being inside reenactment

Natalie Zemon Davis reflects on the experience of making a film from her book about a sixteenth century case of impersonation, and notes that through consulting on and observing the making of the film, she came to see that "I had my own historical laboratory, generating not proofs but historical possibilities" (N. Davis 1983, viii).²⁸ "It was then," she writes, "that I first began to think of historical film as a "thought experiment" (N. Davis 2000, Preface para 5). My performance work too can be described as thought experiment and/or laboratory, but the important point is that my performance work differs from making a film or a play and standing on the outside to observe as the process unfolds. Watching images come into being is different from embodying them. I am the performer; I enter the story in body. The knower here cannot be separate(d) from the known. In performance, I am immersed in the labour of doing. Likewise, there is a difference between witnessing a Civil War battle reenactment, and being a reenactor, even though the so-called "outside" witness position Schneider occupies can sometimes slip into an inside position. I am not an outside observer, but the reenactor. Mine is the body playing with sedimented acts in gestic negotiation. The practice of reenactment is activated by and remembered in body for me, the same body that reflects after the fact here on reenactment as a technique of knowledge production.

In what follows, I investigate what my reenactment strategies yield as reiterations of particular scenarios. I will do so through attention to: 1) a research practice of extreme physical labour as reenactment of the scenario of exile; 2) a performance practice of gestural translation as reenactment of the scenario of

It feels more real, in my body, in me, when I do it in French.
This is where we've arrived back to.

Gather things. Head for the door.

The table in its physicality becomes a transtemporal divide.

She will later say in that moment she recognized
the larger power of colonial logic that overwhelmed any single actor.

She will say, It's not that person [the colonial official himself]. It sounds
horrible, That's the way it is.

interrogation; and 3) a one-to-one performance as reenactment of the scenario of interrogation as outing. We will arrive at an articulation of what I call "becoming archive," a set of critical reenactment techniques with implications for: understandings of reenactment; the relationship between documentary/materially inscribed history and performance based modes of remembering; and the body, transtemporality and haunting. These elaborations comprise a unique linking of Connerton, Schneider and Taylor through articulation of a mechanics of remembering in which physical body, cultural archive and "immaterial" / ephemeral registers are interanimate.

The extreme labour of repetition

Brazilian artist-scholar Oriana Duarte researches feminist Foucaultian philosophy by taking up extreme sport as a philosophical methodology (Duarte 2012; Hermant 2014).²⁹ For her dissertation, she became a rower, training intensively for months and then rowing the rivers of Brazil while recording her practice in multiple creative and reflective forms including scholarly writing, autoethnographic writing, photo and video, drawing and installation. Duarte describes the state induced by such demanding, repetitive physical-psychological labour as rowing, by inventing terms where language failed to adequately describe the conditions she experienced, such as the *rapprochement*, the near-merging she experienced between her labouring body and land, water, boat, oar. For instance, she dreams of experiencing the water from the perspective of her oar passing under and through it, or she experiences herself as merged with boat, which she names "corpobarco" (Duarte 2012, 40; Hermant 2014, 65-66). Duarte's work shows that repetition has

What I haven't found in the one-to-one performance but that I do find in the theatre piece is this assertion of Jewishness. ... Here I'm asserting Je suis Jacques La Fargue. I did feel like I tried to do it with you [Interrogator, French]. You said, "Yeah but you're Jewish" and I just looked [gestures looking straight at you]. That was my way of saying, "And? What are you going to do?"ⁱ

Yes.

No.

temporal and spatial consequences; extreme labour of repetition accumulates impacts in body that shift the logic of the senses, opening to different perceptions of the relationship between body, geography, space and time.

In my own performance practice working with the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, I have come to see a relationship between repetition, extreme bodily labour and perceptions of time and sensing. I have experienced how repetitive physical labour can take one deep into body, into an immersion in what I will call total physicality. This is a condition that I also approach in some of the ways I perform Brandeau / La Fargue for audiences. I was first acutely attuned to the effects of extreme labour when walking from Portugal to Spain as part of my research on the story of Brandeau / La Fargue, research that I undertook for the creation of the solo interdisciplinary theatre work, *ribcage: this wide passage*. This research then fed creation of the one-to-one performance, *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738*, and the dissertation itself.

I walked a sacred Christian pilgrimage, the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, from Porto, Portugal through Spain with the intention of walking all the way to Brandeau's Bayonne, in southwestern France. The Camino de Santiago is a series of pilgrimage routes from across Europe that all lead to the place of the apostle Saint James' purported burial in the Galician city of Santiago de Compostela. I used the Camino to perform a reenactment of a path of Jewish and Converso exile from Inquisition-era Iberia to France. I did so as a means of researching the historical background of the Inquisition as formative of Brandeau / La Fargue's trajectory. In doing so, I reiterated the scenario of exile through the repetitive labour of walking with a tide of people toward a sacred place, but also as if away from a place of persecution toward the refuge of crypto-

Does not finding assertion of Jewishness in the one-to-one have to do with form/genre? Even as I say (the convenient) “She made me eat pork and other forbidden meats...”

Twenty minutes build toward the unscripted question—Do you believe me?—that sometimes opens to further unscripted dialogue, and which sometimes lands while you are still in costume, at the table, and sometimes when you have left the role of interrogator behind. The most compelling moment of the encounter, nestled at the interstice between bodies—interrogator and participant, you and you, participant and interrogatee, you and them, participant and performer—and between times—time of performance and time of its end, time of its interruption by the next performance, time of archival inscription, 1738, and the present. Suddenly all of those bodies and times are simultaneously present. You I never touch you me, but I feel your my skin with your my eyes. I you feel my your touch through fear. We are in the “syncopated time of reenactment, where then and now punctuate each other,” a time that is characterized by a nervousness.^l

Silence.

Jewish community in France. I essentially performed the scenario of pilgrimage as exile.

As I covered geography at the repetitive walking pace of 20-30 kilometres per day for two weeks in sometimes extreme weather, such immersion in total physicality shifted my experience of time and space. The reenactment battered my body—I was on crutches for some of it—and it refused me the psychological strength to complete the task I had set for myself. I diverted to Santiago, not toward France and finished at Finisterre, Spain, which translates as the End of the World, the westernmost point of continental Europe. In the extreme labour of total physicality, my typical sense of temporal distance (e.g. ten years ago, three hundred years ago) seemed to compress; it seemed multiple eras could layer on top of each other in a kind of concurrence. Like eyes staring at a font on a computer screen for hours, then suddenly looking up to a distant horizon out the window, such a shift makes one hyper-aware of a particular sense and sensing. One experiences one’s senses differently. In fact, one becomes attuned to sense itself. A research practice that is performance based, in this example of a reiterated scenario, makes the very natures of sensing and of time perceivable, through difference from ordinary conditions of the body. My body became a means to sense time as other than singular and linear, through extreme physicality. I have deployed extreme physicality through repetition in my subsequent reenactment performances of *Brandeau / La Fargue*, in different ways, for instance through the physical theatre in *ribcage*; and through the durational labour of the one-to-one performance. Below I will discuss aspects of both these performances, but not specifically the aspect of extreme physical labour. We must bear in mind, however, that extreme physical labour as a repetition tool and its consequences, is present in these reenactments as well. The insight this yields is the flexibility, non-linearity and concurrence possibilities of time.

I lose track of the moment of beginning to pass. Do I actually pass?

I have no sense of passing at all. Even as you see multiple people. I move from male to female or female to male in each twenty minute performance, assembling the apparatus of the gender pass in plain view. When you say “Je suis Jacques La Fargue” you are in trousers.

(How now to communicate that I see repetition through memory, and so stand outside myself performing watching as if a witness? But

I am still communicating now with you, reader. And you are them, the witness(es). I address them. You.) When I say “Je suis Jacques

La Fargue” I have tucked a blouse into a skirt. You see two distinct people. Is the shadow gendered? Do you see the transtemporal something-once-like-“race” pass? Is it seeable? Hands in prayer. Clutch the headscarf tight. All and none of it is passing. Interrogation after interrogation after interrogation. Four in a row. Five in a row. Three in a row. Only one person experiences this repetition, retains each interrogation in body, accumulates. I sometimes remember nothing in the way of “concrete” details. You are my witness. You. Me. She. Them. He. Not interchangeable. I move. Approach each, dragging residue between.

Me: I was saying that it's so much harder to go from the male to the female. I was thinking about it dramaturgically, like, to find how. And Melina said, "Yeah, but don't you think that it's just because you prefer to be in the male?" Yes. So part of what's on display there is just that. *Que je préfère jouer l'homme.* It feels more grounded when I arrive here [legs apart sitting forward] than when I'm [legs together, sitting back.]

You: It's so funny because the woman is so ... that bound thing.

Me: Which is funny because this [breasts] is bound.ⁱ

Have you noticed the rhythm of this text?
Have your eyes moved in zigzag from one page to adjacent page as you move vertically tracking simultaneity, or have your eyes moved vertically down first one page, then the next? Try what you haven't yet, now.

Making habit

I now want to explore what happens when a labour of repetition is worked through and composed for performance. Through analysis of a particular scene in *ribcage: this wide passage* in which I perform a "gestic translation machine," I propose a technique of historical reenactment that can enable sensing the process of incorporation itself and in so doing, enable knowing and perceiving the interanimation of document and body, or archive and repertoire. Schneider proposes what might happen in reenactment: the citationality of bodily habit might become perceivable. She proposes this as a consequence of the uncanny that sometimes characterizes historical reenactment. I want to leave the uncanny for now and shift slightly using Connerton's terms: through reenactment, the process of incorporation becomes perceivable. Through Connerton's terms, I offer a case study as a reenactor that affirms Schneider's proposal.

The gestic translation sequence in *ribcage: this wide passage* comes toward the end of this 70-minute very physical theatre work.³⁰ It is a mnemonic apparatus that remembers through rhythm, gesture and text, making text into mnemonics of body. Verbatim testimonial text and its translations drawn from the archival records—the original interrogation record and associated documents, their translations to English—are passed through a translation into gesture according to the text's syllabic-sonic character, such that I gesturally translate the phonetics while I simultaneously recite vocally the text itself. It is the sounds, inflections and rhythms of the words in the interrogation that find translation through body, not the literal translation of each word's meaning to an illustrative gesture. I am calling this recitation/translation of the text a form of

The one-to-one performance *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738* is durational, a durational rhythm of repertoric accumulation. In durational performance, time itself is a material, like body, or voice, or visual, or. The audience in sequence, not amassed. Each encounter makes explicit the transtemporal movement the body is capable of. The accumulation of/in performances makes knowable the body in a constant state of recording in transmission. You touch across time by becoming the archive with them. We enact a deeper, closer encounter between body of researcher and archival text by becoming the text between bodies.

“reenactment,” underpinned as it is by repetition of and faith to the original source texts in recitation. Thus I extend Schneider’s notion of “reenactment” into the blur between “reenactment” and “repetition” through faithful repetition of text. The gestic translation sequence reenacts the interrogation, outing, judgement, attempted disciplining and deportation of Brandeau / La Fargue through verbatim memorization and translation into bodily gesture of archival accounts of these.

The memorization-translation is a sedimentation into habit-memory that begins in studio alone as I enter text into memory syllable by syllable through translation to gesture. A body meets the interrogation record. One could call it both a collision and a collaboration. The body, through incorporating that text, is committing to memory as a bodily memory that contests the text it ingests. It is a process of disidentifying with the text through its incorporation into memory, its memorization, its sedimentation. We could say that the text is both remembered and brought to life in performance as a disidentified record. Meaning lives somewhere between the literal words of the text and the gesture language I have created from visceral responses to the text, gestures that my body performs as a “translation” device. Those visceral responses then erupt into the text, bearing another layer of (counter)knowledge, through gesture. The translation device I create is a mnemonic system. What appears to be happening is a two-way translation; the gestural vocabulary enters a kind of discursive meaning through the text of testimonial record, even as it also means in the non-discursive. Concurrently, the text is made to exceed the meaning of its seemingly straightforward words through the inventory of visceral responses that the gestures transmit.

Through repetition, the text is slowly incorporated, inseparable from the physical sensations of the

I literally couldn't look at you.
The performance as "shapeshifting" ... I can still
recall your face like her in front of me instead of
your face "in real life," which I almost forgot.

You were mean. You were not mean.

Scary. ... I felt more like a protagonist than an
investigator.
The whole atmosphere was scary.

gestures that enable its memorizing. As it is learned it becomes habit. This process of memorizing a text through its structural elements—sound, rhythm, inflection—translated to gesture is an incorporating practice. But it is more complicated than committing text and gesture to memory. The gestic translation machine functions as a relationship between certain sounds and inflections, and gestures. So this gestic translation machine's logic too must be incorporated. Gesture must re-enter my body as an association between gesture and text. Meaning lies in the performance of that association. Meaning is on/in the move. The document requires the machine in performance to come to mean. The text is in process of sedimentation through a gestic translation machine, as sedimented text-gesture. Incorporative and inscriptive memory, then, become blurred. The gestic translation machine becomes both a somatic and a discursive mode of historical memory and its transmission. This complicated process allows me to experience, stage and underscore the process of body habit-memory making, and the entwinement of text and body, how text requires body to activate its meaning. This is what Schneider might call an interanimation of archive and body in performance, where one is in the other, and animated by the other. Each track in this two-track—gesture, text—remembers something other or more than text or gesture. Each becomes a cue for the other.

When I perform this gestic translation machine on stage, I am in a way performing a suspension somewhere between habit—which has forgotten its history, the labour required for sedimentation—and the performatic—a deliberate performance before an audience. In that staging, I am suspended in the before—or syncopated with—the moment of forgetting that history of/as labour, the process of forgetting the history that

The table made you threatening, unreachable.

is the hallmark of incorporation, according to Connerton. I perform habit-memory's making, in process. What I am adding to Connerton is a complication to the idea of habit-memory as always already having forgotten its history. What I contribute to Schneider is an affirmation of the suspicion that repetition makes citationality perceivable, in the flow between discursive and non-discursive. I perceive how bodily habit is made through its making. Further I perceive the interrelation of incorporating and inscribing practices; I have entwined perception of incorporation in process with perception of body as enactor of text, as requirement for the activation of text's meaning and transmission. The enactment of the archival record, its on-the-moveness as transmission comes to be in the act of performing before an audience. What is transmitted, I hope, is not just the text and the gesture, but also the move and the simultaneity of "inscriptive – incorporative – transmissive" practices and, ultimately, the fragility of a single kind of record, its construction, its enactment, its contingency, its liveness, the very interinanimation of evidences. The text ceases to be fixed to its identity as account, as the body in a sense invades it, overwhelms it, enacts it. The gestic translation machine, I propose, is a technique of historical reenactment that can enable sensing the process of incorporation and in so doing, also enables knowing and perceiving the interinanimation of document and body, or archive and repertoire.

Collaborative haunting

I would now like to return to the uncanny quality of reenactment that Schneider notices, by considering my durational one-to-one performance *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738* (hereafter *Aujourd'hui*). I will propose a

They said later. Wrote to me. Moved. Disturbed. Liked it most when there was eye-to-eye contact. When you were about to cry. Saw more than one person even though I changed in front of them. Disoriented by the unscripted question. Surprised by the “more alive”-ness than what you expected. Unable to elaborate a reflection beyond “scary,” “intense,” “a piece I won’t forget,” “emotional,” “trapped.” Unsettled by not knowing what to do. The whole experience, new. Weird. You found playing the interrogator was more emotional, deeper, more, than being a witness. It was more believable in French. L’empire is there in the French, way more, you said. In English it’s not there. Performance anxiety. Will you do it right? Pronunciation. Difficulty with the proximity between themselves and the performer. Wanting to do it right, perform mean, but wanting to take care of you. Me. Only one of you was really willing to yell at me. Disturbed by enjoying playing the powerful. Difficulty with the space between performing and observing. Feeling time going too fast even though it takes at most twenty-five minutes to deliver a text of questions and answers that take less than four minutes to read.

technique of reenactment as a haunting machine that allows transtemporal touch, through that “immaterial” which transmits across bodies in collaborative performance. Thus, I will explore the workings of ephemera in the transmission of historical remembering. Here, I explore reenactment through faithful adherence to textual information in the interrogation record. This performance is (re)staged on the page above in the Supertext. In *Aujourd’hui* my aim is to deliver, through a translation to first person voice script, only the details given in the original archival record pertaining to the case of Brandeau / La Fargue. I reenact the interrogation recorded in the testimony by playing Brandeau / La Fargue while an audience member plays the interrogator, French Colonial Intendant Hocquart. The audience member follows a script I provide for them within the performance space.³¹ The question-answer structure is not found in the archival document, but is implied. I use the question-answer format as the means to reenact an encounter or series of encounters, which might have generated what is provided in the third person voice testimonial record. The performance lasts approximately twenty-five minutes for the audience participant, but lasts longer for me; audience-participant interrogators come one after another without pause, up to five interrogators in a row in a single performance event.

Aujourd’hui is a one-to-one durational performance. One audience member at a time sees “the show,” or rather has an experience with the performer. Durational performance refers to performance that makes use of time itself as an artistic medium. This one-to-one performance is “durational” in the sense that performing the interrogation over and over again with audience members one after another, as a single sustained performance for me, has consequences: first, for audience members as they enter the aftermath,

shadow^k

noun

1. a dark image or shape cast on a surface by the interception of light rays by *an opaque body*
 2. an area of relative darkness
 3. ~~the dark portions of a picture~~
 4. a hint, image, or faint semblance, ~~beyond a shadow of a doubt~~
 5. a remnant or vestige a shadow of one's past self
 6. a reflection
 7. a threatening influence; blight, ~~a shadow over one's happiness~~
 8. a spectre
 9. *an inseparable companion*
 10. ~~a person who trails another in secret, such as a detective~~
 11. (med) a dark area on an X-ray film representing an opaque structure or part
 12. (in Jungian psychology) the archetype that represents man's animal ancestors
 13. (archaic or rare) *protection or shelter*
 14. (modifier) (Brit) ~~designating a member or members of the main opposition party in Parliament who would hold ministerial office if their party were in power, shadow Chancellor, shadow cabinet~~
- verb (transitive)
15. to cast a shadow over
 16. to make dark or gloomy; blight
 17. to shade from light
 18. *to follow or trail* secretly
 19. (often foll by forth) to represent vaguely
 20. (painting, drawing) another word for shade (sense 13)
-

so to speak, of preceding interrogations, and second, for me as these experiences accumulate.

The words spoken in *Aujourd'hui* sit explicitly alongside other information in an interplay between "realistic" speech exchange and "surrealistic" gesture, as I move in two registers: one we might call ordinary action—I sit, I stand, I answer the questions—and another, extraordinary movement that suspends "regular" progression and regular stance of the body. For example, I suspend the reach for an item of clothing, or I freeze in the moment of shirt half-way over my head. Through each reenacted interrogation, I slowly change clothes from "Jacques" to "Esther" or "Esther" to "Jacques," in whichever direction I am left to follow from the end of the previous interrogation. Thus, some audience members first encounter a male-presenting figure, some a female-presenting figure. The change is entirely visible to the audience member. All my movements are caught through lighting in shadow against the wall behind me like a reflective screen for the viewer/participant. The entire performance is intended to be "contained" within the era of the interrogation itself, with one vital exception. At the end of the performance, when the audience member has reached the end of the script, has removed their costume, gathered their things and is leaving the performance space, I state my name: "Je suis Jacques La Fargue," and I ask a question: "Do you believe me?" This arrests us in an explicitly transtemporal exchange.

Multiple times are concurrent in *Aujourd'hui*. The performance's intention is to serve as a space for collaboratively witnessing and participating in the transtemporal, through the weird sense of right but not quite that Schneider calls the uncanny. There is the present day of the performance, which the audience enters from and exits back into. There is time of the interrogation, uttered at the outset of the exchange: September

There were five of you at most, each time. (It seems now that I am in dialogue with the witnesses, and you are among them, though you were not there. And I am still moving, dragging between. Are you (made to be) moving, dragging between? And I am in dialogue with myself, post.) Five times five. There was not always a ready interrogator. That is when the anticipation of the opening door weighed heavier. Suspension in multiple worlds and temporalities manifested between slow suspended unrealistic movement, silence, gaze, waiting, waiting, waiting on the one hand, and the pace of realistic question and answer within and sometimes interrupting this slow motion, this place where whole worlds pass through a set of eyes. They just sit there, staring, accessing worlds. I liked when I could see you express pride or joy at memories on your face. The joy appears when the widow. Cut. Suspend time, slow it, yet it seems to go too fast. My heart racing in the discomfort of recounting now, re-entering it, safer now in recollection.

I am most intrigued by the loss of words, the single adjectives grasping at description.
Something happened.
Is it the shadow?

15th, 1738. There is the time of gesture. Gesture, as we have seen in previous analysis, recalls, compacts a history, announces a process of incorporation always underway. The bodily gestures I use throughout *Aujourd'hui* are drawn from *ribcage: this wide passage*. The gestures in *Aujourd'hui* then are also a record of *ribcage*, especially the sacred binding ritual and its echoes of undoing in the gestic translation machine, reanimated.

The transtemporal effort that is *Aujourd'hui* sets the stage, I propose, for sensing haunting. We might think of *Aujourd'hui* as a haunting machine that relies upon the witness who also performs. In *Aujourd'hui*, the body in the gestic is something like an outside eye on the encounter between interrogator and interrogatee; it haunts the encounter, the body watching/sensing. The body shadows, even as it is materially present. What is transmitted travels through or hovers in the shadow on the wall and hovers in the bodily movement that produces shadow. We might think of the shadow as remains, immaterial residue, an affective stain that travels as I see a participant-interrogator's eyes move from my eyes to looking behind and beyond me at the shadow on the wall, my body's non-identical, abstracted, enlarged, distorted double, made something else in shadow. The shadow looms, presses upon the encounter. *Aujourd'hui* as a collaborative reenactment allows us to sense across time that which hovers about our transaction. That which hovers about our transaction, that which shadows and compels forward the exchange, I propose, is haunting. We sense a haunting, which is the story reenacted. Schneider might call this working with the uncanny, the strange feeling of the concurrent "real" and not, now and then, me and not me, you and not you, through which one time erupts into

The shadow is a dark shape or image cast on a surface. The shadow, it seems, is more than simply that which is cast because of the way in which an object interferes with light. The shadow offers. It trails. It accompanies. It is a spectre. A vestige. A faint hint of. It threatens. Protects. Reflects. The object itself impedes the passage of light. Is dark. Stands in the way of light. Is a consequence. What makes a body opaque?

co-presence in another.

The insight of this particular technique of reenactment is sensing haunting—blurred in time between constitutive of, and a consequence of transtemporal movement, of affective stain traveling body-to-body. In the re-staging of *Aujourd'hui* in the Supertext, and in particular through the integrated comments of participants, one can sense the transformation of the experience of time that the performance produces, and the uncanny sensation elicited in the experience of seeing performer concurrent with seeing performer as distinctly someone/something else. These sensations are not, I propose, autonomous to the participant, but exist in transmission between us, in our haunted exchange. Haunting, as we have seen in *Archival Sense*, is an effect produced from the past pressing upon and insisting upon the present, its unfinished business hovering (Gordon 2008 [1997]). What Connerton pays no heed to, and which Schneider points towards, I will propose is what happens in that uncanny sensation: the not-quite-right sensation is an effect that haunting produces through historical reenactment. Reenactment, then, can be understood as a technique that makes haunting recognizable. This would imply that transtemporal touch, the eruption of one time in another characteristic of historical reenactment according to Schneider, requires haunting. That is precisely what I propose, and it is a proposition that comes importantly, and perhaps can only come, from within a practice of reenactment.

Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738, Rhubarb Festival, Toronto, February, 2012. Photo Kaija Siirala. Used with permission.





A seventeen year-old young man refuses to end the performance. The interrogation starts anew, more hurried, more frustrated, more angry, more deliberate, all the way through to the end of the script, again. He is exasperated and walks away, then tells me—me, not them—that he is frustrated that I am not seeing his attempt to find an opening, to break the script, to counter the ending the testimony inscribes. He has attempted a double-speak, and he thinks I have missed it. The alternative reading is not evident in the text itself. The interrogator has tried to find an out for us both. Confined to the text, he is saying this but meaning that. He is trying to direct the possibility of a different answer. Even if I fail to hear his call, we have performed the testimony as a necessary colonial performance, beneath which lies another, collaborative counter-intention. It is this young man's visceral response to the text, which guides his reading: the interrogator seeking a joint out. He knows it in body. He has found it in body confronted with my body, in the exchange between our bodies, in performance. The seventeen year-old young man writes in the comment book post-performance, "Umm. Yes."

Collaborative archival research, performed.

An eighteen year-old young woman performs in French, her third language, and later obliquely outs herself. She wonders to me privately, "What if someone maybe wanted to play her since she maybe is Jewish herself?" She knows something of the pass? Watches again and again, plays again and again. When she is gone, she enters the next performance through my body incorporated, recording, gestic. It is not what Javier Serna suggests as the repertoric (re)edit, but accumulation.¹ Not sedimentation but incorporated accumulation, which lives in the move, moved between bodies, in the afterlife of bodily encounter. If there is edit, it is that what is accumulated depends upon what is proximate, what is available to be incorporated.

Becoming archive

We have seen above three particular strategies, or techniques, of historical reenactment that allow certain insights to emerge through the performing body. I cast these three strategies as critical reiterations of scenarios through historical reenactment, where the scenario reenacted both reiterates as well as critically engages with the scenario reenacted. Taylor's elaboration of the concept of "scenario" has to do with structures of dominance and the colonization of the Americas. I extend the notion to conditions of forced exile, interrogation and outing as they mark the trajectory of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. To reenact Brandeau / La Fargue is to reiterate entangled scenarios. The *procès-verbal* in the case of Brandeau / La Fargue is a giving of testimony which I have called a record of interrogation. Entangled scenarios meet in the interrogation: a scenario of interrogation, a scenario of discovery (outing), a scenario of conversion, all of which are scenarios of dominance, scenarios that code colonizing relations. The interrogation demands confession, threatens punishment, presumes sin.³² Critical reiteration entails reenactment of a scenario that exposes something of the scenario itself. This I have set out to do in my historical reenactments of Brandeau / La Fargue, and it may be that critical reiteration of scenario as intention in historical reenactment is vital for the insights yielded: the ability to sense time, to sense incorporation, to sense haunting.

In the historical reenactments that I discuss above, I critically reiterate scenarios by making apparent matters related to time, sense, encounter and the body in/as historical remembering. We addressed first the effects of extreme physical labour in a reiteration of the scenario of exile. I proposed that the body's repetition of a single act at high intensity over a long duration—in this case walking long distances as a kind

In the exchange of question and answer, body occupied by and having ingested the text, incorporated (through) its repetition and given over to being in transtemporal affective residue, occupied/occupying body brings us into intimate proximity. In affective touch transtemporally across this space. I am the catalyzing vessel for that negotiated proximity. Multiple intimacies.

Closer to my subject, to you.

Their body incorporates the archive in that moment, through the leap of affect.^m

Your body remembers something. In doing this, in repeating a story almost,
together record the leap.

The utter exhaustion of an hour and a half of performing reenactments of
interrogations back to back.
Dizzying. Disorientation.

of commemorative event—generated a transformed experience of time. This technique of reenactment, I proposed, allowed sensing time itself, and revealed the possibility of a non-linear or concurrent quality to time, throwing into doubt the pastness of the past. The second historical reenactment technique we addressed was the gestic translation machine, in which archival text is reenacted as verbatim repetition with simultaneous translation to gesture, like a live two-track that performs—as a kind of disidentified text—the scenario of interrogation (and related scenarios of conversion, disciplining and so on). I proposed that the gestic translation machine allowed sensing the process of incorporation itself, or sedimentation into habit-memory which is to say, the making of non-discursive memory. Here, performance is a kind of syncopation between habit and conscious performance, a suspension in the process of incorporation. In casting reenactment as a strategy for making incorporation itself knowable and observable, I extend Connerton's mechanics of habit memory. I do so by elaborating a technique that shows the entanglement of incorporation, transmission and inscription as these erupt in and through one another in the gestic translation machine. Thus, I further proposed that the gestic translation machine allowed sensing interanimation between archive and performing body, or the way in which an archive comes to mean only through a body enlivening it. Finally, we addressed the case of one-to-one performance in which the scenarios of interrogation and outing are critically reiterated through reenactment of the encounter between Brandeau / La Fargue and the colonial Intendant. I proposed that this reenactment technique allows a collaborative witnessing and participation in haunting, through which transtemporal touch can happen, through which what Schneider calls an affective stain can travel transtemporally through and between bodies (2011, 178). In other words, the intimacy of one-

If the wordlessness of the performance's after-effect is the impact of the theory—
not just witnessed but co-produced, lived—what does this say about the text, first
encountered? Returned to?

Becoming Archive is a process of translation in the live in which recording and
transmission are constant, an inter and intra bodily, inter and intra temporal
negotiation, still-framed in the shadow of the gestic, moving.

to-one performance can produce, make knowable or serve as a vehicle for the experience of haunting.

We might understand Connerton as theorizing a mechanics of memory through repetition of form and action through the body, yielding what he calls habit-memory. I write of Schneider pointing us towards a workings of ephemera, where reenactment yields transtemporal touch via haunting sensed through body-to-body transmission. The techniques of reenactment I have analyzed above serve to reveal the interwoven nature of the physical mechanics of habit memory and the “immaterial” mechanics of ephemera in the production, sedimentation and enactment of historical knowledge.

These reenactments that I have performed and analyzed each yield dual tellings of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue. First, they yield tellings in the sense of staging narratives. In the one-to-one, for instance, the audience member sees Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue realized, embodied as a character. We might see this as making present and sense-able (a possible version of) this figure, giving the audience historical information about them by working together with that information in co-performance. What this performance does not accomplish is a deep texture of living in the historical contexts and places that Brandeau / La Fargue moved through, as we saw in *Archival Sense*, or as was laid out in the *Context* chapter at the outset of the dissertation. These reenactments however, yield other types of telling in addition to the narrative tellings they perform. Each reenactment also performs a telling of sensate experiences of time, body and historical memory. These tellings are tellings about troubled archive logic, about what overwhelms the inscribed record, about animating or enacting the inscribed record, about the inscribed record's troubled autonomy and

The table always changes. The texture against which the shadow falls always changes.

The table is an old imitation colonial desk that was my grandmother's, set up in an LGBT counselling room that is less than ten feet by ten feet. The interrogator is a mere three feet away. It would be possible for you to touch the naked back of the performer as they wrap the fabric around and around the torso. The shadow crawls along a plain white wall, stark. You see the hand-stitching moving across their naked back. You witness the transformation, a gender passing's operation made visible, but they don't experience it as passing. To all but the passer perhaps, a pass from Jewish to Christian, Christian to Jewish, no longer visible. Which they experience as a pass. Concurrent simultaneous passes, experienced as a multicross, but only the gender pass is visible.

knowledge claims, about the entwined, interdependent state of modes of historical remembering, about that which hovers about, presses upon, haunts enactments of historical memory, and which is its own valid kind of evidence. These reenactments tell something about the form-method-knowledge relationship.

I call the set of techniques of historical reenactment described above "becoming archive." "Becoming archive," I propose, is a mode in which one is in a state of continually becoming evidence. It is a bodily practice of repeating-recording-transmitting.³³ "Becoming archive" recalls, retains, produces a labyrinthine process, as we have seen above. It finds its expression not merely between archive and body, not merely in body as archive, but rather in transtemporal gesture in motion, an unpredictable circumstance. I propose that the techniques of reenactment that constitute "becoming archive" serve as joint apparatuses within performance that offer me the possibility to touch and to become an explicitly transtemporal "archival" body, a body of historical remembering. They are techniques that complicate the physical, bodily mechanics of habit-memory elaborated by Connerton while simultaneously incorporating the workings of ephemera that Schneider points to in her analysis of historical reenactment. A transtemporal body is in the move between, in the interanimation of inscription, body and transmission. We might think of a transtemporal body as one that occupies concurrent times, or in the least is attuned to sensing what Schneider might call time's eruptions, by working with that interanimation in performance. Such a body consolidates, erupts, and amalgamates, becomes historical evidence, and exceeds the inscribed historical record. A body as interanimate historical evidences, in process, unstable, in motion.

Witness: The crossing is also that you're going to play this woman, a character, and you're going to play it in English.
Double-crossing.

Interrogator, English: Why do you ask the question "Do you believe me?" What is the character looking for? Whatever answer is given, what would change? Would any of it change the fate?

Me: That line comes from *ribcage / thorax*. "Vous me croyer?" I'm asking that of the audience in the show, and there are so many possible ways of understanding that. Do you believe my interpretation of the story? Do you believe the story that we have [on record]? Do you believe me as me right now as Jacques La Fargue? I think there is a certain desire to be recognized. No, it wouldn't change the fate. People didn't know if I was asking them as them or as Gilles Hoquart [the interrogator], and then they were completely frozen. There was this suspended moment of them going like [frozen stare, unmoving—audience laughs] and some people answered. Most people just walked out the door. Many people said [in the comment book] that that was the most jarring moment. Because it was the moment where I could blur, that I could get the archive to step into the present.
That was my desire.

Interrogator, French: So wicked. [audience laughs]

Witness: Because you implicate all of us in that moment.

Me: I knew from the get-go that I didn't want to do a historical, like, I didn't want to confine it to its own era. Because there's lots of that and I feel like then I have to make choices and throw a narrative arc through it that's invented because we don't really know totally. And then to throw the narrative arc through it is to accept that what the archive says is true. I really grappled with, "So how can I make this so this story is not confined to its own era?" Because there is obviously continuity between this historical moment and right where we are now. That was what I was thinking about putting the whole show together, but especially the one-to-one.

We are playing colonial drag, not in the sense of how Daniel Boyarin uses it (but dragging his meaning nevertheless),ⁿ but in the sense that you drag the colonial into the present (again), drape yourself in its cloak, facing where the shadow stilled. And in the sense of colonization is such a drag drag, not laughing. I am watching successive you's, each quite slightly off in colonial drag, as in I can see you dragging colonial, your cloak, the apparatus of the pass made visible, your body visible, your voice plodding through words first encountered, its tempo and inflection, the sound of quite slightly off reenactment, of colonial drag. The look when you look across at the body stilled in shadow.

Someone's eyes burn before crying, their own story alive in the reenactment, somewhere between themselves, who they are performing and who they are performing with.



Many of those who knew her well noted the difficulty of looking at her, troubled as they were by the absence of her, occupied by this other person, these other people. Someone who helped manage the performances wrote to you later, “I got to know you before and after the performance ... I could also experience the performance as your “shapeshifting” between play and reality. ... I can still recall your face like her in front of me (instead of your face “in real life”, which I almost forgot) and I think it will stay like that. Repeat.

Let us now return to the suspicion that opened Part III—that my performing Brandeau / La Fargue is foundational to heretic methodology. I have suggested that the strategies constituting “becoming archive” open to an attentiveness to bodily enactment of the archive, to haunting, and to the possibility of transtemporality, all of which prove vital in Part II: Archival Sense. For what in Archival Sense yielded a texture of Brandeau / La Fargue’s living but working between doubt, desire, haunting and error? In effect, theorizing the historical reenactment strategies I have deployed enables us to see that a transtemporal body—a body aware of the bodily, able to sense time and the process of memory sedimentation, a body that senses haunting—can in fact also be opened through archival research. Recall the extreme repetition of reading through ledgers, line by line, and the eyes playing tricks that lead to error, the error revealing a kind of haunting speaking through desire. Recall the body doubled as it walks a city’s map, propelled to a place by a tax ledger, and there hears and smells what is not there in the here and now. What tools have been more important in crafting the texture of Brandeau / La Fargue’s living in Archival Sense than transtemporal touch, haunting, doubt and desire—bodily experiences of knowledge in collaboration with inscribed memory, with archival records? The performance practices described here in Part III: Becoming Archive in effect open the body to another form of archival research. Conversely, the archival research as recounted in Archival Sense is here retroactively revealed as the practice of a body enacting the habit-memory produced by, sensed in, and transmitted through the performances of historical reenactment herein described and analysed.

The table does not prevent your approaching my body, the visceral reach.

The table is twelve feet of designer off-white glass in a board room with elaborate floral wall paper. The shadow is winged, disappears behind a vertical shadow pillar in the floral forest, folds around a corner. The interrogator's face is lit from below. This time, there are four witnesses for some of the interrogation, flies on the wall. You didn't know what to do, trying to watch a show, trying to get emotionally involved but not physically involved, so as not to disturb the performance. Out of place, someone that does not exist or should not exist. Yet still feeling. They misread their instructions and do not immediately exit with the interrogator. Crumbled against the wall in the corner, they cannot see them watch. Their unscripted presence is an unbearable loneliness. Later some say they could see you crying in this not-supposed-to-be performance time that continued. (I am talking to myself as if I am talking to you, the witness who didn't leave. I am watching myself with you.) Some of those who witnessed also tried playing the interrogator, and noted the far deeper intensity of being the participant in the performance. Two witnesses walk away together in silence and you say later you couldn't speak for thirty minutes of walking together.

Who is you?

Endnotes: Supertext (Endnotes: Subtext to follow)

- a See Robinson (1994a, 1994b).
- b See Hermant (2013a) in a special issue on Embodiment in translation studies. Both video stills that open Part III, and the transcription/translation of the gestic translation machine i.e. its visual/textual representation, are included in this paper.
- c Dictionary.com.
- d See Resch (1992).
- e See Ahmed (2006).
- f The instructions throughout the supertext of Part III: Becoming Archive on the left side pages, are taken directly from the script that a participant-interrogator follows in my one-to-one performance entitled *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738* [hereafter *Aujourd'hui*]. Right justified text on these same left side pages amid the participant-interrogator's script is intended as a direct conversation between myself and you, reading with me / performing with me now in this staging on the page with you, the reader, as participant. *Aujourd'hui* was first commissioned by Buddies in Bad Times Theatre's Rhubarb Festival, February 2012, Toronto as part of the one-to-one programme at The 519 Community Centre, and performed then under the title *Aujourd'hui, 15e septembre, 1738* (Hermant 2012a). It was subsequently performed as part of a three-hour workshop-presentation entitled "Performing the Colonial Archive, Moving Bodies Across Language: A Translation Workshop Presentation" that I led with *ribcage* translator Nadine Desrochers at a conference entitled "History / Memory / Performance / Histoire / Mémoire / Présentation" at University of Ottawa Department of Theatre, Ottawa, Canada, April 2012 (Hermant and Desrochers 2012). See Dean et al 2015 for a collection that came out of this conference. *Aujourd'hui* was also performed at the 8th European Feminist Research Conference, Budapest, Hungary, May 2012 (Hermant 2012b); at Tanoda Alternative High School, Budapest, May 2012 (Hermant 2012c); and at Happy Man Institute, Bukovac, Serbia, June, 2012 (Hermant 2012d). Two scripts, one in French and one in English, are presented as a choice to participants upon entering the one-to-one performance. The script is written by Heather Hermant, and translated by Nadine Desrochers. At Rhubarb Festival, I performed over three days, four back to back performances in a row on each of the first two nights, and three back to back performances on the third final afternoon. In the three-hour workshop Nadine Desrochers and I gave at University of Ottawa, I performed the one-to-one performance twice back to back, in English then in French without stopping, e.g. with an anglophone interrogator-participant first, followed by a francophone interrogator. The workshop participants served as a fourth wall aligned in an arc physically in the space in order to witness the performances. These one-to-one performances in Ottawa had followed the first part of the workshop in which I performed excerpts of the work-in-progress of *thorax : une cage en éclats*, the translation of *ribcage: this wide passage* by Nadine Desrochers. Some excerpts were still mid-way between English and French. At the 8th European Feminist Research Conference, five back-to-back performances were scheduled per day for three consecutive days. At this performance, up to five silent witnesses could be present standing against a side wall of the performance space. Participants could sign up either to be a witness or to be a participant, and some chose to try both. At Tanoda Alternative High School, teachers and students observed while seated behind the performance. Three performances, two in English and one in French were performed, followed by discussion with observers and participants. How the performance was performed, whether there were witnesses or not, how comments and impressions were collected, whether performances were back to back or not and whether or not there was discussion as a group was determined according to the needs and logistics of each context.
- g This follows from Schneider's perception of the still image as live (2011).
- h I now introduce voices of audience-participants and audience-witnesses of the one-to-one performances, which are centre-justified but on the right side of the left-side pages, amid the audience-participant's scripted questions. Text that is also centre-justified but in the centre of the left-side pages is taken from the script that I myself perform as Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue in the one-to-one performance, which is memorized (whereas the audience-participant uses a typed script). Participants and witnesses shared their reflections in a notebook left outside the door of the performance space, which included my email address should they wish to send further comments. In the case of the performances at the University of Ottawa, comments were video recorded in a post-performance discussion. Comments from each of the performances are considered in a single pool and not segregated according to which performance they derive from. Text is, unless otherwise noted, taken verbatim from participant comments. It is important to note here that the University of Ottawa Theatre Department is a bilingual program, which admits alternating annual cohorts of francophone and anglophone students. Students and teachers speak in whatever language they prefer. People generally gave their comments on the piece in English, but asked questions and made follow-up remarks in their preferred language. I tended to respond in the language in which people asked their questions or made their comments. Our workshop moved between the two languages.

- i Blocks of centre-justified text are taken from transcript from post-performance discussion at University of Ottawa.
- j Rebecca Schneider draws on Gertrude Stein's idea of nervousness (2011, 15-20).
- k WordReference Random House Learner's Dictionary of American English, 2015.
- l Javier Serna, pers. comm.
- m Brennan (2004) quoted in Schneider (2011, 26).
- n See chapter 7 in Boyarin (1997).

Endnotes: Subtext

- 1 Performance-based methods are, for me, older "architectures of access" (Schneider 2011, 140).
- 2 See Hermant (2013c) for my first published usage of this phrase.
- 3 In this nursery rhyme, the cross-dressed sailor fails to hoist the sails, and to avoid punishment, outs herself as female and offers herself as the captain's mistress, a story in the cultural archive that might condition readings of multicrossing as ending in this gender-normative heterosexual return (Dekker and Van de Pol, 1989, 2).
- 4 Black box refers to a theatre space where audience is situated in one roughly contained area observing the stage in front of it. Interdisciplinary here refers to use of several artistic forms or media concurrently. I also use the term "experimental" to refer to the piece *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738*, in which one audience member at a time witnesses a performance. "Experimental" also refers to my various practices of site-specific experiments in urban and semi-urban space, with or without intentional audiences.
- 5 *ribcage* is directed by Diane Roberts, with live fiddle and looping composed and played by Jaron Freeman-Fox. The music has also been played by Elliot Vaughan. Video installations by Kaija Siirala were originally live-mixed, though not for touring. Videography is by Heather Hermant and Melina Young; set design by Heather Hermant; costumes by Luisa Milan.
- 6 Mourner's Kaddish has traditionally been a man's job in the presence of a *minyán*, or quorum of ten Jewish men, but some scholars have shown that there is no explicit ban on women performing *kaddish* (See for example Berkovits, 2011). In this gesture in *ribcage*, one could conceive of the audience as a *minyán*, and the recitation as taking place as a "double-crossing" unfolds: from Jewish to Christian and from female to male, concurrent with a transtemporal crossing.
- 7 The first public performance of *ribcage* took place in a gallery with audience on long wooden antique benches forming a wide V. Tremors Festival, Vancouver, 2010 (Hermant 2010a). The piece was originally conceived to be adaptable to any presentation space.
- 8 A *midrash* is an interpretation of or reflection on Biblical text in the Jewish tradition.
- 9 Stoler notes that this movement was underway long before Jacques Derrida penned *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, considered a landmark text that begins with the Greek origins of the word "archive," as containing both "commencement" and "commandment." Derrida notes that the word "archive" contains the memory of its origin, as well as shelters itself from this memory, in other words forgets too (Stoler 2009, 44; Derrida 1995, 9.)
- 10 Jacques Cartier was a French explorer from Brittany who claimed what is now Canada for the French Crown, in 1534.
- 11 Such adornments are also found throughout the city of Amsterdam (Hondius et al, 2014).
- 12 In Indigenous world views, land is intimately entwined with memory. Writes Anishnaabe scholar Damien Lee, contrary to the assumption that knowledges that miss intergenerational transmission because of ruptures caused by colonialism disappear, knowledge "is still in the land, and ... it can resurge through our relationship with place" (Lee 2012, para 1). I have written elsewhere about the practice of walking or moving across landscape as decolonial historiographic method, in which I argue for both landscape and body as archives (Hermant 2014).
- 13 I am indebted to my cousin Norman Hermant for his sleuthing on this.
- 14 Taylor calls repertoire "performativ," to shift from discursive to embodied by distinguishing it from "performative" (Taylor 2003, 16).
- 15 Taylor's major work is subtitled "Acts of Transfer," a line she acknowledges comes from Connerton (Taylor 2003, 3fn3). Rebecca Schneider mentions Connerton only in passing in her work on historical reenactment (2011, 66).

- 16 These distinctions are not so cut and dried; for instance, learning a math equation, an apparently cognitive memory, might require repeated performance of the equation.
- 17 What Connerton calls “habit-memory” bears some relation to what Pierre Bourdieu after Mauss calls “the habitus—embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history ... the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product” (Bourdieu 1990, 56). Bourdieu elaborated the habitus, which he characterized as “systems of durable, transposable dispositions,” as a means of understanding social organization and the maintenance of social borders. The main point of relation between habit-memory and habitus is the idea that the history of how one is disposed in certain ways or how one is able to perform a certain skill habitually is not apparent because of its sedimentation in body through practice via repetition.
- 18 Just like the classes of memory delineated above, distinction between individual and social habit-memory is not so clear cut.
- 19 Sedimentation also appears in the work of Butler on gender as “a stylized repetition of acts” (Butler 1988, 519). For Butler, we understand the gendered body “as the legacy of sedimented acts rather than a predetermined or foreclosed structure, essence or fact, whether natural, cultural, or linguistic” (522). Connerton and Butler are linked in their attention to repetition. Butler, borrowing from phenomenology, explicitly states this repetition as the means through which bodies come to gain cultural meaning.
- 20 Phelan was in search of a way to free the female body from the gaze within patriarchal systems of representations.
- 21 Schneider observes Civil War reenactment as a practice that stands apart from and is often disdained by and disdains the art world, but she also considers artist Allison Smith’s *The Muster* (2005), in which Smith called on queers and other dissidents to join her in a Civil War reenactment (Schneider 2011, 27-28). She also reflects on the reenactment photography of Cindy Sherman and Yasumasa Morimura, and notes that the viewer must recognize misrecognition in these photographs in order to recognize the artist posing (182-216). For another photo-based (documentation of) historical reenactment, see Liz Magor’s *Bitumen* (1993), chromogenic prints of reenactors reenacting figures in North American history (Magor 1993), exhibited as part of the solo exhibition *Surrender* at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2015. Contemporary performers who deal in historical reenactment include Rebecca Belmore’s *Rising to the Occasion* (1987–1991); Valerie Mason-John’s “Queenie,” in her stage production of *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1999); Mojisola Adebayo’s *Moj of the Antarctic: An Africa Odyssey* (2011, 2007, n.d), a transplantation of 19th century Ellen Craft onto an Antarctic landscape; Nikhil Chopra’s personas Sir Raja and Yog Raj Chitrakar; and Kent Monkman’s persona Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, to name a few.
- 23 The stakes in rethinking performance for Schneider are akin to the stakes articulated by Adrienne Rich when she foregrounded re-vision as a feminist matter of survival (20 citing Rich 1979, 33-49). Says Schneider, performance tackles this revision through “re-gesture, re-affect, re-sensation” of sedimented acts (20).
- 24 Schneider names Gordon’s *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* as an influence (2011, 248fn55).
- 25 In my understanding, interanimation is a condition in which a genre is made animate by another or others, where genres catalyze each other. It could also be a condition in which genres bleed into each other. In Fred Moten’s work, from which Schneider builds on the notion, sound and rhythm are used to read photographs “in the break” (Moten 2003 cited in Schneider 2011, 207). Music activates or allows the reading that the image calls. As Moten suggests, different media cross-identify, cross-constitute and improvise each other (Schneider 2011, 20-21). Schneider works with the inter(in)animation between archive and repertoire, placing “in” between parentheses, which for me emphasizes the condition of one’s presence in the other. The parentheses are a means to highlight the syncopation between interanimate and interanimate (21fn21). For her, the word “interanimate” comes from Donne via Moten. She cites I. A. Richards [architect of The New Criticism], who coined the phrase “the interanimation of words” to mean the way in which words, by being surrounded by other words and by existing within a context, are enlivened by those words and context. To interanimate (without the middle ‘in’) means to mutually animate, to mutually enliven, incite or give spirit to (OED). Taken together, we have distinct things enlivening each other; things being embedded in environments; and things being in some way in other things.
- 26 Schneider aligns this “something other” with theatre practitioner Eugenio Barba’s “extra-daily” (30). Barba notes the difference between use of the body-mind of the performer in a performance situation versus in everyday life, and that the difference is attributable to different principles of physical and mental presence between daily life, and the “extra-daily” condition of performance (Barba and Savarese 2006 [1991]). Extra-daily techniques enable the kind of non-discursive communication that transmits in performance. There is an element of precarity to extra-daily technique. Schneider also cites anthropologist Victor Turner who elaborated on liminality in rites of passage as a state of betweenness characterized by ambiguity, a state which does not share attributes with where one is coming from nor where one is going to (Turner 1969, 94-95).

- 27 Canny (from the Anglo-Saxon root *ken*) meaning knowledge, understanding, or cognizance; mental perception. Uncanny is an idea beyond one's ken, something outside one's familiar knowledge or perceptions. Having or seeming to have a supernatural or inexplicable basis; beyond the ordinary or normal; extraordinary; mysterious; arousing superstitious fear or dread; uncomfortably strange; strange or unusual in a way that is surprising or difficult to understand (Dictionary.com). Going into the uncanny in psychoanalysis is beyond the scope of this dissertation.
- 28 Making the film *The Return of Martin Guerre* troubled Davis because of its tendency to depart from the historical record for the sake of the smoothness of story. She writes, "Where was there room in this beautiful and compelling cinematographic recreation of a village for the uncertainties, the "perhapses," the "may-have-beens," to which the historian has recourse when the evidence is inadequate or perplexing?" (1983, viii). She concludes "that with patience, imagination, and experimentation, historical narration through film could become both more dramatic and more faithful to the sources from the past" (N. Davis 2000, Preface para 6).
- 29 I met Duarte in the Performance Practice as Research Working Group facilitated by Pablo Assumpção Costa and Christine Greiner at the 8th Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics Encuentro, São Paulo, Brazil, 2013. Duarte's dissertation has also been vital to me in its enacting of practice as research in terms of methodology, and the forms of its outcome; her dissertation is a book in three parts, like my own, parts which she refers to as "Notebooks." A theoretical chapter is flanked by experimental forms of writing, still images from video footage taken from her rowing practice, drawings from her journals, and experimentation with layout. Her dissertation also included a video installation. The printed dissertation itself is an art piece (Duarte 2012). See Hermant 2014, 10-11.
- 30 To view this, please see this documentation of *thorax : une cage en éclats* <https://vimeo.com/73170354>. The gestic translation machine excerpt is shown from 1:38 – 2:04 (Hermant 2013b).
- 31 I provide English and French scripts. Participants choose. The French script is translated by Nadine Desrochers.
- 32 Interrogation promises redemption through a kind of entrapment: confession, proper gender, faith, perhaps gendered contribution to the colonial context through marriage. It is interesting here to cast this demand for confession, a highly Christian scenario—"Tell us why you found it necessary to disguise your sex for five years?"—as also a scenario of discovery, via the double outing that Brandeau / La Fargue endured. One could even call this compulsion to confession in tandem with outing, the scenario of confession's ties to the scenario of the closet, which is at least as old as the Biblical Queen Esther whose closeted Jewishness in the court of King Ahasuerus is self-outed for the sake of the Jews about to be slaughtered. Here the closet is not one concealing sexual preference, but gives us one genealogy of the closet (surely among many) that is decidedly multicrossed/ing. Taylor cites Jill Lane when she notes that scenarios of conquest in the Americas dating to the early 16th century were later recast as scenarios of conversion, to downplay or deflect from the violence (Taylor 2003, 31; Lane 1998). The scenario remains coherent however it is cast, Taylor notes.
- 33 I cannot find an elegant invented word in English, nor in French, for this condition of being in repeating-recording-transmitting, as I have come close in Spanish and Portuguese: "En graborepetición." Or "en registrepetição."



Staged photo of my desk in Toronto with *ribcage* and *Aujourdhuy* press material and coverage alongside front and back covers of Sharon McKay's novel.

Conclusion

This dissertation has concerned itself with an eighteenth century life. As an artist-scholar, I have come at this subject along three slants, shaping the questions at the heart of this study: How has the story of this eighteenth century life entered knowability? What primary evidence exists and what new evidence can be found about this historical figure? And finally, how does *how* one seeks to know shape *what* one can know about this historical figure? Thus, I have been concerned with an analysis of how this figure has been and is represented in (re)tellings; I have been concerned with examining and searching to find “evidence” about this life; and I have been concerned with methodologies for researching, analyzing and telling it. I have been driven by a broader overarching, or underpinning, concern: How might I tell this story as a queer, feminist, decolonial gesture? This is, it seems at first glance, a question comprised of three questions, but I have endeavoured to practice these attentions to the queer, the feminist and the decolonial as inseparable and intertwined; that is, my approach has been grounded in an intersectional, feminist politics of location; an attention to the constructedness of gender as informed by critical race theory; a queer analytic that takes queer to mean practices in the temporal, political and sexual domains; and in my belief that the present is a colonial one, that the past figures (in) the present, the present figures (in) the past and the future, and that evidence of this interplay can be found in the cultural archive. I take this cultural archive to be comprised of cultural productions such as literature and film, as well as ways of being in the social, ways of perceiving, thinking and doing (Saïd 1994, xxiii, 59; Wekker 2016 Intro, *The Cultural Archive*). In pursuing my questions, I have had to negotiate the otherness of the eighteenth century, and the anachrony of working with such terms and lenses as feminist, queer and decolonial when moving between materials, ideas and lives of the eighteenth century, and those of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Mention of the story of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue within accounts ranges from bemused dismissal (Vaugeois 2011, 31) to a sense of the remarkable in it (Sack 1926, 3) to doubt as to the authenticity of the story (Tulchinsky 1992, 14). Within Jewish studies in and of Canada, there has been attention to the significance of Brandeau's expulsion on the grounds of refusal to convert to Christianity, while there has been little attention to the gender dimension's entwining with other dimensions of the tale. I have set out to sift through representations and iterations of telling across sources in order to understand under what conditions the story has travelled, what absences and silences have travelled with it and what work they have done; to respond to absences and silences so as to approach the historical protagonist with an eye to intersectional complexity; and to discover how we might do queer, feminist, decolonial work through engagement with this story. I have worked dialogically across centuries and geographies, with the attention one brings as a critical Cultural Studies-inclined scholar. The dissertation has unfolded in three Parts, through which I have moved from reading (Part I: *Eruptions Into Knowability*) to sensing (Part II: *Archival Sense*) to becoming (Part III: *Becoming Archive*), each of these Parts dramatically different in method and presentation, yet as I have shown, animating one another.

As the first dissertation to make this historical figure its central subject, this research adds new archival findings and contributes to scholarship in overlapping and intersecting fields, including Gender, Queer, Canadian, Atlantic, Jewish and Diaspora Studies, Practice as Research in the Arts and Performance Studies. My explicit scholarly placing of the story within Queer Historiography is novel in relation to how the story has been framed to date. It allows me to place a figure well-known in Jewish Canadian historiography into Queer historiography, thereby re-figuring the story's significance to Jewish historiography. This radically interdisciplinary approach has allowed me to position the story as a story of multicrossing—of crossing over simultaneous and multiple co-inscribing axes—and to add it to histories and representations of gender crossers. Doing so allows me to contribute to history and to literary studies—particularly studies of children's literature—in relation to crossers. Positioning Brandeau / La Fargue as multicrosser could compel intersectional re-readings of gender crossing case studies, attentive to crossings that may have missed detection, like the Jewish to Christian cross that Brandeau / La Fargue undertook. A major overarching contribution of the dissertation is its epistemological intervention through what I call “multigenre” as a methodology. I will return to this overarching contribution, once I have revisited the findings of each of Parts I, II, and III. While revisiting the yields of each Part, I will identify areas of future work, and evaluate where the work in each Part has fallen short. I will end by summarizing my conclusions on how the research practices deployed in the dissertation speak to each other and how multigenre offers the possibility of queer, feminist, decolonial practice.

Part I: *Eruptions Into Knowability*

In Part I, I undertook a genealogical and narratological analysis of representations of the story of Brandeau / La Fargue since its first inscription in the French colonial archive in 1738, through to the present day (Bal 2006, 1997, 1993, 1985). I did so through intersectionality as a principle, which enabled me to account for the multiple axes of signification that constituted Brandeau / La Fargue's living, and to bring an attention to those multiple axes when reading representations of Brandeau / La Fargue (Crenshaw 2012, 1989). I demonstrated that the story has indeed been told with frequency in Canada, despite lack of entrenchment in the Canadian imaginary as a key settler story. The strategic genealogy that I have constructed of the travels of the story reveals its under-analysis. I have shown that moments of the story's visibility coincide with moments of preoccupation with difference and national belonging. This visibility has tended to be conditional; it has circulated through heteronormative renderings of Brandeau / La Fargue dependent upon often racialized gender binaries. This visibility has also tended to occlude Aboriginal presence, sovereignty and resistance, and colonial power relations.

In Part I, I first analyzed the original archival record that brings us the story (ANF 1738a). I then gave special attention to the wave of creative production about the story in the first decade of this century, analyzing a

novel for young people by Sharon E. MacKay (2004), and a documentary film about Quebec City's Jewish history in which Brandeau as a character plays a vital narrational role (Tepperman 2008), two very different works that both deal in animating historical material. Importantly, I have not attended in detail to the first novel to be published based on the story, written in French and later translated to English by Pierre Lasry (2000, 2002). Future work will demonstrate this first novel's definitive impact on subsequent creative works including my own, though this novel has not enjoyed nearly the reach that McKay's has. Of particular relevance to my intersectional approach is Lasry's crafting of masculinities in relation to Jewishness and to settler experience more broadly, and how Jewish masculinity is affirmed, entwined with rejection of cultural assimilation and the New World.

I showed how in the original archival document of 1738 that first brings us the story, Jewishness is gendered and gender is racialized, even as I have made clear that "race," as it would come to be known later in the century, had not yet coalesced. I have shown how what we might understand as a gendered racialization travels through the representations I do analyze; how their creators are caught between navigations of context and audience; how in the process, the multicrosser as *multicrosser* slides from attention; and how the nature and reality of the colonial figures in and disappears from these tellings. What these conclusions show are the relationships and tensions between these tellings and the socio-political contexts shaping their creation and intended audiences; the persistence of ambiguity about Jewishness, one that is gendered; and how despite gender's own range of possibilities, its binding to binary biological sex prevails in the analyzed representations.

The trick in reading cultural productions such as McKay's novel and Tepperman's documentary is that these were created in our time, in a time when "race" as an ideology and "class" as a concept have come to be known, and yet these works, and in particular McKay's novel, reference or portray a period before these concepts were understood as they are now. Essential, then, was the overview I gave of the eighteenth century. I demonstrated that the contexts in which Brandeau / La Fargue moved were characterized by slow shifts: a shift away from Galenic medicine's conception of what we now call gender as humours along a gradient toward more entrenched binaries; a shift toward secularity; a shift toward the idea of the nation-state; and these within a predominant preoccupation with status, rank and lineage, and a lack of systemic attention to and policing of mobility. Status, rank and lineage shaped how a person's identity at the time was established and known in community from birth onwards through proximity, and thus if a person moved outside of community of origin, as Brandeau / La Fargue did, they would be without such identity (Caplan and Torpey 2001). This was in an era when the notion of an inner core, fixed "identity" particularly around gender and sexuality had not yet taken hold (Mak 2004). Status, rank and lineage also would provide the logic of "race" to come, not yet conceived of in Brandeau / La Fargue's time, yet as I demonstrated, showing antecedents and traces of emergence. I showed perception of Jewish difference at the time to be entwined with African, Indigenous and female difference, and characterized by

both malleability and essentialized understandings. I also gave an overview of the eighteenth century European “tradition” of “cross-dressing,” which allowed me to situate the multicrossing of Brandeau / La Fargue in relation to numerous documented cases of crossing around Europe, and in relation to rare cases in which gender and “race”/ethnicity are crossed, or could be seen in our reading to be crossed simultaneously. Finally, I situated the story in relation to Iberian diasporic history of Jews and New Christians, which links Iberia, France, The Netherlands and the so-called “New World,” among other locales. This elaboration of Brandeau / La Fargue's eighteenth century constituted one way, perhaps a conventional way, of telling the story of an eighteenth century figure by telling of their context.

In elaborating the transtemporal differences and situating the story geographically and historically, I foregrounded how telling an eighteenth century tale requires navigating between the past and the present, as have the authors whose works I put under analysis. I contended that the creative works I analyzed speak to socio-political dramas about, principally, belonging, nationhood and multiculturalism in contemporary Canada. I suggested that the issues of belonging, nationhood and multiculturalism represented something akin to the “crisis” that the “transvestite effect” (Garber 1992) reveals; the transvestite—the gender-crosser—appears or is deployed, says Garber, to secure crisis onto one axis—gender—when the crisis might be elsewhere, on another (always related) axis (1992). My conclusions point to the persistence in the Canadian cultural archive across the centuries with otherness, transgression of borders, and who constitutes the nation, preoccupations that persistently overshadow the question of Indigenous national sovereignty and settler colonialism.

The multicrosser

My analysis of *Esther*, Sharon E. McKay's novel for young audiences, allowed me to elaborate the concept of the “multicrosser,” one who simultaneously crossed multiple co-inscribing axes concurrently, among them, gender, religion, class/status, geography, language, ethnicity, and age. I situated McKay's novel in a broader literary context of tales for young readers in settler colonial contexts (Bradford 2007, 2004, Nodelman 2008, Reimer 2008, Rusnak 2008, Thaler and Jean-Bart 2008) and of transgender stories for young people (Flanagan 2008). While Flanagan shows how there is still a shortage of stories of gender crossing and transgender young people's experience that do not end by returning the crosser to their so-called “original” gender, I have been able to speak to a shortage of gender crossing stories for young people where multiple crosses are enacted in the single character's experience akin to Brandeau / La Fargue's multicrossing, and to offer the concept of multicrossing to scholarship on children's literature. I have thus shown the potential importance of Brandeau / La Fargue to these bodies of work.

In elaborating the multicrosser, and to understand how the multicrosser as multicrosser slips from

attention, I gave close attention to structure and strategies of narration in McKay's novel. Gender and racialization play important roles in the multicrosser slipping from view. The narration of the novel repeats the removal of agency that the interrogation record performs through inscription in third person voice, by giving the narration to a person who turns out to be a colonial employee assisting in overseeing Brandeau's interrogation. Esther is given to speak from within that narration. I showed how Esther's speech in the novel affirms the protagonist's core and essential femaleness as well as sense of herself as Jewish, the latter achieved through interculturality and nostalgia for an absent Jewish community. In analyzing moments of passing, doubting and outing of Esther, I concluded that in McKay's rendering, doubted Jewishness operates as class/status confusion and that it travels across a binary notion of gender. I further concluded that multicrossing—the movement across multiple axes and in particular gender and Jewish difference in the character of Esther as s/he stands before the interrogator—manifests as instability at the intersection of standing/status, “race,” ethnicity, religion and nation. This instability produces an exoticism that becomes a source of allure and desirability when Jacques' male guise is revealed for what it is and Esther appears as female. I concluded that this exoticization, allure and desirability are metonymic for a racialized unknowability that is highly gendered.

Further, my attention to how masculinities are produced in the novel through description revealed how men function as key driving forces behind the narrative, including the Gentile sailor who is the only witness-ally to Esther's multicrossing, and both the object of Esther's desire and her desire to become male. This relationship, I argued, comes to serve as the primary mode of celebrating interculturality in the novel. I showed, however, that this relationship depends upon what I called Esther's Jewish heterosexual failure. Interculturality, I demonstrated, is heterosexualized through this relationship, which indefinitely postpones Esther's desire. The indefinite postponement, I argued, casts Esther's future as decidedly intercultural-heterosexual. Interculturality depends on the Gentile male rescuing the Jewish female rejected by her own, the Jewish figure sacrifices any possibility of Jewish community and can only claim Jewishness in the absence of such a community. Further, the heterosexualized encounter is written by the dominant position, male and Gentile. Shifting to the question of how the character Esther *herself* sees and judges her passings in the novel, I discovered that McKay's Esther never frowns on her own gender passing, but is troubled by her pass from Jewish to Christian. Passing, I concluded, never risks her core femaleness, but the pass from Jewish to Christian is for Esther profoundly destabilizing. I proposed that the crisis, to return to Garber's notion of transvestite effect, is not about the gender pass. Indeed, interculturality as a mission is at the heart of the story, and requires contending with Christian-Jewish historical relations. I revealed how the story unfolds from narrational inscribing of Esther as essentially and undeniably female toward a closing narrational act of Christian penance by an outed narrator, and through the process he and Brandeau's interrogator—who finds in the outed Esther a gendered, heterosexualized, racialized exotic allure—are

not only absolved of guilt, but framed also as rescuers. This absolving links to the novel's theme of interculturality, an interculturality I have shown to be inequitable.

I ended my analysis of McKay's *Esther* by undertaking a decidedly queer reading of a few scenes in the novel that offered me space to move as a reader against the heteronormative erasure of (homo)Jewishness and multicrossing community. In analyzing these scenes—of a same-sex kiss, of a nun spying, of watching washerwomen on a ship's deck—I enacted reading imaginatively as a necessary kind of performance to reveal the multicrosser as multicrosser. I concluded that given the novel's intended audience, it was doubtful whether young readers could undertake the labour of filling the gaps through which queer decolonial imagining might transpire, even as this very engaging and readable novel has been celebrated as a one that foregrounds (a certain kind of) gender equity, choice in matters of religion and the possibilities of (certain kinds of) interculturality.

In my analysis of Shelley Tepperman's documentary in French about the history of Jews in Quebec City, I showed how the process of telling the Brandeau story within the documentary also obscures the multicrosser as multicrosser; and that an interplay between secure gender binaries, heteronormativity and insecure conceptions of Jewish difference was at work in this obscuring. I drew on Ronald Schechter's scholarship on the figure of the Jew in eighteenth century France, and on the elder male protagonist Haïm's retelling of the colonial record, to show how tropes co-inscribing gender and Jewishness found in the colonial record—Esther Brandeau's purported flightiness, obstinacy and indecision as eighteenth century tropes of Jewishness coinciding with tropes of femininity—travel through to this 21st century telling, but are changed by the context of their re-inscribing to stand for symptoms of internal moral conflict about Jewish and national belonging (Schechter 2003). I showed that in Haïm's recounting of the Brandeau story, his young female listener, Rosie, is meant to signal the unlikelihood of Brandeau's success at passing, and that Haïm self-feminizes by positioning himself as accessory to Gentile success since Quebec's beginnings. This, I argued, is related to the risk of affirming claims of early Jewish presence in Quebec. In other words, a claim challenging a dominant ethnic position from an historical ethnic margin is made along the gender axis through feminized masculinity. I further showed that the transtemporal play in the documentary, which reveals Rosie as Brandeau, triangulates us as viewers around possible positions in the transactional architecture of passing that literary theorist Amy Robinson constructs between passer, in-group clairvoyant and dupe, thereby producing ambiguity around what constitutes Jewishness (1993; 1994).

Rosie, who turns out to be Brandeau, passes across eras and religions, but the filmmaker does not make the gender pass visible, or to be precise, the documentary privileges Jewish-Christian passing over female-male passing in negotiating the telling of Jewish history in Quebec. Rosie as Esther can claim Jewishness and not-Jewishness, revealing a spectrum and a complexity to what constitutes Jewishness. The gender cross though disappears, is relegated to the past. The female masculine historical experience inherent in the story of Esther

Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue remains outside the frame, evicted by the focus on Jewish-Christian passing and by heteronormativity. To make it present we must, as with the McKay novel, make strategic imaginative readings into the transtemporal play, to re-place the multicrosser as multicrosser into this engaging, informative work.

Intersectionally storied land

I argued that Tepperman's documentary casts Quebec City's Jewish history as a negotiation between French Catholic and British Protestant settlers. I argued that such an architecture produces the land as protecting and facilitating early Jewish settlers through allowing them to pass into it, but that the land is not attended to as already peopled, and distances Jews, places them on the other side of colonial first contact, so to speak. Indigenous presence in the story of Quebec's Jewish community sits outside the frame, occluding colonial power dynamics. McKay's novel contended with colonial power dynamics, I discovered, in very particular ways. I argued that her novel replicates marginalization through its representation of, and narrative allocation given to, African and Indigenous figures. This is consistent with how Bradford characterizes stories for children in settler colonial contexts, where she says authors are caught in a tension of wanting to represent a colonial reality and to critique it (Bradford 2007). I demonstrated how African figures appear silently in fleeting but vital moments in the novel, then disappear. I argued that Indigenous figures are abstracted, not given individuality and that they subtly serve to ally Jewish and Indigenous through shared rejection of Christianity. I also showed how representations of Esther's encounters with Africans seem quite subtly in McKay's novel to "graduate" Africans from barely recognizable as human in the Old World to almost-human in the New. Interestingly, working-class Gentile women tend to be nameless in the Old World and named in the New. Read together, these narrative strategies subtly cast the so-called New World as progressive. We can draw a connection here to a problematic persistence in the Canadian cultural archive of Canada as a place of progress away from the backwardness from which settlers came (come).

Tepperman's and McKay's contending or lack of contending with colonial context caused me to return to the question of how a settler story can be told as a decolonial gesture. I proposed contemplating what I titled "intersectionally storied land," a means of writing an ethics of settler responsibility to Indigenous sovereignty into all readings and tellings. I drew on a turn in Jewish literary studies termed "literary Sephardism," where the Sephardic Jewish experience is deployed in literature to think questions of nation, difference and belonging (Casteel 2012, Halevi-Wise 2012, Kandiyoti 2012). I proposed that this scholarly literature be put into conversation with literatures on queer settler colonialism and queer Indigenous studies as a strategy of anchoring reading as a decolonial gesture (Byrd 2011, Driskill et al 2011, Morgensen 2011). This conversation, I proposed, encourages attention to histories of Jewish exclusion and expulsion, while scrutinizing "earliest" and "firstness" narratives attached to Jewish presence in Canada and to Brandeau / La Fargue, and specifically, it places this historical

figure within the colonial project while simultaneously recognizing the story's queer disruptive potential. Disruption of queer settler colonialism could be foregrounded by the multicross unraveling on colonized territories, by the multicrosser as betrayed and evicted from these territories, by the multicrosser who fails to disappear into the landscape, fails to, even refuses to, belong. The linkage can be made while keeping in view the multicrosser's living as made possible by colonial projects playing out along Atlantic routes toward the production of what would become Canada. This scholarly linkage, I proposed, represents an opportunity for production of intersectional decolonial discourse in Canada that refuses the non-conforming historical subject's collapse into queer settler colonialism.

Ultimately, Part I revealed the entwining of the past with the present. I demonstrated the ways in which this story has been reanimated centuries removed from its first inscription as a means of engagement with issues that have also travelled across time, principally concerning gender, ethnicity, nation-making and belonging. While crafted with very different aesthetics in entirely different media for different audiences, McKay's novel and Tepperman's documentary deploy the story of Esther Brandeau in the service of attention to broader questions of belonging and difference, and in ways that occlude the multicrosser. The conversation between analysis of the three documents—the archival record, the novel and the documentary—and the Context chapter delineating the eighteenth century worlds through which Brandeau / La Fargue moved foregrounded the tensions inherent in reading and representing the historical record across centuries. It also enabled connecting 21st century socio-political issues to eighteenth century antecedents. However, intersectionality deployed via narratological and genealogical analysis of a cultural archive did not allow for confirmation or refutation of the claims in the original archival record that have subsequently travelled across the centuries as truth, nor for arriving at what M. Jacqui Alexander calls “the texture of living” of the historical figure in question (2005, 295). We might understand this texture to be that which one seeks when one confronts absence in the written record as it meets the compulsion to know and tell of those absented. Alexander writes of a desire to produce a texture of her historical subject's living in the absence of inscribed evidence, how to, as it were, let the subject speak where inscribed history has silenced her, silenced particular pasts (Alexander 2005, Trouillot 1995). In Part II: Archival Sense, I returned to the archives in search of the historical figure and the texture of their eighteenth century living, compelled by the elisions in representations I brought to the foreground in Part I.

Part II: *Archival Sense*

How can we pursue knowing more about an eighteenth century historical figure in such a way that our coming to know serves queer, feminist, decolonial world-making? How can we reconcile feminist, queer and decolonial ambitions with wanting to conclusively find and know the historical figure, when to capture the passing

subject might itself be a colonialist act of violence? How might we tell of the subject through archival research in such a way that they are liberated from the limitations of the inscriptions that bring them to us? In Part II: *Archival Sense* I turned (again) to reading archives to attempt to answer these questions.

The yields of Part II are as follows: 1) demonstration of the role that desire, doubt, error and haunting play in archival research; 2) demonstration that despite absence of abundant conclusive archival evidence, a rich texture of an historical subject's living can be produced, through a focus on desire and the body of the researcher, rather than relegation of these to the footnotes or to not-telling, and by working through synchronous communities rather than exclusively along patriarchal lineage logic through which archival records consulted are ordered; 3) articulation of this approach in historical practice, which I name "heretic methodology"; 4) demonstration of how such a heretic methodology, where the amateur and the erotic meet, can also produce new archival evidence, 5) demonstration of the productivity of working between what I have called genres of evidence—archival, and affective or ephemeral—toward approaching rather than capturing or fixing the historical figure. The principal overarching yield of Part II was not a large amount of new "data" about Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, nor a new analysis based on such data, but instead a new story, in which archives figure as much as geography, desire and haunting, and where the yield cannot be separated from the search.

The new archival findings delineated in Part II include: a) locating a baker in Saint-Malo that I propose is the baker referred to in the original testimony; b) locating what I argue is a possible Jewish family in Saint-Malo at a time when Jews are purportedly not to be found there and thus purportedly not available to the multicrosser; c) locating a widow in Saint-Jean-de-Luz that could be the widow, or a part of the family of the widow referred to in the testimony, thereby introducing one of two first person female voices to the landscape I sought to paint; d) locating a ship upon which Brandeau may have been sent from Bayonne, and which purportedly wrecked on the sandbar of Bayonne, a discovery which throws into question the assumption of actual *wreck*; e) locating families of captains doing *cabotage* along the French coast that could have moved Brandeau / La Fargue, or Pierre Mausiette, between ports; f) locating a pair of sisters registered in an Amsterdam Jewish charitable society's list of orphans that may cast light on Brandeau / La Fargue's origins and social standing; and finally, g) locating a tombstone in a Bayonne cemetery that may be that of our subject, a finding that remains inconclusive.

In order to produce new archival evidence and to generate a texture of Brandeau / La Fargue's living, I turned to a queer historiography, which is grounded in radical attachment to the subject researched and in a desire for transtemporal touch (Dinshaw 2012, Freeman 2010, 2005, Freccero 2006). I paired autoethnography with archival research, and performed a heretic methodology as a methodological proposal for queer historiography. Heretic methodology can be understood as a disidentification with scriptocentric historical practice, but one which is nevertheless profoundly committed to archival research. Thus I argued for and demonstrated the heuristic

potential in historical practice of a dialogue between inscribed evidence and affective evidence, or ephemera sensed through the body (Muñoz 2009, 1999). I showed that ephemera are as vital to the production of the texture of a life of an historical subject as is a document found in an eighteenth century colonial Intendant's correspondence with the Crown.

My performance of enacting the archive in *Archival Sense* was a demonstration of reading simultaneously *along* the original testimony—taking it for evidence—and askance, through extremely close reading of other primary sources in the cities and towns the testimony pointed me to. In such a dual reading along and askance, names of people became names of places, monasteries and boats, for example. These in turn revealed the original testimony to be possibly a record of Brandeau / La Fargue's strategic telling, its own kind of evidence. I allowed to surface and foregrounded the central role that widows might have played in the story and raised the possibility of widow-centred networks as vital to the unfolding of the tale. Likewise I suggested the possibility of Jewish proximities—overlapping communities of Jews, or former Jews—as important to the multicrosser's movements. The map of a city according to the location of its tailors allowed me to place Brandeau in specific neighbourhoods, and to posit those neighbourhoods' relationships to an entirely other city and to a larger and older Jewish history. Through my navigation of the archives, what emerged is not the certainty of evidence, and the certainty of finding our subject, but a geography—spatial, temporal, psychic—of what I call probable proximities. Production of these textures of proximity, I proposed, grants our subject in some sense, the right to pass. Thus I offer to queer historiography a case study of liberating the passer from capture through archival research and its narration, a queer, feminist telling in its relation to archives and to who merits telling (widows, crossers, absent and possible Jews) and one which perhaps performs, if only tangentially, a decolonial telling insofar as it circumvents the subject's capture and fixing.

My contribution to queer historiography has been to operationalize Elizabeth Freeman's call “to let eroticism into the notion of historical thought itself” (2007, 164), by working with broadly understood notions of eros and desire as tools for historical practice (Lorde 1984). I gave an autoethnographic account of taking up Dinshaw's call for “[d]eveloping queer history through the concept of affective connection,” through an aspiration for a touch across time (2001, 203). I brought Dinshaw's notion of affective connection across time together with Muñoz's concept from within performance studies of “ephemera” as evidence sensed in body. He relates ephemera to “affective taxonomies” of queer and feminist of colour positionality through which the past can be made to work for queer futurity (2011, para 13). What presses through those affective taxonomies is the past that haunts, that puts forth an ethical insistence upon the present for something to be done (Gordon 2007 [1997], Freccero 2006, 70). In making explicit linkages between the erotic, desire and haunting, queer and amateur as the grounding of my archival research, I demonstrated how the concept of affective connection can be operationalized in an historical

research practice, narrating how that aim of transtemporal touch looks, feels and produces “on the ground.”

Importantly, I have contributed an example of intersectionalizing this transtemporal touch, perhaps most explicitly through dual attentions to affective connections of gender, Jewishness and crossing. Temporally, the autoethnographic narration I proposed as integral to heretic methodology immerses the reader in the present of the archival search as well as in the struggle for ordering its outcomes, a movement between times in the spatial engagement with records and places, rather than just presenting an orderly retroactive accounting of facts found. This shows the way in which form can be taken up in queer historiography to do transtemporal work—in this case through autoethnographic telling woven with other forms of historical accounting—and to foreground the toggle between eras inherent in historical work.

The methodology that I performed in *Archival Sense* offers a path to producing the texture of a subject's living despite absence or silence in the record, and provides a methodological response to what many feel as a longing for historical precedent, historical resonance, or longing for transtemporal affective connection. It lays out an approach to leveraging a desire for historical resonance—like that sudden recognition I felt when I first encountered Brandeau / La Fargue—without overwhelming the historical subject. To do so I put forth desire, doubt, error and haunting as bodily-engaged tools, with the inscribed record central to this process and responsive to these. At the end of *Archival Sense*, I landed upon another tool when I came upon the tombstone, and that tool is grief. While grief has perhaps been implicit in the search for absent(ed) communities in *Archival Sense*, its explicit pursuit as a tool alongside doubt, error, desire and haunting might complete the promise of heretic methodology. In addition to the relevance of the yields of *Archival Sense* to queer historiography and confronting silencing the past, my contribution to the field of autoethnography as a feminist practice is to link it to its applicability and uses in historical practice, to studies of the past.¹

In *Archival Sense* I compiled many, but not all archival materials I have gathered thus far, and thus have produced a limited texture of their living focusing on a few locales where Brandeau / La Fargue is said to have lived and worked. Future work will allow me to process a backlog of findings, to follow up threads and to (re)visit particular archives that will open up probable proximities to more and other. What you have experienced is a sketch of my telling of Brandeau / La Fargue, a history as literary artifact as White would call it (1974), a telling that I hope is self-evidently not the only and final one, but one that reveals the very contingency of building a narrative from archival pieces hinging on a third-person voice testimony derived from a context of interrogation. An important contribution that I have made is to inflect history as narrative through an *intersectional* and *multigenre*

1 For an overview of autoethnography and its history, please see Holman-Jones et al, who delineate the characteristics of autoethnography as: “(1) purposefully commenting on/critiquing culture and cultural practices, (2) making contributions to existing research, (3) embracing vulnerability with purpose, and (4) creating a reciprocal relationship with audiences in order to compel a response” (23) (2013, 23-42).

approach.

What does this heretic methodology, as I name it, offer for advancing an understanding of what may constitute a queer, feminist, decolonial telling, and what does it fail to accomplish to that end? First, it allows generating texture of living without capturing or freezing the subject. For instance, I showed how following errors and the improbable—yielding to insistence, giving in to the persistence of “silly side tracks”—erupts the prominent force of desire, and catalyzes a specific kind of reading aimed less at a totalizing knowing and more at a circling around an unpinnable subject. To not aspire to capture or freeze affirms that a) we cannot know everything, we cannot order and own the world, the past, the definitive narrative and b) that we can know much without repeating, in the case of the crosser, the violence of outing, that we can respect the passer's desire to pass. Second, it allows leveraging the affective currents resident in the kind of deep yearning for identification with an historical subject without overwhelming or appropriating them, rather remaining attentive to the dynamic interplay between researcher as subject and historical figure as subject. Third, in searching for and through synchronous communities, the process supplants the supremacy of the patriarchal lineage logic underpinning historical records of the eighteenth century (and of other eras), allowing for instance, networks of working class widows to take centre stage. Such a way of reading archives askance queers the archive itself, producing otherwise with and from it, just as working as I have queers the archive in the sense of revealing it not as autonomous but as enactment. Fourth, this approach allows dangerous and difficult to name knowledges—knowledges that manifest in haunting, in ephemera, in desire—their rightful, acknowledged place in historical knowing, intervening in what Conquergood calls “the scriptocentrism of the Western academy” (2013, 32-46) and the epistemic dimensions of coloniality (Maldonado-Torres 2007). The above suggests the potential of heretic methodology to resist patriarchal and colonial practices when working with a settler past.

However, the queer historiography deployed in Part II to produce a telling of Brandeau / La Fargue, and the intersectionality deployed in Part I to identify and illuminate absences and occlusions in iterations of the tale thus far, both fail to further a deep understanding of the relationship between contemporary bodies, historical memory and historical practice, though Archival Sense indeed points to this relationship. In Part III then, I moved from *sensing* to *becoming*, operationalizing performance studies as principle through the method of performance practice as research, to address a lacuna left by the genres of research practice deployed in Parts I and II.

Part III: Becoming Archive

Within Performance Studies, Diana Taylor coined the vital terms “archive” and “repertoire” to distinguish between inscribed and artifactual memory on the one hand, and socially performed/embodied memory on the other, arguing that these are vital and interlinked in historical memory (2003). We can understand historical

memory not as “history” or “the past” per se, but how that past is understood in collectivity/community, how its impacts are accounted for, how that understanding sustains, produces, performs and transforms a sense of collective/communal continuity and being. Taylor has argued that the repertoire, or performed modes of remembering, have been devalued in the Americas since and as part of the process of colonization, in favour of inscribed history, with heavy consequences for those marginalized from and by inscription. Part III took up my engagement with historical reenactment as an artist-scholar who performs Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue on stage. My performance practice of staging Brandeau / La Fargue preceded the scholarly research undertaken in Parts I and II, and continued throughout the production of this dissertation. I had long suspected that the heretic methodology that produced a texture of the subject's living in Part II: Archival Sense was informed or enabled by my practice as a performing artist. But how? What can performing the archive on stage tell about time, the body, remembering, and telling an eighteenth century historical figure? What might be the relationship between a performance practice of historical reenactment, and the performative nature of historical research? What might performing Brandeau / La Fargue offer queer, feminist, decolonial world-making? Part III sought to investigate the interface between archive and repertoire, by looking into the knowledge to be found in and produced from performing Brandeau / La Fargue on stage.

One principal yield of Part III is, like in Archival Sense, methodological. Through doing, and analyzing, performance, I articulated a set of three performance-based techniques of historical reenactment, following Rebecca Schneider's explorations of historical reenactment but extending what forms of performance can be understood as historical reenactment (2011). I articulated these three techniques—extreme physical labour, memorization and translation through the body, and collaborative performance with audience—as methods for becoming what I called a consciously transtemporal body. I named these practices “becoming archive,” achieved through the critical reiteration of colonial scenarios of exile, interrogation and discovery (outing) (Taylor 2003, 53-78). These techniques, I demonstrated, allow the body to be sensed as a body through which multiple times/eras erupt, which is to say, a body that becomes across time, that can touch the past through its critical reiteration in the present. I showed that these techniques yield the experiences of: 1) sensing the nature of time as non-linear; 2) sensing the making of what Paul Connerton calls “habit-memory” *in process*, in other words the making of habit-memory in body (1989); and 3) co-witnessing haunting through collaborative performance. In articulating these techniques derived from my stage performances of Brandeau / La Fargue, I was able to foreground the relationship between performance practice as research and archival research. I demonstrated that these research practices are not autonomous, but interanimate, troubling the distinction between archival and bodily-performed historical evidence. In other words, I was able to offer an articulation of the bodily mechanics of that interface between archive and repertoire. One of the principal contributions in Part III is that I offer a rare case of a scholar

of historical reenactment who actually *does* historical reenactment herself as a performer and who does so alongside other modes of thinking and doing historical practice. My insights in *Becoming Archive* contribute to scholarship in Performance Studies on historical reenactment by examining the relationship between documentary / material / inscribed history and performance-based modes of remembering.

Two of my performances were at the heart of Part III. The first was the 70-minute interdisciplinary theatre work *ribcage: this wide passage (thorax : une cage en éclats)*. I attended to an excerpt in which I use physical gesture to translate the text of the archival record, while simultaneously reciting the original record itself. The second work was the durational one-to-one performance *Aujourd'hui / This Day 1738*, in which I staged the interrogation of Brandeau / La Fargue as an encounter between myself as Brandeau / La Fargue, and one audience member at a time following each other in sequence as interrogators. I also attended to the extreme bodily labour of a performance-based research process in which I walked for two weeks along a Christian pilgrimage route, taken as a route of Jewish exile from Iberia constitutive of Brandeau / La Fargue's originary community in southwest France.

I worked with memory theorist Paul Connerton's notion of "incorporating practices," through which he gives us a mechanics of what he calls habit-memory, where memory is sedimented into body through repetition and forgets the process of that sedimentation through the cultivation of habit (1989). I saw Connerton's articulation as both a starting point for understanding how historical remembering is sedimented in body and in culture, and as a stepping off point for my own deeper investigations into how practices of historical reenactment might make the mechanics of these processes knowable or witnessable. The goal was to explore how such understanding might contribute to an elaboration of the relationship between working in archives, and performing from the historical record, and thereby contribute to theorizations of historical evidence. I worked between Connerton and Schneider to identify missing links in understanding the mechanics of historical reenactment. I argued that Connerton's concepts of habit-memory and incorporation presume a linear progression of time and a sense of incorporation as always already passed into the unconscious knowing of habit. I wondered, How might we witness or make knowable the process of incorporation? Schneider's study of performance and memory through her analysis of historical reenactment destabilizes conceptions of time as linear, and confronts the persistence of archival logic, which demands site-able remains and scripts performance knowledge to disappear (2011, 133-135). She does so by theorizing the body's capacity, through historical reenactment, to erupt multiple times into co-presence, and to record or serve as live remains. Schneider, I proposed, takes us beyond temporal linearity, and argues for historical reenactment's uncanniness as evidence of time's transtemporal eruptions. Schneider thus points us towards, but does not explicitly pose haunting as constitutive of such eruption. I ultimately united Connerton's physical mechanics of habit-memory making with the workings of ephemera and haunting, in the production,

sedimentation and enactment of historical knowledge, demonstrating and deepening Schneider's arguments. I did so through the set of historical reenactment techniques I named "becoming archive." I argued that "becoming archive"—as both a set of techniques and a state of being through historical reenactment—provides a means for becoming a transtemporal body, a body through which multiple times erupt, a body that touches across time.

My ultimate aim was to return through Schneider, Connerton and Taylor to the suspicion at the heart of the chapter: that performance practice had facilitated the heretic methodology practiced in *Archival Sense*, in other words, that performance practice was foundational to the archival labour and to the crafting of a texture of my subject's living. The techniques of reenactment I deployed and analyzed involve extreme physical labour, ingestion of archival text and its translation to gesture, and one-to-one co-performance with audience members. Extreme physical labour, I demonstrated, alters one's senses such that one becomes able to sense sense itself, but most importantly, it alters one's perception of time, and allows its perception as non-linear. Ingestion of archival text and its re-performance through gesture and speech, I argued, makes the process of incorporation—the making of non-discursive memory—available for recognition, and further reveals the interanimation of inscribing, incorporating and transmissive practices of remembering. Here interanimation signals the ways in which practices are mutually constituted and activate one another (Schneider 2011, 21-22). Co-performance in durational one-to-one, I argued, serves as a haunting machine, allowing co-sensing of haunting as evidence of and vehicle for transtemporal touch, making available for recognition the possibility of sensing one era within another, or possibly, eras in negotiation with one another, as Schneider suggests. That this one-to-one experience of haunting is a shared one moves the insights about the transtemporal body beyond the individual, and points to the role of exchange or affective transmission between bodies in the making of shared historical memory. Together, these techniques of becoming archive make available for recognition the interanimate relationship between body, haunting, "ephemera" or affective remains, and inscribed remembering.

These recognitions allowed me to demonstrate a relationship between the heretic methodology I undertook in *Archival Sense*—which deploys desire, doubt, error and haunting to produce texture of living in the absence of conclusive archival fact—and a performance practice that engages with the story of Brandeau / La Fargue through historical reenactment techniques. I argued that performance practice prepared the ground for crafting a texture of an eighteenth century life, through attention to bodily sense, and to the body's constitutive place in historical remembering. Ultimately, "becoming archive" stands as a possible historical research methodology entwined with archival labour, *and conversely*, archival labour comes to stand as the practice of a body enacting the habit-memory produced by, sensed in, and transmitted through performances of historical reenactment. We might say then that this points us to archival research as leveraging, or activated by, historical memory as it is embodied in the researcher. Archive and repertoire, entangled.

The reenactments addressed in Part III yield dual tellings of Brandeau / La Fargue. On the one hand they may animate historical figures, making sense-able versions of characters, thereby giving some historical information. On the other, they perform tellings of sensate experiences of time, body, and historical memory. But they do not yield a deep texture of the living of the historical figure as in *Archival Sense* combined with the Context section at the outset of the dissertation, pointing to the ways in which genres of research must work together toward a complex knowing.

Future work stemming from my performances of historical reenactment will dwell on historical reenactment as what I call “colonial drag,” drawing on Freeman's notion of temporal drag (2010) and intersecting with Daniel Boyarin's usage of the same phrase (1997). This puts into conversation performance artists who, in their historical reenactment work, move across temporalities and geographies as decolonial gesture (Hermant 2014). This will move the work beyond my own performance practices, and allow taking up the performers our/themselves intersectionally and comparatively.

I have thus far revisited the findings and shortcomings of Parts I, II and III, and future work. I will now turn to the overarching methodological offering of the dissertation.

Multigenre as queer, feminist, decolonial methodology

Part III transpired as two parallel texts. The “Supertext” consisted of staging the excerpt from *ribcage* noted above, as well as the one-to-one durational performance *Aujourd'hui*. To a certain extent, the Supertext performed the impossibility of translating into the discursive the performance experience and the knowledge t/here produced (Fleishman 2012, 34). Accompanying along the bottom half of the page, the Subtext followed a more “conventional” scholarly engagement with performance, the body and historical knowledge. In the toggle between Supertext and Subtext I produced echo, interruption, expansion, repetition, completion, confounding. The intention was to move the reader into sensing performance, and into sensing moving between multiple, entwined ways of doing. This relationship between modes of doing is at the heart of the overarching offering of this dissertation: multigenre. This is a methodological answer to the impetus behind this dissertation: How can we research and retell colonial stories in the service of queer, feminist and decolonial world-making? More specifically I asked, How can cultural analysis, archival research and performance perform telling Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue in a queer, feminist and decolonial way, and how do these genres of research practice speak to each other?

Whereas in Part I: *Eruptions Into Knowability* I stood outside as a reader reading texts, and then in Part II: *Archival Sense*, I positioned myself closer to the story through radical attachment, trailing behind my subject as it were, in Part III: *Becoming Archive* I attempted to enter us into what Dwight Conquergood characterizes as the immediacy and intimacy of performance (2013, 48). Thus I moved from a removed position, to proximity, to

entering into. These strategies, I conclude, have allowed approaching the multicrosser, and together constitute the methodological proposal emergent from the dissertation as a whole, which I name “multigenre.”

How have these research practices spoken to each other, and how might this enable us to elaborate principles of multigenre as a research methodology? Let us first look at how the divergent practices have responded to one another. We have seen the catalytic relationship I have posited between performance of historical reenactment in Part III and the heretic methodology enacted through archival research and autoethnography in Part II. This catalytic relationship speaks of troubled archive logic and the entwined workings of inscribed and embodied “evidence” of the past. Intersectionality, most explicitly operationalized in the cultural analysis in Part I, can be seen as the preamble or perhaps the ideological prefiguring of all telling of Brandeau / La Fargue performed in the dissertation. Intersectionality allowed seeing and understanding Brandeau / La Fargue's place and circulation in the cultural archive, and less explicitly it pointed to the situated knowing at the heart of an autoethnographic approach to queer historiography in Part II. Intersectionality as orientation and analytic set the stage for framing historical reenactments as critical reiterations of scenarios of exile, interrogation, discovery (outing) and (failed) conversion in the story of Brandeau / La Fargue. Taken as a queer, feminist, decolonial orientation, intersectionality laid the possibility for decolonial approaches to reading and cultural analysis especially in Part I, and for seeking synchronous communities in Part II.

Archival research served as the site of a queer historiography enacted through the body and affective registers, rather than simply as a source of new archival fact, even as it was precisely the source of information cultural analysis could not have yielded. Archival research as I performed it in Part II responded to the occlusions I came up against in cultural analysis, and did work that an intersectional cultural analysis could not do in the way of producing a texture of the subject's living and actually coming into proximity with the subject transtemporally through generation of that texture. Performance of historical reenactment, beyond serving as a means of understanding the bodily mechanics of historical memory and the performative nature of archives, also completed the approach or proximity posited in Part II through total bodily immersion in reenactment, which would seem on its own to discard any analytical lens that is possible by standing *outside* as a witness to performance. These different approaches are interinanimate; they animate one another as well as are found within one another (Schneider 2011). They respond to the incompleteness of each other, catalyzing knowledge production from different vantage points that allow for an understanding of the historical figure as dynamic rather than pinnable or fixed.

From this experience I will articulate the principles of multigenre as follows, and then address what it offers that interdisciplinarity or multidisciplinary may not offer. Multigenre as research methodology is distinguished by its multiple, simultaneous attentions, and constitutive practices: 1) arts practice as research and intersectionality

are its groundings; 2) knowledge is produced from within multiple distinct research practices; 3) attention is given to mode of presentation of outcome from such research practices, explicitly extending intersectionality to the plane of genre; 4) attention is given to conversation between genres of both research method and outcome of presentation, seen as entwined; 5) attention is given to the contingency of knowledge and destabilization of knowledge hierarchies; and 6) an ethics of approach or proximity rather than of capture is the consequence of, and intention behind, these above characteristics. My aim has been to intervene in hierarchies of academic habitus. Multigenre, as epistemological intervention, has been a means to do so.

Multigenre is characterized by several attentions and practices that can also characterize interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary, but is also distinguished from these in important ways. Multigenre aligns with what Nina Lykke describes as feminist interdisciplinary modes of working, “a bricolage of different disciplinary perspectives” which “[t]hrough open, experimental dialogues, may generate methodological and/or theoretical innovations” (Lykke 2011, 140-141). For Lykke, interdisciplinarity differs from multidisciplinary because interdisciplinarity “allows boundary work and boundary transgressions to take place between different disciplinary modes of working,” whereas multidisciplinary, she suggests, maintains the distinctions between disciplines deployed (ibid). Multigenre could be construed as going beyond interdisciplinarity and into what Hornscheidt and Baer call transdisciplinarity. “Transdisciplinarity,” they write, “is based upon a systematically critical reflection on all disciplines, their agenda, methodology and established findings. ... [Transdisciplinarity] is, first and foremost, *explicitly* reflexive research” (Hornscheidt and Baer 2011, 170) and it finds “research problems and thinking technologies ... articulated in ways that are not ‘owned’ by specific disciplines” (Lykke 2011, 140-141).

What makes multigenre distinct from inter-, multi- or transdisciplinarity though is first, multigenre—as cued by the choice of word to name it—pays critical attention to genre, construing mode of research practice as well as form through which research outcomes are presented as entangled and implicated in knowledge hierarchies. Here, intersectionality is tied to method as well as to form of outcome. Honor Ford-Smith calls a “new intersectionality” a “putting into dialogue ... traditions which exist in multiple solitudes,” which suggests attentiveness to modes of thinking, doing and transmitting that are left outside of scholarship, or which need shifts in framing, understanding and deployment of “discipline” (pers. comm. 2013).² An attention to genre in

2 I thank my colleague Honor Ford-Smith who first used this term “new intersectionality” in an email following M. Jacqui Alexander’s lecture, “Medicines for Survival: Indigenous Knowledge and the Sacred,” at York University, Toronto, March 7, 2014. Ford-Smith is recognizing hierarchies of knowledge production, which are gendered and raced, and is responding to Alexander’s “interweaving of spirituality with political economy and Black and Caribbean feminist thought ... diverse and apparently philosophical mixtures coming together in a practice that can be highly productive” (Honor Ford-Smith, pers. comm.). Alexander’s lecture was part of a series entitled *The Contemporary Urgencies of Audre Lorde’s Legacy*, jointly produced by the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University and the Women and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto, which I helped realize together with Ford-Smith, Alexander, Allisa Trotz, Jin Haritaworn, and others. Ford-Smith was responding to Alexander’s thinking through and with Lorde’s texts.

intersectionality was a call made implicitly by feminists of colour such as Trinh T. Minh-ha and Audre Lorde whose works defy the scholarly tradition of the question and the argument both in form and in content (Lorde 1982, Minh-Ha 1991). An explicit naming of genre here bolsters this trajectory. The word “genre” also signals toward arts-based modalities, and indeed the centrality of arts practice in multigenre also distinguishes it. Finally, as explained, multigenre produces an ethics of approach rather than of capture of a subject, or of an answer to a defining question.

Let us further dwell in the epistemological intervention proposed by multigenre, by dialoguing with concepts of sedimentation and reiteration encountered in Part III, and the overall engagement with intersectionality in the dissertation. In the habitus of the academy and the hierarchies of knowledge production that predominate t/here, arts practices do not typically occupy such a central position as in multigenre, outside of Fine Arts and Performance Studies departments. Habitus, Bourdieu articulated, is comprised of “systems of durable, transposable dispositions,” which like Connerton's habit-memory, is “embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history ... the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product” (Bourdieu 1990, 56). In using the term “genre,” I signal to Bourdieu's argument that genres accrue respectability and value differentially through their repetition and thus entrenchment, and that such determination is not neutral (1993, 161-176). A genre is a cue to a particular register or registers of knowledge, and genres, akin to scenarios and habits, accrue validity through repetition, with some genres becoming more established and endowed with respectability than others (Bourdieu 1993, 161-176). Multigenre signals toward knowledge as implicated in the means by which it is produced, as well as toward ways in which knowledge is communicated, that is, as shaping whether, how and where that knowledge is or is not received.

When we consider the story of Brandeau / La Fargue, genre plays a part in how it comes to mean.³ When I perform, literally, or labor in the archives, or when I write, I am in each of these modes performing different kinds of actions on the “object” that is the story of the multicrosser. In this dissertation, this has ranged from critical cultural studies and intersectional analysis (Part I: Eruptions Into Knowability); to autoethnography and queer historiography (Part II: Archival Sense); and finally to performance practice as research (Part III: Becoming Archive). Each of these quite different research genres has yielded quite different ways of telling Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, each dragging traces or concerns into the other. Multigenre dwells in the interanimation of genres of knowledge and so it requires touching the nature of genre difference.

Connerton writes that situating a work as part of a particular genre entails identifying certain features and presumptions based on prior experience, in other words genre entails “a structure of implicit expectations,” which

³ As Arjun Appadurai writes, “We have to follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories” (cited in Ahmed 2006, 17).

allows a new experience to be subsumed into those framing expectations “before it is completely known” (1989, 12). Drawing on Connerton’s work on incorporating practices we can think of genre as coming to be through reiteration and in this sense, genre “has memory” and remembers because of “accumulated acts of the same” (34). We might extend the notion of sedimentation here to genre then, insofar as some genres, by virtue of their entrenchment, have been sedimented into a culture through reiteration, repetition. The expectations of a doctoral research project, for instance, are laid out in the expectations of “the dissertation” as genre, and those expectations make it challenging to do arts practice in research process and outcome outside of Fine Arts, for example. Disciplinary conventions can constrain or foreclose ways of knowing, an argument made with frequency from within feminist and Indigenous scholarship. The practice of multigenre may make this sedimentation available for recognition, through destabilization of knowledge hierarchies. It is a mode of doing that reveals the contingency of knowing, and the process of knowledge’s sedimentation through reiteration of modes of doing.

Each genre I have used in outcomes herein—the different modes of writing and presenting, which follow from the different modes of research and analysis that lead to these modes—positions me/you differently; each calls for a different mode of being and communicating. The conversation is meant to be in movement, in relation, troubled. As a consequence of the conversation between genres, multigenre can serve as a strategy for a telling that tells while also fracturing the notion of cohesion and certainty. The movement between genres is as much the story, akin to how I earlier described *ribcage*: “The story is the story of these intersecting stories.” The conversation, perhaps, requires multicrossing; moving between and simultaneously occupying various ways of thinking, doing research and knowledge production, translating, crossings that cannot be easily disentangled. It may be that such a strategy is what has enabled me to perceive the multicrosser as *multicrosser* in the first place.

Doing things explicitly in multigenre generates a repeat looking, and that repetition becomes a kind of question-generating machine, impacting “what is found” in terms of the story of Brandeau / La Fargue, and in terms of broader questions about research practice and knowledge production.⁴ I move the vulnerability of the making of knowledge to the foreground, so that the process of production of knowledge accompanies the statement of the knowledge itself. If genre embodies a system of knowledge and the ways it is produced, multigenre intervenes in the hierarchical distribution of genre, not through discarding a genre construed as dominant in favour of a genre construed as subaltern, but by doing genres together, making use of their relationships and frictions between them.⁵ Multigenre as methodological approach can I hope provide a relevant

4 It holds a potential akin to the feminist double take that Schneider writes of in *The Explicit Body in Performance* (1997), where the feminist performance artist performs her objectification and intervenes in it to make its conditions glaring. Perhaps what I have been trying to do is Explicit Process, the process of reading-translation-incorporation made explicit through performance of multigenre.

5 Jasbir Puar uses “friction” to characterize the relationship between intersectionality and assemblage theory, addressing a divide in feminist scholarship and points to possibilities for co-deployment of what are in some ways incompatible practices (2012, 49-66).

template beyond Performance Studies and Practice as Research in the Arts. I have chosen not to delve deeply into the implications of multigenre within the Practice as Research in the Arts paradigm—its own paradigm distinct from quantitative and qualitative methods—though immersion in this paradigm and its literatures have informed my articulation of multigenre.⁶ Future work will address these implications.

Outro: remaining troubled

In addressing the central question that has guided this dissertation, I would propose that a queer, feminist decolonial telling of an eighteenth century story such as *Brandeau / La Fargue's* is one that leverages the potential critical disruptive power of the tale, and which operates through an objective of approach rather than of capture. The story's tellings to date indeed do work to affirm women's rights and Jewish belonging in the context of the founding of Canada, with implications beyond the particularities of the female and/or Jewish experience, and these tellings have largely aimed to foster multi/intercultural possibility. However, the story's *queer* disruptive potential intersectionalizes and therefore troubles these takes, destabilizing gender and sexual normativities and by situating the story within decolonial movement. This is important in a Canadian contemporary context characterized by Indigenous resurgence and critical resistance to the power differential inherent in reconciliation (Coulthard 2014, McCall and Hill 2015); mainstreaming of LGBT rights, the increasing visibility of trans struggles and the continued marginalization despite this visibility of trans of colour and two-spirit peoples; and in a contemporary transnational context of preoccupation regarding migration, difference, and belonging where some bodies are deemed more worthy than others (Haritaworn et al 2015). Performing research and telling of colonial era history in multigenre, I suggest, can offer an epistemic opening to multiple knowledges, and the potential to simultaneously uncover patterns in historical and contemporary context, trouble potentialities, and imagine alternatives. The disruptive potential of the multicrosser, in the case of *Brandeau / La Fargue*, is to be found in their destabilizing the certainties of categories through crossing; in their being enabled by and simultaneously

6 Terms naming a practice-based paradigm in/through the arts differ slightly in meaning, including research-creation, performative practice, practice led research, practice as research, practice based research, performance as research, artistic research and creative arts practice. Each carries its own genealogy, primarily based on the geographic/academic locations where each emerged. See Riley and Hunter for an overview of these genealogies, and for analysis and examples of each (2009, 107-113). See Cole and Knowles on arts-based research methods in which arts process serves as data gathering mechanism, and/or means of presenting data (2008). See Chapman and Sawchuk (2012), and Levin (2009) on research-creation in Canada. See Barrett and Bolt (2007) and Kershaw and Piccini (2004) on practice as research and creative arts enquiry; and Barrett and Bolt (2013) on creative arts practice and new materialism. See Fleishman (2012; 2009), Kershaw (2009), Piccini and Kershaw (2004) and Kershaw and Nicholson (2011) on practice as research in performance. See Sullivan (2010) and Wesseling (2011) on artistic research in the visual arts and design. See Fentz and McQuirk (2015) on artistic research and embodiment. On autoethnographic performance, which can be understood as practice as research, see Holman-Jones et al (2013) and Shoemaker (2013) on autoethnographic performance. See the first issue of *Inflexions*, focused on research-creation, from Sense Lab, Concordia University, Montreal (Thain 2008). Much of this literature overlooks the fact that Indigenous methodologies very prevalently do practice as research. See L. Smith (2012 [1999]). For the sacred as practice based research that can be understood as creative practice, see especially Part III in Alexander (2005, 257-332).

evicted from imperial terms of encounter; in their resistance to total entrapment, their unpinnability; in being on the move; in representation's failure to fully account. In taking up the multicrosser's passings, across times, borders, bodies of water, gendered and racialized bodies, languages and genres of representation, I cross temporalities, disciplines, borders, languages, genres of embodying, becoming, approaching, analyzing and observing, performing a search as a telling.

* * *

In video projection is a body on the move between the impossibility of return to an originary elsewhere and an arrival to a belonging that seems can only be ethically lived through unbelonging. Aspiring to perform a queer, feminist, decolonial telling of a settler tale compels me to return again and again to those old boots in video projection in *ribcage: this wide passage*, trodding across the winter landscape over and over again, never arriving. Morgensen advocates groundlessness as a tool for destabilizing the settler colonial imaginary (Morgensen 2012, 227). So I return again and again to an ethical engagement with accounting for those boots on that/this land, that/this movement, that/this bodily engagement with place. A cyclical looping built into multigenre compels us (back, again) to re-look, re-read, re-recreate, re-become, re-perform. Repeat, differently.



In *ribcage: this wide passage*, a figure walks across a winter landscape over and over again, in video projection on floor-to-ceiling reproductions of the interrogation record suspended behind sheer curtains. Video installation by Kaija Siirala and Heather Hermant, live videomixing by Kaija Siirala, videography by Melina Young and Heather Hermant. Photo by Tim Matheson. Used with permission.

Appendix

Procès-verbal de l'interrogatoire d'Esther Brandeau, jeune juive qui "s'est embarquée à La Rochelle, en qualité de passager, en habit de garçon, sous le nom de Jacques Lafargue, sur le bateau le Saint-Michel, commandé par le sieur Sallaberry". Signé Varin.

Transcription by Heather Hermant, with line breaks as found in original record.

Source: Archives nationales de France, Fonds des Colonies, Série C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, 1738, septembre, 15, fol. 129-130. CollectionsCanada.gc.ca, Online MIKAN no. 3067208.

P129 [left]

Aujourd'hui quinziesme septembre
mil sept cent trente huit, pardevant nous Commissaire
de la Marine chargé a Quebec de la police des gens de mer
est comparu Esther Brandeau agée d'environ vingt ans,
la qu'elle s'est embarquée a la Rochelle en qualité de
passager en habit de garçon sous le nom de jacques la
fargue sur le batteau le S.^t Michel commandé par le
S.^r Salabery, et nous a déclaré se nommée Esther Brandeau
fille de David Brandeau juif de Nation negociant au
S.^t Esprit Dioceze de Daxe pres bayonne et estre Juive
de Religion, Et quil y a cinq ans que son pere et sa mere
la firent embarquer au D. lieu sur un Navire hollondois
Capitaine geoffroy pour l'envoyer a amsterdam a une
de ses Tantes et a son frere, que le Navire s'estant perdu
sur la Barre de Bayonne dans la Lune d'avril ou de
may mil sept cent trente trois, elle fut heureusement
sauvée a terre avec un des gens de l'Équipage, quelle fut
retiré par Catherine Churiau veuve demeurante a Biaritz
que quinze jours apres elle partit habillée en homme pour
Bordeaux ou elle s'embarqua en qualité de coqc sous le
nom de Pierre Mausiette sur une barque commandée
par Capitaine Bernard destinée pour Nantes, qu'elle
retourna sur le meme batiment a Bordeaux ou Elle
sembarqua de nouveau en la meme qualité sur un
batiment Espagnol Capitaine Antonio qui partoit pour
Nantes, qu'arrivée a Nantes Elle deserta et s'en alla
[129 right]

a Rennes ou elle se plaça en qualité de garçon chez
un nommé augustin tailleur d'habits ou elle resta
six mois, que de Rennes elle alla a Clisson ou elle
entra au service des Recollets en qualité de domestique
et pour faire des Commissions, qu'elle resta trois mois
dans ce Couvent dont elle sortit sans en avertir, pour
aller a S.^t Malo ou elle se trouva azile chez une Boulang[ere]
nommée Seruanne demeurante aupres de la grande porte

ou elle resta cinq mois rendant quelques services a la d^{te} Seruanne qu'elle alla ensuite a Vitré pour chercher quelque condition, La elle se mit au service du S^r de la Chapelle cy devant Capitaine au regiment de la Reine Infanterie qu'elle a servi pendant dix a onze mois en qualité de laquais, quelle sortit de cette Condition parceque sa santé ne luy permit pas de continuer a veiller le d^t S^r de la Chapelle qui estoit toujours malade. La d^{te} Esther revenant a Nantes a une lieüe de Noisel fut prise pour un voleur et arrest[e] par la Maréchaussée du lieu et conduite dans les prisons du d^t Noisel ou on la fit sortir au bout des vingt quatres heures parce qu'on s'aperçût qu'on s'etoit mepris, Elle se rendit ensuite a la Rochelle ou aya[nt] pris le nom de jacques la fargue elle s'est embarquée pour passer sur le d^t batteau le S.^t Michel, sur la quelle declaration avons interpellé la d^{te} Esther Brandeau de nous dire qu'elle raison elle a eüe de p.130

deguizer ainsy son sexe pendant cinq ans sur quoy Elle nous a dit que s'estant sauvée du naufrage arrivé a Bayonne Elle tomba dans la maison de Catherine Churiau comme il est dit cy dessus qu'elle luy fit manger du porc et d'autres viandes dont l'usage est deffendu parmy les juifs, et qu'elle prit la resolution dans ce tems de ne plus retourner chez son pere et sa mere pour jouir de la meme liberté que le Chretiens; Donc et du tout nous avons dressé le present procès verbal Et a la d^{te} Esther Brandeau signé avec nous a quebec les jours et au surdits.

Collationné
[Signature]

Table I

Boats registered in Saint-Malo & Bordeaux ports, 1733-1738, with captain's name like "Bernard", "Antonio", "Bernard" or "L'espagnol" (arranged chronologically)

Captain's name	Ship's name	Size & Cargo ¹	Crew #	In port at	Date registered in port	Destined for	Arrived from	Date left point of origin	Source
Guillaume Bernard	St-Phillippe de St-Malo	150 tx, salt		Saint-Malo	May 2, 1733	"petit nord" ⁷			ASM 417, 51
Bernard Lemarcand	Ste-Barbe de St-Pessac(?)	8 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Jan 2, 1734				ASM 417, 134
Bernard Lemarcand	Ste-Barbe de St-Pessac(?)	9 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Jan 20, 1734				ASM 417, 138
Bernard Lemarcand	Ste-Barbe de St-Pessac(?)	10 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Jan 30, 1734				ASM 417, 139
Bernard Lemarcand	Ste-Barbe de St-Pessac(?)	11 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Feb 3, 1734				ASM 417, 141
Guillaume Bernard	St-Phillippe de St-Malo	150 tx, salt		Saint-Malo	May 10, 1734	"petit nord" ⁷			ASM 417, 171a
Nicholas Lemarchand, Sieur de la Chapelle	Salamon de St-Malo ⁶	200 tx, grain & bales	39	Saint-Malo	Jun 17-18, 1734	Cadix [Cadiz] & Detroit			ASM 417, 179a, 179; ASM 642, 48
François Besnard	St-Augustin de St-Briac ¹⁰	25 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Jun 27, 1734	"les sabliers" ⁸			ASM 417, 176a
Yves Besnard	Reine des Anges	32 tx.		Saint-Malo	Jul 10, 1734	"le long des costes" ⁹			ASM 417, 183
François Besnard	Ste-Roze de St-Briac	32 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Jul 12, 1734	La Rochelle			ASM 417, 184
François Besnard	St-Augustin de St-Briac	25 tx.		Saint-Malo	Aug 3, 1734	"le long des costes" ⁹			ASM 417, 188a
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac			Saint-Malo	Aug 3, 1734	"le long des costes" ⁹			ASM 417, 188
Louis Bernard	Françoise de Plassac ¹¹	27 tx, ballast	4	Bordeaux	Aug 19, 1734		Rochefort	July 24, 1734	ACF 234, 135
Pierre Garnier	Françoise de Plassac	27 tx, tabacco	4	Bordeaux	Aug 31, 1734		La Rochelle	Aug 21, 1734	ADG 234, 166
Bernard Cot	St Jacques de St. Pardon	32 tx, salt	8	Bordeaux	Sept 19, 1734		Marenne		ADG 235, 97
Gabriel L'espagnol	St Joseph d'abriduc? [could be de Brilleuc] ¹⁰			Bordeaux	Sept 22, 1734		Saint-Malo	July 1734	ADG 235, 72
Joseph Bernard	Françoise de Plassac	27 tx, salt		Bordeaux	Sept 23, 1734		Marenne		ADG 235, 92
Bernard Lalano	Laventurier de Morlaix	35 tx, ballast	5	Bordeaux	Sept 25, 1734		Morlaix	Sept 9, 1734	ADG 235, 100
Joseph Bernard	Janne Marie de St Briac, barque	fabrics / canvas ² and other merch.	6	Bordeaux	Oct 1, 1734		Saint-Malo	Sept 9, 1734	ADG 235, 155
Pierre Bernard	Ste. Etienne de Lisle Dieu [île d'Yeu?]	26 tx. pressed sardines	4	Bordeaux	Oct 1, 1734		Belisle	Sept 1734	ADG 235, 226
Jean Bernicard	Largonote de La Rochelle	30 tx, wheat	5	Bordeaux	Oct 11, 1734		Marans	Oct 6, 1734	ADG 235, 201
Pierre Bernard	St Etienne de Lisle Dieu	sardines	4	Bordeaux	Oct 19, 1734		Belisle	Oct 8, 1734	ADG 235, 226
Bernard Chaufaux	Str-? De St-Malo	7 tx		Saint-Malo	Oct 23, 1734	"le long des costes" ⁹			ASM 418, 18a

Table I cont'd
Boats registered in Saint-Malo & Bordeaux ports, 1733-1738, with captain's name like "Bernard", "Antonio", "Bernard", "Antonio" or "L'espagnol"

Captain's name	Ship's name	Size & Cargo ¹	Crew #	In port at	Date registered in port	Destined for	Arrived from	Date left point of origin	Source
Joseph Bernard	Françoise de Plassac	27 tx, wheat	4	Bordeaux	Nov 20, 1734		Marans	Nov 9, 1734	ADG 236, 152
Bernard Decannier	Marguerite de Libourne	30 tx, iron	5	Bordeaux	Nov 24, 1734		St. Sebastian	Nov 1, 1734	ADG 236, 162
Joseph L'espagnol	Ste Barbe du Port Launay ¹²	21 tx, salt	4	Bordeaux	Nov 27, 1734		Marenne	Nov 18, 1734	ADG 236, 167
Bernard Lalano	Laventurier de Morlaix	35 tx, 10 tx rock	5	Bordeaux	Nov 29, 1734		Morlaix	Nov 5, 1734	ADG 236, 173
Julien Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac	50 tx		Saint-Malo	Dec 2, 1734	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 18-19
Joseph Bernard	Janne Marie de St Briac	50 tx, rye & other merch.	6	Bordeaux	Dec 29, 1734		Saint-Malo	Dec 7, 1734	ADG 236, 109
François Besnard	St Augustin de St-Briac	25 tx		Saint-Malo	Jan 3, 1735	"le long des costes" ¹⁹			ASM 418, 22
Bernard Chauffaux	St. Yves de St Malo	7 tx		Saint-Malo	Feb 5, 1735	"le long des costes" ¹⁹			ASM 418, 26a
Yves Besnard	Reine des Anges, barque de St-Briac	32 tx		Saint-Malo	Feb 5, 1735	"le long des costes" ¹⁹			ASM 418, 25
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac	50 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Feb 25, 1735	"le long des costes" ¹⁹			ASM 418, 28a
Bernard Chauffaux	St Yves de St Malo	7 tx		Saint-Malo	Mar 5, 1735	"le long des costes" ¹⁹			ASM 418, 30a
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac	32 tx		Saint-Malo	Mar 9, 1735	"le long des costes" ¹⁹			ASM 418, 30b
Bernard Chauffaux	St Yves de St Malo	7 tx		Saint-Malo	Mar 21, 1735				ASM 418, 33b
Bernard Ble... (?)	Providence de St Malo	70 tx, salt	34	Saint-Malo	Apr 1, 1735	Gaspé			ASM 418, 38
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac	40 tx, oats		Saint-Malo	Apr 13, 1735	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 44b
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac, barque	32 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	May 3, 1735	La Rochelle			ASM 418, 55
Guillaume Bernard	St Philippe de St Malo	170 tx, salt	72	Saint-Malo	May 4, 1735	"au petit nord"			ASM 418, 53ab
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac, barque	50 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Jun 16, 1735	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 61b
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac, barque	32 tx		Saint-Malo	Aug 8, 1735	"le long des costes"			ASM 418, 69a

Table 1 cont'd
Boats registered in Saint-Malo & Bordeaux ports, 1733-1738, with captain's name like "Bernard", "Antonio" or "L'espagnol"

Captain's name	Ship's name	Size & Cargo ¹	Crew #	In port at	Date registered in port	Destined for	Arrived from	Date left point of origin	Source
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac, barque	50 tx, fabrics/canvas ² & other merch.		Saint-Malo	Dec 2, 1735	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 85a
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac	32 tx		Saint-Malo	Jan 26, 1736	"le long des costes"			ASM 418, 91a
François Besnard	St Augustin de St Briac	25 tx		Saint-Malo	Feb 9, 1736	"le long des costes"			ASM 418, 93a
Yves Besnard	Reine des Anges de St Briac, barque	32 tx		Saint-Malo	Feb 20, 1736	Les Sables d'Olonne			ASM 418, 94a
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac	40 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Mar 13, 1736	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 100a
Jan L'espagnol	Marie Janne d? [seems to say dabreil... Brieuc?]	40 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Apr 7, 1736	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 112b
Pierre Bernard Tréhouart	St Luc de St Malo	80 tx, salt etc	22	Saint-Malo	Apr 28, 1736	"au petit nord" ⁷			ASM 418, 122b
Guillaume Bernard	St Philippe de St Malo	170 tx	76	Saint-Malo	May 7, 1736	"au petit nord" ⁷			ASM 418, 125a
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac	40 tx, fabrics/canvas ²		Saint-Malo	May 14, 1736	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 126b
Paul Besnard Liron	Marie Julienne de St Malo	20 tx, stones, casts or mussels, other merch. ³		Saint-Malo	May 30, 1736	Amsterdam			ASM 418, 130a
Yves Bernard	Reine des Anges de St Briac, barque	32 tx		Saint-Malo	Jul 7, 1736	"le long des costes" ⁹			ASM 418, 137a
Jacques Bernard	St Augustin de St Briac	24 tx		Saint-Malo	Jul 27, 1736	"le long des costes" ⁹			ASM 418, 139a
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac	32 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Sept 7, 1736	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 145a
Paul Besnard Lizon	Marie Julienne de St Malo, barque	20 tx		Saint-Malo	Oct 3, 1736	Lorient			ASM 418, 148b
Bernard Lynders	Demoiselle Catherine d'Amsterdam, galiotte	100 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Nov 3, 1736	Bilbao			ASM 418, 153a

Table 1 cont'd
Boats registered in Saint-Malo & Bordeaux ports, 1733- 1738, with captain's name like "Bernard", "Antonio", "L'espagnol"

Captain's name	Ship's name	Size & Cargo ¹	Crew #	In port at	Date registered	Destined for	Arrived from	Date left origin	Source
Joseph Bernard	Marie de St Briac, barque	50 tx, wheat & other merch.		Saint-Malo	Dec 24, 1736	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 158a
Bernard Lemarquand	Ste Barbe de St Servan	10 tx		Saint-Malo	Dec 28, 1736				ASM 418, 158a
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac	40 tx		Saint-Malo	Jan 2, 1737	"le long des costes" ⁷			ASM 418, 158b
Jacques Besnard	St Augustin de St Briac	25 tx		Saint-Malo	Jan 7, 1737	"aux sables d'Aulonne" ⁸			ASM 418, 159b
Paul Besnard Liran	Marie Julienne de St Malo	20 tx		Saint-Malo	Jan 30, 1737	"aux sables d'Aulonne" ⁸			ASM 418, 164a
François Besnard	Ste Roze de St Briac	32 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Feb 18, 1737	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 167a
Joseph Besnard	Janne Marie de St Briac	40 tx, wheat, other merch.		Saint-Malo	Mar 27, 1737	Bordeaux			ASM 418, 179a
Nicolas LeMarchand [Sieur de la Chapelle]	Thetis de St Malo	200 tx, salt etc.	81	Saint-Malo	Mar 27, 1737	"pêche à la Grande Baye" ⁷			ASM 418, 178b
François Besnard	Ste Rose de St Briac	40 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Apr 4, 1737	La Rochelle			ASM 418, 182a
François Besnard	Ste Rose de St Briac	32 tx, ballast		Saint-Malo	Apr 29, 1737	La Rochelle			ASM 418, 194b
Guillaume Bernard	Lassomption ⁵	203 tx, salt	111	Saint-Malo	May 2, 1737	"au petit nord" ⁷			ASM 644, 51; ASM 418, 196a
Joseph Bernard	Marguerite de Plassac	33 tx, salt	5	Bordeaux	Jul 5, 1738		Marnes [Marennes]	June 30, 1738	ADG 237, 15
Diego Delcolado	St Antoine de Reine Sevilla	30 tx, salmon, sinkers ¹³	7	Bordeaux	Jul 26, 1738		London		ADG 237, 95
Bernard Lemoing	St Pierre de Douarneneth	30 tx, sardines	5	Bordeaux	Sept 17, 1738		Douarneneth [Douarnenez]	Sept 8, 1738	ADG 239, 72
Jean Besnard	Larganaute de La Rochelle	40 tx, slate	5	Bordeaux	Sept 30, 1738		La Rochelle	Sept 25, 1738	ADG 239, 103
Joseph Bernard	Marguerite de Plassac	33 tx, wood strips for making barrels ⁴	4	Bordeaux	Sept 30, 1738		Marans	Oct 19, 1738	ADG 239, 102

*Any text in [square parentheses] is my comment, translation or insertion of relevant material from related entry elsewhere in chart.

¹ Size, cargo & crew # not inserted if not inscribed or not legible in entry. This can sometimes be deduced from other entries of same ship. Tx= tonneaux

² toiles; ³ moule can mean casts or mussels, either is a possible cargo here; ⁴ feuilards; ⁵ Owned by Louis Desmaisons; ⁶ Owned by Le Sr. Lompré de Sebire;

⁷ Indicates fishing in Newfoundland; ⁸ Les Sables d'Olonne; ⁹ Coastal travel and trade up and down coast; ¹⁰ Current spelling of Saint-Briac / Brilleuc is Saint-Brieuc

¹¹ Plassac is on the river Gironde, same river as runs through Bordeaux, but closer out to sea; ¹² Port Launay is on the river Aulne, in from the western coast of

Brittany, opposite Brest, almost due west of Rennes and due north of Quimper; ¹³ plomb

Table 2: Crew and passengers aboard ships registered at Nantes, 1733-1734, with names like Bernard, Antonio or Lespagnol

Name, position & age	Date	Ship name	Destined for	Size	Crew #	Source
Pierre Bernard, matelot, 21 ans	Apr 20, 1733	Le Roy de la Piolleyre de Nantes	Pêche Terre-Neuve			ADLA C1214 No. 6, Fol. 126
Paul Bernard, second captain, age 43	Apr 28, 1733	La Paix de Nantes	St. Domingue	150 tx.	35'	No. 33, Fol. 135
Guillaume Bernard, mousse, age 19	Apr 30, 1733	Le Jean de Morlaix	La Rochelle	70 tx		No. 8, Fol. 127
Bernard Chassignon, captain from Nantes	May 13, 1733	La Reine Ester	Léoganne	140 tx	20	No. 39, Fol. 140
René Bernard, surgeon, age 22	June 18, 1733	St. Antoine de Nantes	Cap St. Domingue	90 tx	21	No. 53, Fol. 165
Michel Bernard, mousse, age 15	Aug 12, 1733	Duc de Bourbon	Cap St. Domingue	55 tx	38	No.69, Fol. 1
Masturin Bernard, second captain, age 61	Aug 19, 1733	Le Lyre de Nantes	Cap St. Domingue	200 tx	30	No. 72, Fol. 15
René Bernard, novice, age 20	Aug 19, 1733	Le Lyre de Nantes	Cap St. Domingue	200 tx	30	No. 72, Fol. 15
Louis Bernard, mousse, age 12	Aug 19, 1733	Le Lyre de Nantes	Cap St. Domingue	200 tx	30	No. 72, Fol. 15
Joseph Bernard, novice, age 20	Aug 25, 1733	La Parfaite de Nantes	Martinique	250 tx.	39	No. 76, fol. 21
Jacques Bernard, matelot, age 24	Sept 16, 1733	Parfaite de Granville	Martinique	80 tx		No. 85, fol. 33
Jacques Bernard, carpenter, age 29	Sept 22, 1733	Justice de Nantes	Cap St. Domingue	150 tx	33	No. 88, Fol 37
Bernard Gabaston de Bayonne, captain, age 34	Oct 6, 1733	Les Deux Renés ²	Cap St. Domingue	250 tx	40	No. 95, Fol. 47
Pierre Bernard, matelot, age 29	Oct 7, 1733	Ste Marie de Grade de Nantes	Marseille	80 tx	15	No. 97, Fol. 51
Pierre Bernard, passenger, age 25	Nov 20, 1733	La Marie Thérèse de Nantes ³	Martinique	90 tx		No. 108, Fol. 66
Jean Bernard, mousse, age 17	Nov 21, 1733	La Monarque de Nantes ⁴	Coast of Guinea			ADLA 1214

Table 2 cont'd: Crew and passengers aboard ships registered at Nantes, 1733-1734, with names like Bernard, Antonio or Lespagnol

Name, position & age	Date	Ship name	Destined for	Size	Crew #	Source
Nicolas Bernard, matelot, age 37	Dec 19, 1733	Le Père de Famille	Léoganne			ADLA 1214
Bernard Baulon, second captain, age 25	Feb 1734	Le St Julien	Léoganne			ADLA 1215
Bernard Gabaston de Bayonne, captain, age 30	July 19, 1734	Les Deux Renés de Nantes	Cap St Domingue	250 tx	44	ADLA 1215, No. 95, Fol. 47

¹ One novice is Jean Françoise de la Barbade, nègre, age 37. There is also one nègre as passenger.

² The second captain, pilot, a *matelot* and *mousse* are all from Bayonne

³ Among the passengers is Catherine, *négrresse esclave*; and ship's surgeon Jean *Fargue*

⁴ Among passengers is Pierre, *nègre du capitaine*

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Synopsis

How do we research and retell colonial stories in the service of queer, feminist and decolonial world-making? What work is performed in such retelling? I argue that such retelling requires deploying multiple genres of research practice whose differential yields allow knowledge production about the subject without immobilizing that subject within a definitive narrative. I argue that working across research genres destabilizes the supremacy or truth claims of any single research practice, and liberates the historical subject from limitations imposed upon them in the moment of inscription, which often renders invisible the actual living of the non-conforming subject and limits the possibility of making queer, feminist, decolonial genealogy. I lay out my argument through a discussion of the case of Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, an eighteenth century figure known as the first, if not among the first Jewish people to arrive to what we now call Canada. They did so in 1738 as a purportedly female Jewish subject passing as a Christian male, after five years of working across France as, or often as, male. They were doubly outed at or en route to what we now call Quebec City. Following one year held in the French colony of New France, they disappear from the record after being deported for refusing to convert to Christianity.

As the first sustained scholarly study of this figure, and the first dissertation to centre them, I enter Brandeau / La Fargue into histories of gender crossers, foregrounding theirs as a case of multicrossing—passing across multiple, simultaneous co-inscribing axes of signification. I complicate and enrich the story's place in Canadian history and culture; offer it as a rich case within Atlantic and Diaspora studies; and put forth a focus on gender in Sephardic and Jewish diasporic studies of the colonial period. I provide methodological innovation to yield insights at the intersection of historical practice and performance studies; and I produce new archival evidence about the tale. I establish the case as a key antecedent to, and useful focal point for contemporary discourse about Canadian belonging, negotiations of difference and practices of settler colonialism, and provide a path for leveraging the queer disruptive potential of such eighteenth century stories.

In Part I, I discuss several iterations of the Brandeau / La Fargue story. I demonstrate that 1) despite the story's lack of entrenchment in Canadian culture as a key foundational settler story, it has nevertheless been retold with frequency; 2) its conditional visibility coincides with moments in which there is a crisis over national belonging; 3) it is made visible predominantly through heteronormative renderings and racialized gender binaries; and 4) Aboriginal presence and colonial power relations are largely occluded in retellings. Through this analysis, I operationalize one of the first principles of my queer, feminist, decolonial retelling, and this principle is intersectionality. Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw within the field of law and emergent from feminist of colour thought, intersectionality allows recognition of the multiple ways in which individuals are socially situated and experience interlocking systems of oppression along what have come to be known as “intersecting axes” of gender, “race,” ethnicity, ability, class, religion, sexuality, place of origin and so on (Crenshaw 2012; 1989). I

deploy intersectionality as principle, and narratology as method for reading for axes that simultaneously constituted Brandeau / La Fargue's experience and representation. Narratology entails close reading of texts to uncover the structure and literary strategies that form a telling, and to ascertain what work those structures and strategies perform (Bal 2006, 1997, 1993, 1985). Intersectionality compels me to stay attuned in particular to gender, ethnicity, class or status, religion and age as well as colonial context and geographical movement in my narratological reading of iterations of the Brandeau / La Fargue case.

I begin with a chapter that attends to the eighteenth century context. I gather scholarly work on women who passed as men in Europe during colonial expansion; eighteenth century thinking on what we now term "gender"; perceptions and self-perceptions of Jews in this period; the history of the notion of status and its relationship to what we would now understand as class, "race" and gender; and eighteenth century patterns, experiences and perceptions of mobility and migration. I demonstrate that the contexts through which Brandeau / La Fargue moved were characterized by slow shifts in understandings of personhood, in relation to what we would now term gender, ethnicity, "race," religion, class and belonging. Against this effort to understand the eighteenth century on its terms, I analyze tellings of Brandeau / La Fargue to detect how their situatedness among intersecting, or co-inscribing axes, is represented, what has stuck to the story in its travels, and how structures and strategies underlying tellings produce Brandeau / La Fargue. I analyze three iterations of the case: the original *procès-verbal* of 1738 (ANF 1738a); a widely circulated children's novel by Canadian author Sharon E. McKay entitled *Esther* (2004b); and a French-language documentary by Shelley Tepperman entitled *Les Juifs de Québec : Une histoire à raconter* (2008) in which Brandeau as a character plays a vital narrational role.

My intersectional narratological reading ultimately complicates interpretations and representations of the story thus far. It reveals the constrictions placed upon this story through its reiterations, including heteronormative gender assumptions; trade-offs made between gender and religious affiliation; and entrenchment in European narrations of Indigenous space. I show that the multicrosser as *multicrosser* slips from attention in the interpretations and representations of the story thus far. I offer the case as a new addition to histories of eighteenth century gender crossers, and as a new addition to literary studies, particularly of tales for children in settler colonial contexts, and transgender stories for children (Bradford 2007, Flanagan 2008). Finally, I foreground the story as an opportunity for producing queer, feminist and decolonial discourse about Canada, its origins and its contemporary social and political culture; and propose placing queer Indigenous and settler colonial studies (Byrd 2011, Driskill et al 2011, Morgensen 2011) in conversation with studies of literary Sephardism—that is, the study of deployment of Sephardic Jewish history in literature to think national belonging (Casteel 2012, Halevi-Wise 2012, Kandiyoti 2012). This I propose as a means to leverage the disruptive potential of queer settler subjects

while resisting the collapse of the non-conforming subject into settler colonialism. Such a conversation offers one avenue for bringing into view the constrictions noted above, and for addressing the work they do in contemporary contexts. In Part I, I reveal the entwining of the past with the present, as I demonstrate the ways in which this story has been reanimated centuries removed. Such reanimations are a means of engagement with issues that have also travelled across time, principally concerning gender, ethnicity, nation-making and belonging.

I argue, however, that intersectionality as principle and narratology as method do not allow us to refute, confirm or add new archival information to the claims in the archival record itself, nor to paint what M. Jacqui Alexander calls “the texture of living” of the historical subject in the eighteenth century context (2005, 295). We might understand “texture of living” as that which Alexander seeks as she confronts absence in the written record as it meets the compulsion to know and tell of an enslaved woman's life and death. In Part II, I journey deep into archival records in search of the historical figure and the texture of their eighteenth century living, compelled by the elisions in the representations I analyzed in Part I. I go into the archival research knowing that the colonial records that bring us this story do not bring us a first person voice of this historical figure. Whereas in Part I, we uncovered an absence of accounting for the multiple axes intersectionality attunes us to, the challenge in Part II is how to confront the absence of conclusive archival evidence about the subject, and how to navigate what Trouillot has called “silencing the past”—not just absence in the record, but the dynamic relations of power that privilege certain people, events and perspectives, and silence others even when present in the record itself (1995). How might we tell of the subject through archival research in such a way that they are liberated from the limitations of the inscriptions that bring them to us? Part II shifts dramatically in style and methodological approach, and generates both a methodological intervention and new information about the historical figure.

Principal yields of Part II are to: 1) reveal the role that desire, doubt, error and haunting play in the archival research process; 2) show how a central focus on the researcher's body in archival research fosters production of a rich texture of the historical subject's living, without pinning the subject to a definitive narrative, allowing the passer continued passing; 3) uncover new archival evidence; and 4) reveal, through new archival evidence, the original testimony as possibly a case of strategic telling. New archival findings include locating: a) a widow s/he may have lived or worked with; b) possible widow-centred networks proximate to or concurrent with Jewish or crypto-Jewish networks; c) a family of possible Jews in a locale where at the time historians agree Jews were not present; d) possible networks through such families between cities where Brandeau / La Fargue purportedly worked; e) a network of captains who may be those named in Brandeau / La Fargue's record of testimony; f) a ship Brandeau / La Fargue may have travelled on, throwing into doubt the shipwreck claimed in the testimony; g) possible family members located in Amsterdam's Jewish archives; and h) a tombstone that may be theirs.

In this endeavour I place myself within scholarly understandings of history as narrative (White 1988, 1980, 1973), contributing an intersectional, multigenre inflection to the narrative tradition in historical practice. Hayden White challenged distinction between history and literature, arguing that history is story, and is underpinned how historians prefigure the historical field through tropes and ideologies, and then read and organize data through such prefiguring. A historical text, he says, is a literary artifact (1974), one of any number of tellings of a single set of events that could be produced and coexist contradictorily. I follow White's underscoring of history as story, and his assertion that the historian brings a set of assumptions to the narration that makes meaning of historical information, while I diverge from any assumption that past and present are discontinuous, insofar as decolonial thinkers demonstrate the lingering operations of colonialism in contemporary contexts (Byrd 2011, Lugones 2010, Maldonado-Torres 2007, Mignolo 2000, Morgensen 2011, L. Simpson 2011, Wekker 2016, Wynter 2003). Further, I do so in line with the principle of transtemporal touch, albeit anachronous, advocated by queer historiographers (Dinshaw 2012, 1999, Freeman 2010, 2005, Freccero 2011, 2006). I build on feminist historiography that has sought to bring to light lives of ordinary and marginalized people, and to reveal the gendering of historical practice itself (Davis 1995, B. Smith 1996). I go beyond the centrality of written inscription to consider the value of lived bodily "evidence" transmitted affectively through what performance theorist Jose Muñoz calls "ephemera" (2009), in conversation with what Avery Gordon elaborates as "haunting," an ethical insistence of the past on the present that has material bodily consequence (Muñoz 2009, Gordon 2008, Freccero 2006). The methodology of Part II is a key contribution, which I name a "heretic methodology." It follows from Muñoz's advocacy for working with the past as means of producing a utopian futurity in service to queer, racialized communities (2009, ch1 para 19). I operationalize queer historiography to do so. I offer queer historiography a case study of liberating the passer from capture through archival research and its narration, a queer, feminist telling in its relation to archives and to who merits telling (widows, crossers, absent and possible Jews) and one which perhaps performs, if tangentially, a decolonial telling insofar as it circumvents the subject's capture and fixing.

Underpinning queer historiography according to Dinshaw is an aspiration for transtemporal touch, an attachment to historical figures rather than an objective distance or detachment from them (2012). This emerges from a desire to produce queer community not through assimilation or appropriation of figures of the past into a queerness of our time, but through a desire for transtemporal kinship across eras (1999). I deploy queer historiography by centring bodily sense and desire as archival research tools. I disrupt the patriarchal and colonial underpinnings that order the records I engage with by following lines of investigation prompted by desire, error, doubt and haunting. Rather than relegating to the footnotes the silly sidetracks and embarrassments consequent from such followings, I perform an autoethnographic narration of the archival search *as a history of Brandeau / La*

Fargue. The process is at once premised on a deep engagement with archival research, and at the same time committed to “evidence” that travels otherwise, through affect, through ephemera. Through this dual commitment I perform a disidentification with an historical practice premised on the authority of inscription (Muñoz 1999).

By staying attuned to bodily sense, I search against patriarchal lineages of birth, marriage and death through which the eighteenth century archives I encounter are organized, leveraging the archives to situate the historical figure in their movement through networks of synchronous communities that might not be recognizable in lineage logic, networks in part made possible by movement of ships and people through transatlantic colonial routes. In doing so, I bring to light networks and communities of widows, and of purported or former Jews, and create a texture of the historical figure's living through an attention to these speculative networks. It is through my narration of what I find and do not find and how I search that I generate Alexander's texture of living (2005, 295).

While Alexander does not define “texture of living,” I propose that this texture is a sensorial animation of places and movement through them, that when produced might allow for approaching a bodily experience of transtemporal touch. Thus, I combine queer historiography's principle of touching the past through radical attachment, with Alexander's challenge to produce texture of living in the absence of inscribed evidence. My narration becomes a history as literary artifact told through dual commitments to the written record and that which exceeds it, underpinned by the ethical insistence of the past pressing upon the present through haunting. The principal overarching yield of Part II, then, is not a large amount of new “data” about Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue, nor a new analysis based on such data, but instead a new story, in which archives figure as much as geography, desire and haunting. The yield is not separate from the search.

However, the queer historiography deployed in Part II to produce a history of Brandeau / La Fargue, and the intersectionality deployed in Part I to illuminate occlusions in iterations of the tale thus far, both fail to further a deep embodied understanding of the relationship between contemporary bodies, historical memory and historical practice, and therefore to better understand how the cultural archive produces cultures of belonging and exclusion through circulation of the past, and how these might be intervened into. In Part III, I operationalize performance studies as principle through the method of performance practice as research, to address this lacuna. Part III takes up my engagement with historical reenactment as an artist-scholar who performs Brandeau / La Fargue on stage. Such performance practice preceded the scholarly research undertaken in Parts I and II, and continued throughout the production of this dissertation. Artistic practice as a form of research *generates* questions and explorations of these, rather than starting from a question to arrive at its answer(s). This distinguishes arts practice based research from other research modes (Kershaw 2009, Riley and Hunter 2009, Sullivan 2010, Wesseling 2011). Questions my artistic practice both yielded and explored include: What can performing the archive on stage tell

about time, the body, remembering, and telling an eighteenth century historical figure? What might be the relationship between a performance practice of historical reenactment, and the performative nature of historical research? What might performing Brandeau / La Fargue offer queer, feminist, decolonial world-making?

In memory studies, Paul Connerton elaborates the role of social bodily practice in transmission of social memory. He generates two key concepts: “habit memory,” embodied memory produced through repetition in the social, and bodily “acts of transfer,” whereby cultural practices transmit and sustain shared remembering, and produce collectivity (1989). Connerton privileges the body among bodies in his theorizations of memory. In performance studies, building from Connerton, Diana Taylor distinguishes between the “archive” of enduring materials like documents and artifacts, and the equally important “repertoire” of socially performed acts of transfer that appear ephemeral in an archive logic—such as dance, ceremony, theatre, and song—often marginalized as historical knowledge claims (Taylor 2003). Repertoric practices, Taylor argues, sustain communal memory often counter to or in excess of inscribed history, while bearing some relation to it. Taylor also foregrounds repertoire as that through which colonial “scenarios” are sustained and through which they can be troubled (2003, 53-78). Scenario as analytic privileges attention to bodies, and refers to the socially reproduced dynamics of power as they are enacted between bodies beyond the discursive. Paying attention to scenarios is an important strategy in recalibrating scriptocentrism (Conquergood 2013, 32-46) and the epistemic dimensions of coloniality (Maldonado-Torres 2007). Performance practice as research advocates have long argued that non-discursive knowledge-making takes place in performance, its own theorizing, which discourse fails to fully capture (Fleishman 2012, 34). Connerton's and Taylor's shifting of memory studies' attention to the body in the social acknowledges this richness of performed knowledge and its transmission outside discursive bounds. Part III investigates the interface between archive and repertoire, and ultimately produces knowledge about the bodily mechanics of that interface.

The key yield of Part III is articulation of three historical reenactment techniques—extreme physical labour, memorization and translation through the body, and collaborative performance with audience—as methods for becoming a consciously transtemporal body. I name these practices “becoming archive,” achieved through critical reiteration of colonial scenarios of exile and outing (Taylor 2003). These techniques allow the body to be sensed as a body through which multiple times erupt, which is to say, a body that becomes across time, that can touch the past through its critical reiteration in the present. I show that these techniques yield: 1) sensing the nature of time as non-linear; 2) sensing the making of what Connerton calls “habit-memory” *in process* (1989); and 3) co-witnessing/sensing haunting through collaborative performance. Part III further yields an articulation of the relationship between performance practice as research and archival research not as autonomous, but as interinanimate (Schneider 2011), troubling distinctions between archival and bodily evidence.

Two performance works and one performance-based research practice are at the heart of Part III. My 70-minute theatre performance *ribcage: this wide passage (thorax : une cage en éclats)* integrates spoken word, movement, video installation, and live music. I pay attention to a scene in which I translate through physical gesture the text of archival records pertaining to Brandeau / La Fargue, while simultaneously reciting those texts. In the second work, *Aujourd'hui / This Day, 1738*, I reenact the Brandeau / La Fargue interrogation, with myself as interogatee and one audience member after another as interrogators. This work is a durational one-to-one performance; it features one audience member at a time, and time itself is a medium in the performance. Finally, I consider a performance-based research practice I undertook of walking a sacred Christian pilgrimage route as a path of Jewish/Converso exile. I analyze these practices by understanding them as historical reenactments.

The uniqueness of my contribution is that I *do* historical reenactment as performer *and theorize* such historical reenactment in concert with multiple modes of researching. I thus step off from Rebecca Schneider's key work on historical reenactment where she considers reenactments of U.S. Civil War battles, and works of performance art, in two ways: 1) by being the scholar who also performs reenactments, and 2) by extending Schneider's umbrella of historical reenactment to include a diversity of practices at the intersection of theatre, performance art and what might, for clarity's sake, be understood as “verbatim” reenactment that aspires to “exact” replication of past events based on archival records (Schneider 2011). Schneider's work confronts the notions that the past is autonomous from the present; that time is linear and singular; and that the body live in the present cannot serve as historical evidence. Such arguments trouble archive logic (Schneider 2011, 133-135). My work demonstrates and deepens these arguments via attention to bodily mechanics of memory making (Connerton 1989), and of ephemera and haunting (Muñoz 2009, Gordon 1997) as they play out in critical reiterations of colonial scenarios of exile and outing (Taylor 2003). Through Schneider I connect the archival research process to scenarios of the colonial that can be interrupted through reiteration in performances of historical reenactment.

To theorize in the discursive that which is produced within performance requires grappling with the very impossibility of translating performance-based knowledge to the discursive. In response to this challenge, I split the page horizontally in Part III. In the Supertext across the top of the page I attempt a re-staging of the performances under analysis, performing to some extent the impossibility of translation from stage to page. Here, I attempt to bring the reader into something approximate to the performance event itself in the moment it is underway. I aim to integrate the reader into the performance along with myself and with audience, whose responses to my work are integrated verbatim, in order that the reader may approach touching the nature of performance itself. Beneath the Supertext is a Subtext of a more conventional scholarly nature. Here, I revisit the term “archive” across a range of disciplines, and then work with the terms “repetition” (Connerton 1989, Schneider

2011), “incorporation” (Connerton 1989), and “reenactment” (Schneider 2011) in order to attend to the mechanisms of performance as they relate to memory and historical practice. In articulating the yields of the techniques I analyze, I propose that critical historical reenactment attunes the body to the haunting and bodily sense through which the archive was engaged with in Part II. The performance practices of reenactment are thus revealed as foundational to the archival labour of Part II, catalytic of the heretic methodology that allows the production of texture of the subject's living. The techniques of “becoming archive” make available for recognition the interanimate relationship between body, haunting, ephemera and inscribed remembering. I show that “becoming archive” stands as a possible historical research methodology entwined with archival labour, *and conversely*, that archival labour comes to stand as the practice of a body enacting the habit-memory produced by, sensed in, and transmitted through performance. But it is also evident that the performances analyzed are unable on their own to produce a rich texture of an eighteenth century figure's living, nor new archival evidence, nor an intersectional analysis of iterations of Brandeau / La Fargue, even as an intersectional orientation might be what set the stage for conceiving the historical reenactments as critical reiterations of colonial scenarios.

Supertext and Subtext are not meant to resolve each other, but to expand, trouble and return to each other through overlap, repeat and echo. Read together, they attempt a materialization of what it is to work in what I name multigenre, the dissertation's overarching research methodology. Multigenre entails working across distinct yet entwined research practices that each generates yields and modes of articulating those yields and where each, on their own, fails to answer the call of a queer, feminist, decolonial telling of an historical tale. I conclude that a queer, feminist, decolonial telling of an eighteenth century figure in the 21st century must be tellings multiple, following the feedback loops generated between reading (Part I), sensing (Part II) and becoming (Part III). I show that multigenre provides a strategy for doing so. Telling of a colonial era story in a single genre may yield particular knowledge while closing off the story. When multiple research genres are enacted, through their differential yields we may approach the story in such a way that we trouble any single knowledge claim. Multigenre, I propose, allows for a dynamic relationship between teller and told, which keeps the story unfixed and multiple, unhinges the subject from a finality that forecloses or excludes aspects and possibilities. Multigenre allows us to perform telling through an ethics of approach rather than of capture or closure. It is an epistemic intervention that opens to diverse ways of knowing long advocated in feminist and Indigenous scholarship, that troubles knowledge hierarchies, and that extends intersectionality to the plane of genre. I propose multigenre as one answer to the question of how we might perform telling Brandeau / La Fargue in a queer, feminist, decolonial way, one which accounts for the intersectional complexity of the historical figure; the colonial contexts in which they moved; and justice imperatives of the colonial present in which the current telling unfolds.

Samenvatting

Hoe onderzoeken en hervertellen wij kolonialistische verhalen in dienst van queer, feministisch-en dekolonialistische wereld making? Wat voor arbeid wordt er uitgevoerd in zo'n hervertelling? Ik beargumenteer dat zulke hervertellingen het gebruik van verschillende onderzoekspraktijk genres vereist, welke hun differentiërende opbrengsten het mogelijk maken om kennis te produceren over het onderwerp zonder dit onderwerp te bevriezen in een statisch verhaal. Ik beargumenteer dat het werken door en met verschillende genres, de heerschappijen en claims van waarheid voor elk individuele onderzoeksmethode destabiliseert. Ook bevrijdt deze manier van werken het historische onderwerp van limitaties in het moment van opschrijving, wat vaak de levens van non-conforme onderwerpen onzichtbaar maakt en daarmee de wording van een queer, feministisch en dekolonialistisch genealogie limiteert. Ik illustreer mijn argument aan de hand van een discussie over het verhaal van Esther Brandeau/Jacques La Fargue, een achttiende eeuwse figuur die bekend staat als de eerste, zoniet één van de eerste, joden die arriveerden in het land wat we vandaag de dag Canada noemen. Hij/zij¹ arriveerde in Canada in 1738 als een ogenschijnlijk Joodse vrouw die zich voordeed als een Christelijke man, na vijf jaar in Frankrijk te hebben gewerkt voornamelijk als man. Hij/zij werd ontmaskerd als zijnde vrouw en Joods op de route naar wat we nu Quebec stad noemen. Na een jaar te zijn vastgehouden in de Franse kolonie van Nieuw Frankrijk, verdwijnt hij/zij van de radar nadat hij/zij is gedeporteerd omdat hij/zij weigert te bekeren tot het Christendom.

Als zijnde de eerste gestage studie van dit figuur en de eerste dissertatie die dit figuur centreert, plaats ik Brandeau/La Fargue in een geschiedenis van gender 'crossing', waarbij ik dit verhaal op de voorgrond zet als een multi crossing waarbij verschillende tegelijkertijd inschrijvende van assen van betekenis(geving) de revue passeren. Ik compliceer en verrijk de plaatsing van het verhaal in Canadese geschiedenis en cultuur; ik bied het aan als een rijke case study binnen Atlantische-en Diaspora studies en ik plaats de focus op gender in Sefardische en Joodse Diaspora studies in het kolonialistische tijdperk. Ik bied methodische innovatie om inzichten te verkrijgen in de intersectie van historische praktijken en prestatie studies; waarnaast ik ook nieuw bewijs produceer voor het archief over dit verhaal. Ik stel deze zaak vast als een belangrijk verhaal voorafgaande en een belangrijk brandpunt voor hedendaags discours over Canadees 'behoren', discussies over verschil en de praktijken van kolonialisme, waarbij ik een pad baan voor de potentiële versturende queer invloed in zulke 18e eeuwse verhalen.

Ik kaart de verschillende iteraties van het Brandeau/La Fargue verhaal gedeeltelijk aan. Ik demonstreer dat 1) ondanks het gebrek van verschansing van dit verhaal in de Canadese cultuur als een fundamenteel kolonialistisch verhaal, het toch meerdere malen herverteld is; 2) de conditionele zichtbaarheid van dit verhaal samengaat met momenten van crisis betreft een nationaal 'behoren'; 3) het verhaal zichtbaar wordt gemaakt

1 Het voornaamwoord 'they' (hen) wordt voornamelijk gebruikt in deze dissertatie om te refereren naar Esther Brandeau / Jacques La Fargue.

voornamelijk door heteronormatieve weergaves en geracialiseerde gender tweedelingen; 4) inheemse aanwezigheid en kolonialistische machtsverhoudingen grotendeels uitgesloten worden in hervertellingen van het verhaal. In deze analyse operationaliseer ik één van de eerste principes van queer, feministisch en dekolonialistische hervertellingen, namelijk die van intersectionaliteit. Geïntroduceerd door Kimberlé Crenshaw in het wetenschappelijke gebied van rechten en opkomend uit het gedachtegoed van het feminisme van kleur, permitteert intersectionaliteit herkenning van de verschillende manieren waarop individuen sociaal gesitueerd zijn en hoe zij de samenwerkende systemen van oppressie ervaren aan de hand van wat bekend werd als de 'kruisende assen' van gender, 'ras', etniciteit, vermogen, klasse, religie, seksualiteit, plaats van origine enzovoorts (Crenshaw 2012; 1989). Ik zet intersectionaliteit in als een principe en narratologie als een methode om de assen te lezen die gelijktijdig de ervaring en representatie van Brandeau/La Fargue uitmaakten. Narratologie houdt het nauw lezen van teksten in, om de structuur en literaire strategieën bloot te leggen die een vertelling vormen en om vast te stellen welk werk die structuren en strategieën uitvoeren (Bal 2006, 1997, 1993, 1985). Intersectionaliteit dwingt mij om afgestemd te blijven voornamelijk op gebied van gender, etniciteit, klasse of status, religie en leeftijd, zowel als kolonialistische context en geografische beweging in mijn narratologische lezing van de iteraties van de Brandeau/La Fargue zaak.

Ik begin met een hoofdstuk die de context van de achttiende eeuw volgt. Ik verzamel academische werken over vrouwen die zich voordeden als mannen in Europa tijdens de kolonialistische expansie; achttiende eeuwse gedachtes over wat we nu 'gender' noemen; percepties en zelf-percepties over-en van Joden in deze periode; de geschiedenis van de notie van status en de relatie van status tot wat we nu begrijpen als klasse, 'ras' en gender; en achttiende eeuwse patronen, ervaringen en percepties van mobiliteit en migratie. Ik demonstreer dat de contexten door welke Brandeau/La Fargue zich bewoog gekarakteriseerd werden door langzame veranderingen in het begrijpen van persoonlijkheid, in relatie tot wat we nu gender, etniciteit, 'ras', religie, klasse en 'behoren' noemen. Tegenover deze inspanning om de achttiende eeuw op zijn voorwaarden te begrijpen, analyseer ik de vertellingen van Brandeau/La Fargue om te detecteren hoe hun gesitueerdheid te midden van intersectionaliserende of gelijktijdig inschrijvende assen is gerepresenteerd, wat er bij de verhalen is gebeven tijdens zijn reizen en hoe de onderliggende structuren en strategieën de verhalen van Brandeau/La Fargue produceren. Ik analyseer drie iteraties van dit verhaal: het originele *proces verbaal* uit 1738 (ANF 1738a); een breed verspreid kinderboek door Canadees auteur Sharon E. McKay getiteld *Esther* (2004b); en een Franstalige documentaire door Shelley Tepperman genaamd *Les Juifs de Québec: Une histoire à raconter* (2008) waarin Brandeau als een karakter een vitale vertellende rol heeft.

Mijn intersectionele narratologische lezing maakt de interpretaties en representaties van het verhaal tot zover ingewikkelder. Het onthult de limitaties die op dit verhaal worden geplaatst door zijn herhalingen, inclusief heteronormatieve gender assumpties; afwegingen die tussen gender en religieuze aansluitingen worden gemaakt; en verschansingen in Europese vertellingen over inheemse ruimte. Ik laat zien dat de 'multicrosser' als zijnde een *multicrosser* de aandacht ontglipt in de interpretaties en representaties van het verhaal tot zover. Ik bied dit verhaal als een nieuwe toevoeging tot de geschiedenissen van achttiende eeuwse gender crossers en als een nieuwe toevoeging voor literaire studies, in het bijzonder van kinderverhalen in kolonialistische contexten en transgender verhalen voor kinderen (Bradford 2007, Flanagan 2008). Uiteindelijk draag ik het verhaal aan als een kans voor het produceren van queer, feministisch en de-kolonialistisch redevoering over Canada, haar origine en haar hedendaagse sociale en politieke cultuur; en stel ik voor om queer inheemse en kolonialistische studies (Byrd 2011, Driskill et al 2011, Morgensen 2011) in een conversatie te plaatsen met literaire Sefardische studies- of beter gezegd, de studie van het ontplooiën van een Sefardisch-Joodse geschiedenis in literatuur om over nationaal 'behoren' na te denken (Casteel 2012, Halevi-Wise 2012, Kandiyoti 2012). Ik stel dit voor als een manier om te profiteren van de versturende potentie van queer kolonialistische onderwerpen terwijl ik ondertussen de ineenstorting van het non-conforme onderwerp in kolonialisme wil vermijden. Een dergelijke conversatie biedt toegang tot het in kaart brengen van de hierboven genoemde limitaties, en voor het aankaarten van de arbeid die wordt weggezet in hedendaagse contexten. In het eerste gedeelte onthul ik de verstrengeling van heden en verleden wanneer ik de manieren illustreer waarop dit verhaal is gereanimeerd over de eeuwen heen. Dergelijke reanimaties dienen als een manier van betrekking bij kwesties die ook over de eeuwen heen gereanimeerd zijn zoals gender, etniciteit, natie-wording en 'behoren'.

Ik beargumenteer overigens, dat intersectionaliteit als een principe en narratologie als een methode ons niet permitteren om nieuwe informatie aan het archief toe te voegen, te weerleggen of te bevestigen met betrekking tot het al bestaande archief, noch om, wat M. Jacqui Alexander de 'textuur van leven' noemt, te illustreren van het historische onderwerp in de achttiende eeuwse context (2005, 295). We kunnen 'textuur van leven' begrijpen als dat wat Alexander zoekt wanneer ze een zekere afwezigheid in geschiedenis confronteert, omdat het het verlangen naar het weten en vertellen ontmoet over het leven en de dood van een tot slaaf gemaakte vrouw. In het tweede gedeelte duik ik diep in de archieven op zoek naar het historische gevoel en de textuur van haar achttiende eeuwse leven, gedwongen door de weglatingen in de representaties die ik in het eerste gedeelte onderzocht. Ik verdiep mij in de archieven, wetende dat de kolonialistische documenten die ons dit verhaal brengen ons niet de stem van dit historische figuur in de eerste persoon bieden. Waar we in het eerste gedeelte de afwezigheid bloot legden van de verantwoording voor de meerdere assen waar intersectionaliteit ons

op afstemt, is de uitdaging in het tweede gedeelte de confrontatie met het gebrek aan afdoende bewijs over het onderwerp en hoe te navigeren wat Trouillot het 'het stilzwijgen van de geschiedenis' noemt- niet alleen afwezigheid in documentatie, maar de dynamische relaties van macht die bepaalde personen, evenementen en perspectieven privilege verlenen en die anderen het zwijgen opleggen ook al zijn deze aanwezig in het document zelf (1995). Hoe kunnen we over het onderwerp vertellen door middel van archiefonderzoek op zo'n manier dat ze bevrijd zijn van de limitaties van de opschrijvingen die ons het onderwerp brengen? Het tweede gedeelte wisselt dramatisch in stijl en methodologische aanpak en genereert zowel een methodologische interventie als nieuwe informatie over het historische figuur.

De hoofd opbrengsten van het tweede gedeelte zijn om: 1) de rol te onthullen die verlangen, twijfel, fouten en 'haunting' spelen in het proces van archiefonderzoek; 2) te laten zien hoe een centrale focus op de lichamelijke ervaring van de onderzoeker in archiefonderzoek het produceren van een rijke textuur van de manier van leven van het historische figuur bevordert, zonder het onderwerp vast te pinnen op een beslissend narratief, waarbij de crosser wordt gepermitteerd om te blijven 'crossen' 3) nieuw bewijs voor het archief te onthullen; en 4) om, door archiefonderzoek, de originele getuigenis als een mogelijke manier van strategisch vertellen te onthullen. Nieuwe bevindingen voor het archief omvatten het localiseren van: a) een weduwnaar/weduwe waar hij/zij mogelijk mee woonde of werkte; b) mogelijke weduwe-gecentreerde netwerken nabijzijnd of overeenkomend met Joodse of crypto-Joodse netwerken; c) een mogelijk Joodse familie in een omgeving waar in die tijd, zoals historici concludeerden, geen Joden aanwezig waren; d) mogelijke netwerken via dergelijke families tussen steden waar Brandeau/La Fargue ogenschijnlijk werkte; e) een netwerk van schippers die mogelijk genoemd zijn in de getuigenverklaring van Brandeau/La Fargue; f) een schip waarmee Brandeau/La Fargue al dan niet gereisd zou hebben, waarbij het scheepswrak in de getuigenverklaring in twijfel wordt getrokken; g) mogelijke familieleden die gelokaliseerd zijn in de Joodse archieven van Amsterdam; en h) een grafsteen die van hen zou kunnen zijn.

In dit streven plaats ik mijzelf binnen de academische verklaring van geschiedenis als vertelling (White 1988, 1980, 1973), die een intersectionele en multi-genre verbuiging bijdraagt aan de traditie van het narratief in historische praktijken. Hayden White betwiste het verschil tussen geschiedenis en literatuur, waarbij hij beweerde dat geschiedenis een vorm van verhaal is en aangeeft hoe historici door middel van tropen en ideologieën het historische vlak vooraf voorstellen en daarna data lezen en organiseren aan de hand van deze vooraf voorgestelde beelden. Een historisch feit, zegt hij, is een literair feit (1974), één van de ongedefinieerde hoeveelheid vertellingen over een enkele reeks van gebeurtenissen die tegenstrijdig geproduceerd kunnen zijn en tegelijkertijd kunnen bestaan. Ik volg White's benadrukking van geschiedenis als verhaal, tezamen met zijn bewering dat historici bepaalde veronderstellingen meenemen in vertellingen die betekenis geven aan historische

informatie, terwijl ik afwijk van de veronderstelling dat heden en verleden discontinue zijn tot zoverre dat kolonialistische denkers de langgerekte kolonialistische verrichtingen in hedendaagse contexten demonstreren (Byrd 2011, Lugones 2010, Maldonado-Torres 2007, Mignolo 2000, Morgensen 2011, L. Simpson 2011, Wekker 2016, Wynter 2003). Verder doe ik dit in aan de hand van het principe van 'transtemporal touch', ofschoon deze anachronistisch is, die wordt bepleit door queer geschiedschrijvers (Dinshaw 2012, 1999, Freeman 2010, 2005, Freccero 2011, 2006). Ik bouw op feministische historiografie die geprobeerd heeft de levens van doodnormale en gemarginaliseerde mensen tot het licht te brengen en het genderen van historische praktijken te onthullen (Davis 1995, B. Smith 1996). Ik ga voorbij de centrale geschreven teksten om de waarde van geleefd lichamelijk 'bewijs' te overwegen die affectief wordt overgedragen door wat de performance theorist Jose Muñoz 'ephemera' noemt (2009), in conversatie met wat Avery Gordon uiteenzet als 'haunting', een ethische aanhouden van het verleden aan het heden wat een tastbaar lichamelijk effect heeft (Muñoz 2009, Gordon 2008, Freccero 2006). De methodologie van het tweede gedeelte is een belangrijke bijdrage die ik 'ketter methodologie' noem. Het volgt Muñoz's pleidooi voor het werken met verleden als een manier om een utopische andere wereld te creëren in dienst van queer-en geracialiseerde gemeenschappen (2009, h1 para 19). Om dit te doen operationaliseer ik queer historiografie. Ik bied queer historiografie een case study van een bevrijding van een 'multicrosser' door archiefonderzoek en zijn vertelling, een queer-en feministische vertelling in zijn relatie tot archieven en tot wie het verdient te vertellen (weduwnaars, kruisers, afwezige en mogelijke Joden) en één die wellicht, indien tastbaar, een de-kolonialistische vertelling presteert in zoverre het de vangst en vaststelling van het onderwerp omzeilt.

Het onderbouwen van queer historiografie is volgens Dinshaw een streven naar 'transtemporal touch', het vasthouden aan historische figuren in plaats van een objectieve afstand of afscheiding van ze te houden (2012). Dit komt voort uit een verlangen om een queer gemeenschap te creëren, niet door assimilatie of toeëigening van figuren uit het verleden in een queer-heid van onze tijd, maar door een verlangen naar *transtemporal* verwantschap door de eeuwen heen (1999). Ik pas queer historiografie toe door lichamelijke gevoelens en verlangens als archivale onderzoek tools te centreren. Ik verstoort de patriarchische en kolonialistische onderbouwingen die centraal staan in de documenten die ik gebruik door manieren van analyse toe te passen die worden ingegeven door verlangen, fout, twijfel en 'haunting'. In plaats van de onnozele zijsporen die uit deze wijze van onderzoek zullen voortkomen te verbannen naar voetnoten, zal ik een auto-etnografische vertelling van dit archiefonderzoek als een geschiedenis van Brandeau/La Fargue uitvoeren. Het proces gaat aan de ene kant uit van een diepe betrokkenheid met archivaal onderzoek en is op hetzelfde moment toegewijd aan 'bewijs' dat op andere wijze reist, door affect, door kortstondigheid. Door deze tweeledige toewijding dis-identificeer ik mij met de historische praktijken gebaseerd op het gezag van opschrijving (Muñoz 1999).

Door afgestemd te blijven op lichamelijke ervaring en logica, onderzoek ik tegen patriarchische geboortegeslachten, huwelijken en dood waardoor de achttiende eeuwse archieven die ik tegenkwam zijn geordend, waarbij ik gebruik maak van de archieven om het historische figuur te situeren in zijn beweging door netwerken van synchrone gemeenschappen die niet herkenbaar zouden zijn in de logica van afkomst, netwerken die gedeeltelijk mogelijk zijn gemaakt door de beweging van schepen en mensen door transatlantische koloniale routes. Door dit te doen, breng ik netwerken en gemeenschappen van weduwnaars aan het licht, en die van beweerde of voormalige Joden en creëer ik een structuur van het leven van het historische figuur door middel van aandacht voor dergelijke netwerken. Door het verhaal over wat ik ontdek en wat ik niet ontdek en hoe ik onderzoek genereer ik de structuur van Alexander's leven (2005, 295).

Ook al definieert Alexander de 'texture of living' niet, leg ik voor dat deze structuur een zintuiglijke animatie van plekken en bewegingen door dergelijke plekken is, zodat wanneer deze wordt geproduceerd, deze een lichamelijke ervaring mogelijk maakt van de 'transtemporal touch'. Zodoende combineer ik het principe van queer historiografie, dat van het in contact komen met het verleden door middel van radicale hechting, met Alexander's uitdaging om 'texture of living' te creëren in de afwezigheid van geschreven bewijs. Mijn vertelling wordt een geschiedenis in de vorm van een literair artefact verteld door een tweeledige commitment aan de geschreven geschiedenis of documentatie en dat wat voorbij hier voorbij gaat, onderbouwd door de ethische aandring van het verleden die aandringt op het heden door 'haunting'. De principiële overkoepelende opbrengst van het tweede gedeelte is dan niet een grote hoeveelheid nieuwe data over Esther Brandeau/ Jacques La Fargue, noch een nieuwe analyse gebaseerd op dergelijke data, maar in plaats daarvan een nieuw verhaal, waarin archieven net zoveel waarde houden als geografie, verlangen en 'haunting'. De opbrengst is niet gescheiden van de zoektocht.

Echter, de queer historiografie die is ingezet in het tweede gedeelte om een verhaal te produceren over Brandeau/La Fargue en de intersectionaliteit die in het eerste gedeelte is ingezet om uitsluitingen en iteraties van het verhaal tot dusver te belichten, falen er beiden in om een diep lichamelijk/tastbaar begrip te bevorderen over de relatie tussen hedendaagse lichamen, historisch geheugen en historische praktijken en daardoor om beter te begrijpen hoe het culturele archief de cultuur van 'behoren' en uitsluiting produceert door de circulatie van het verleden, en hoe hierbij ingegrepen kan worden. In het derde gedeelte operationaliseer ik performance studies als een principe door de methode van performance als onderzoek, om deze leemte aan te kaarten. Het derde gedeelte bevat mijn betrokkenheid met historische opvoeringen als een kunstenaar en geleerde waarbij ik Brandeau/La Fargue vertaal op een podium. Dergelijke uitoefeningen van opvoeringen gingen vooraf aan het academische onderzoek in het eerste en tweede gedeelte, en continueerden in de productie van deze dissertatie.

Kunstzinnige uitoefening als zijnde een vorm van onderzoek genereert vragen en verkenningen hiervan, in plaats van te starten met een vraag en tot een antwoord te komen. Dit onderscheidt op uitvoering gebaseerde kunstzinnige praktijken van andere onderzoeksmethodes (Kershaw 2009, Riley and Hunter 2009, Sullivan 2010, Wesseling 2011). Vragen die mijn artistieke uitvoeringen zowel opleverden als exploreerden zijn: Wat kan het opvoeren van een archief op een podium ons vertellen over tijd, het lichaam, herinneren, en het vertellen van een achttiende eeuwse historisch figuur? Wat zou de relatie kunnen zijn tussen een historische heropvoerings praktijk en de performatieve natuur van historisch onderzoek? Wat kan het uitbeelden van Brandeau/La Fargue queer, feministisch en de-kolonialistische wereld-making bieden?

In 'geheugen' studies gaat Paul Connerton in op de rol van sociale lichamelijke praktijken in de overdracht van sociaal geheugen. Hij ontwikkelt twee hoofdconcepten: 'gewoonte geheugen' belichaamd geheugen geproduceerd door herhaling in het sociale, en lichamelijke 'handelingen van overdracht', waarbij culturele praktijken een gedeeld herinneren overdragen en behouden en een collectiviteit produceren (1989). Connerton bevoorrecht het lichaam onder lichamen in zijn theorieën over geheugen. In performance studies onderscheidt Diana Taylor, bouwend op Connerton, tussen het archief van duurzame materialen zoals documenten en artefacten en het eveneens belangrijke repertoire van sociaal uitgevoerde handelingen van overdracht die kortstondig lijken in de logica van het archief - zoals dans, ceremonie, theater en zang- en die vaak worden gemarginaliseerd als historische kennis claims (Taylor 2003). Repertoire praktijken, beargumenteert Taylor, houden gemeenschappelijk geheugen in stand, vaak in tegenstelling tot of ten overvloede van geschreven geschiedenis, terwijl deze praktijken toch nog in relatie staan tot dergelijke geschreven geschiedenis. Taylor stelt ook voorop dat door repertoire kolonialistische 'scenario's' behouden worden en waardoor deze scenario's gedestabiliseerd kunnen worden (2003, 53-78). Scenario als zijnde een analytische methode prefereert de aandacht voor lichamen, en refereert naar de sociaal geproduceerde dynamieken van macht wanneer deze worden uitgevoerd tussen lichamen voorbij het discours. In het speciaal aandacht besteden aan scenario's is een belangrijke strategie in het herijken van 'scriptocentrism', of de focus op geschreven documentatie (Conquergood 2013, 31-46) en de epistemische dimensies van kolonialisme (Maldonado-Torres 2007). Voorstanders van performance praktijken als research hebben lang beweert dat non-discursieve kennis-wording plaatsvindt in performance, met het eigen theoretiseren van performance, dat waar discours vaak in faalt te omvatten (Fleishman 2012, 34). Connerton's en Taylor's schuivende focus van geheugen studies naar het sociale lichaam, erkend deze rijkheid van opgevoerde kennis en de transmissie van deze kennis buiten de grenzen van discours. Het derde gedeelte onderzoekt het raakvlak tussen archief en repertoire en produceert uiteindelijke kennis over de lichamelijke mechanieken van deze aansluiting.

De hoofd opbrengst van het derde gedeelte is de articulatie van drie historische naspeel technieken- extreme fysieke arbeid, herinneren en vertalen door middel van het lichaam en een performance in samenwerking met het publiek- als methodes om een bewust 'transtemporal' lichaam te worden. Deze praktijken noem ik 'archief worden', bereikt door kritische herhaling van kolonialistische scenario's van verbanning en gedwongen onthulling (Taylor 2003). Deze technieken gunnen het het lichaam om gevoeld te worden als een lichaam waarin meerdere tijden uitbarsten, dat wil zeggen, een lichaam dat 'wordt' door de tijd heen, een lichaam wat het verleden kan aanraken door zijn kritische reproductie in het heden. Ik laat zien dat deze technieken de volgende opbrengsten hebben: 1) het gewaarworden van tijd als non-lineair; 2) de gewaarwording van het proces van worden wat Connerton 'gewoonte-geheugen' noemt (1989); en 3) het getuige zijn van/gewaarworden van het spoken van geschiedenis door samenwerkende performance. Het derde gedeelte brengt een articulatie van de relatie tussen de performance praktijk als onderzoek en archiefonderzoek niet als autonoom, maar als 'interanimate' (Schneider 2011), waarbij verschillen tussen archivaal en lichamelijk bewijs gedestabiliseerd worden.

Twee performance werken en één performance-gebaseerde onderzoek praktijk vormen de kern van het derde gedeelte. Mijn 70 minuten durende theater performance *ribcage: this wide passage (thorax : une cage en éclats)* integreert het gesproken woord, beweging, video installatie en live muziek. Ik schenk aandacht aan een scène waarin ik een vertaling maak van de tekst van archivale documentatie met betrekking tot Brandeau/La Fargue door middel van lichamelijke beweging, terwijl ik tegelijkertijd deze teksten voordraag. In het tweede werk, *Aujourd'hui/ This Day, 1738*, reproduceer ik de interrogatie van Brandeau/La Fargue, met mijzelf als de ondervraagde en de ene na de andere persoon in het publiek als de ondervrager. Dit stuk is een één op één performance; met telkens één persoon uit het publiek en met tijd zelf als een medium in de performance. Uiteindelijk overweeg ik een performance-gebaseerde onderzoek praktijk die ik ondernam van het lopen van een heilige Christelijke pilgrimage route als een pad van Joods/Converso ballingschap. Ik analyseer deze praktijken door ze te begrijpen als historische reproducties.

Het unieke aan mijn contributie is dat ik historische reproductie *doe* als een performer en dat ik dergelijke historische reproducties *theoretiseer* in overleg met meerdere modi van onderzoek. Ik stap dus af van Rebecca Schneider's sleutelwerk over historische reproductie wanneer ze reproducties van veldslagen tijdens de burgeroorlog van de Verenigde Staten beschouwt, en werken in performancekunst, op twee manieren: 1) door de geleerde te zijn die ook de reproducties opvoert, en 2) door Schneider's spreekwoordelijke paraplu van historische reproducties uit te breiden om een diversiteit aan praktijken toe te voegen op het kruispunt van theater, performancekunst en wat, voor de duidelijkheid, begrepen kan worden als verbatim, reproductie dat ernaar streeft om een exact waarheidsgetrouw beeld te creëren van het verleden gebaseerd op archivale documenten

(Schneider 2011). Schneider's werk confronteert de opvatting dat het verleden onafhankelijk is van het heden; dat tijd lineair in enkelvoudig is; en dat het lichaam aanwezig in het heden niet kan fungeren als historisch bewijs. Zulke argumenten betwisten archief-logica (Schneider 2011, 133-135). Mijn werk demonstreert en verdiept deze argumenten door aandacht voor de lichamelijke mechanica van 'geheugen wording' (Connerton 1989), en voor 'ephemera' en 'haunting' (Muñoz 2009, Gordon 1997) wanneer ze zich afspelen in kritische re-iteraties van kolonialistische scenario's van ballingschap en 'outing' (Taylor 2003). Door Schneider link ik het proces van archiefonderzoek met kolonialistische scenario's die geïnterrumpeerd kunnen worden door de performance van historische reproductie.

Om in het discours te theoretiseren wat is geproduceerd in performance, wordt er vereist de onmogelijke taak beet te nemen om performance-gebaseerde kennis te vertalen naar het discours. Als een reactie op deze uitdaging deelde ik de pagina horizontaal in tweeën in het derde gedeelte. In de Supertext bovenaan de pagina doe ik een poging tot een heropvoering van de performances onder analyse, waarbij ik tot op zeker hoogte de onmogelijke vertaal taak van podium tot schriftelijke platform uitvoer. Hier probeer ik de lezer mee te nemen in iets wat ongeveer in de buurt komt van het optreden zelf in het moment dat het aan de gang is. Mijn doel is de lezer te integreren in de performance samen met mijzelf en het publiek, welke hun reacties op mijn werk schriftelijk geïntegreerd zijn, zodat de lezer de aard van performance zelf kan benaderen. Onder de Supertext is een Subtext van een wat meer conventionele wetenschappelijke natuur. Hierin kom ik terug op de term 'archief' over een heel scala van disciplines en werk ik daarna met de termen 'repetitie' (Connerton 1989, Schneider 2011), 'integratie' (Connerton 1989) en 'heropvoering' (Schneider 2011) om zodoende de mechanismen van performance te bekijken zoals zij zich relateren tot geheugen en historische praktijken. Door de opbrengsten van deze technieken die ik analyseer te articuleren, stel ik dat kritische historische heropvoering het lichaam afstemt tot de 'haunting' en lichamelijke ervaring door welke het archief was betrokken in het tweede gedeelte. De performance praktijken van naspelen zijn als volgt onthult als fundamenteel voor het archivale werk in het tweede gedeelte, katalytisch van de kettlers methodologie die de productie mogelijk maakt van de textuur van het leven van het onderwerp. De technieken van 'archief wording' maken de herkenning mogelijk van de 'interinanimate' relatie tussen lichaam, haunting, efemeer en geschreven geheugen. Ik laat zien dat 'archief wording' als een mogelijke onderzoeksmethodologie verstrengeld met archivaal arbeid, en omgekeerd, dat archivale arbeid komt te staan als de beoefening van opvoeren van het lichaam van gewoonte-geheugen geproduceerd door, ervaren in en overgedragen door performance. Het is echter ook duidelijk dat de geanalyseerde opvoeringen niet op zichzelf een rijke textuur van het leven van een achttiende eeuwse figuur kunnen produceren, evenals nieuw archivaal bewijs, noch een intersectionele analyse van iteraties van Brandeau/La Fargue, zelfs als een intersectionele

oriëntatie de toon kan hebben gezet voor het ontstaan van historische heropvoeringen als kritische hervertellingen over kolonialistische scenario's.

De Supertext en Subtext zijn niet bedoeld om elkaar op te lossen, maar om elkaar uit te breiden, te betwisten en terug te brengen door overlapping, herhaling en echo. Tezamen gelezen, pogen zij een materialisatie van wat het betekent om te werken in wat ik een multi-genre noem, de overkoepelende research methodologie van deze dissertatie. Multi-genre houdt het werken in door meerdere verschillende en toch verbonden onderzoeksmethoden die elk opbrengsten leveren en manieren om dergelijke opbrengsten te articuleren en waar elk, op zichzelf, de oproep faalt te beantwoorden van een queer, feministische, de-kolonialistische vertelling van een historisch verhaal. Ik concludeer dat een queer, feministische, de-kolonialistische vertelling van een achttiende eeuwse figuur in de 21e eeuw meervoudig moet zijn, opvolgend op de feedback lussen gegenereerd tussen het lezen (het eerste gedeelte), ervaren (het tweede gedeelte) en wording (het derde gedeelte). Ik laat zien dat multi-genre een strategie vormt om dit te doen. Het vertellen van een kolonialistisch tijdperk verhaal in een enkele genre kan bepaalde kennis opbrengen terwijl het verhaal wordt begrensd. Wanneer meerdere onderzoek genres worden gebruikt, kunnen we door hun kenmerkende opbrengsten het verhaal benaderen op zo'n manier dat we elke kennis claim bekritisieren. Ik beweer dat multi-genre een dynamische relatie mogelijk maakt tussen de verteller en de luisteraar, waardoor het verhaal non-gefixeerd blijft en veelvuldig, en het onderwerp los wrikt van een eindresultaat die aspecten en mogelijkheden afschermt of uitsluit. Multi-genre biedt ons de mogelijkheid om een vertelling op te voeren door een ethiek van aanpak in plaats van een vangst of afsluiting. Het is een epistemische interventie die verscheidene manieren van weten opent die lang gepleit zijn in feministisch en inheemse wetenschap, die kennis hiërarchieën bekritiseert, en die intersectionaliteit uitbreidt tot het gebied van genre. Ik bepleit multi-genre als één antwoord op de vraag hoe we de vertelling van Brandeau/La Fargue kunnen opvoeren op een queer, feministische en de-kolonialistische manier, één die verantwoording aflegt voor de intersectionele complexiteit van het historische figuur; de kolonialistische contexten in welke zij bewegen; en imperatieven van het kolonialistische heden rechtvaardigt waarin de actuele vertelling zich ontrafelt.

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