WALKING IN RELATION
A THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CROSS-CULTURAL APPROACH

By Sarai Richter & P.X.L.
Arizona State University

WALKING AS A THEORY OF LIFE AND LEARNING

What if history repeats itself in each person, each echo a reminder of choices made, paths taken, and the patterns that emerge? In a world shaped by cycles of repetition and disruption, the very tension between these forces becomes a space for critical reflection. Trauma is a narrative wound that persists, repeating in ways that demand our attention to confront and transform. While walking in India, I learned that the study of history is about human capabilities. People are capable of both good and evil and everything in between. "In the west, people tend to think history is a series of events, but it's a spectrum of human potential" (Acharya Yogi Vinay, personal communication, 2024). Indigenous frameworks recognize the interwoven nature of personal and collective histories (Smith, 1999).

India's history comes from two books, *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*. The first is the life of Rama, and the second is Khrisna. These are not mere myths but lenses revealing the spectrum of human possibilities, emotions, family, business, society, etc. Much like Kimmerer's (2013) understanding of Indigenous wisdom as a tapestry of stories and teachings that reveal our relationship with the land, community, and Self, if we look at a person's life and look for meaning through a generalizable cultural lens, we can see the entirety of history in one individual. A kaleidoscope of a trillion potential outcomes swirls before us.

As I walked through these histories, each step became an entry point into past and present entanglements. Walking is not just a physical act; it is the rhythm of inquiry. Walking threads meaning into lived experiences, bridging ecological, political, and personal dimensions (Solnit, 2001). Yet, we find ourselves tethered to the past, to the lives of others, caught within a familiar and confining threshold, arrested moments in time offering a lens to view the past, shape our decisions, and transform futures. Does the repetitive manifestation of trauma re-cycle, or do we harness these patterns for transformation? Recognizing that the moment of potential change is not about escaping the past but about engaging in these constellations actively, not as a passive observer but as co-creators of meaning in the lessons that shape our journey toward a more intentional and conscious future (Benjamin, 1968). As we face histories of inequality, disruption, and resistance, we find the potential for connection at the intersection of repetition and transformation. The tension between what has been and what could be offers space to critically examine how we move forward—not by forgetting our histories, but by revisiting and reinterpreting them with renewed purpose, creating new paths for social change and collective action. Walking as a pedagogy is a transformative practice where theory and practice meet in body and space. Springgay and Truman (2018) argue that walking creates spaces to muddy places and knowings between the personal and the political. This perspective is essential in understanding

walking as an act of personal movement and a means to engage in relational inquiry, where embodied knowledge connects with social and ecological contexts.

As a pedagogical strategy, walking offers a relational and embodied way of knowing, bridging the gap between theory and practice. This aligns with Anyon's (2008) assertion that theory is a powerful tool to deepen research and enrich empirical work. By incorporating walking into educational contexts, researchers and educators can move beyond static methods and engage in a dynamic, iterative process that fosters critical thinking and relational understanding, resists static definitions, and instead emerges with each step attuned to the ecological, political, and personal dimensions of research—an unfolding rhythm of inquiry.

Walking. Footsteps thread my bones together.

We evolved to walk long distances. A rhythm stitched into our bodies. Walking has always been my escape. Foot after foot, ground meeting soul. Always moving, never still. My genetic code set in motion truths I was yet to know. Each trail pulling me to its natural end.

I was
walking when
it happened…

A cop stood at the house's threshold, his voice as flat as asphalt. Words fell heavy in the empty void between him and me.

Your biological father walked

out

onto the highway.

a soccer mom couldn't

But what of the space between? Between foot and earth? Between motion and stillness? A tension. The rhythm of walking reflects something older than me, older than him. Is this an ancestral inheritance, a form of embodied history? The body keeps the score of our traumas, holding memories of our lives and those passed down to us (van der Kolk, 2014).

in time.

In time, walking reveals not only the rhythm of thought but the forces that shape our movements. The paths we choose are not random; they are guided by memory, shaped by personal and collective histories. Our orientation to objects influences how we navigate the world (Ahmed, 2006), weaving past and present into the directions we take.

Walking clears my head. I love dirt paths the most—the ones that wind along creek beds, cut through cornfields, and sidewalks cracking under the pressure of roots. With each step, my feet

press into the earth, a palimpsest of his steps, my steps—a history I cannot escape. Paths twist toward ends and edges. But this has no finality.

Only more steps.

I follow them.

If I inherit the paths he walked, do I inherit his pain, too? Is my propensity for walking nurture or nature? Questions linger pregnant in the air as the ground beneath me hums with the history of his stride.

Memories linger—the stale scent of cheap whiskey filling my nostrils.

As night draws its curtains, Mak's whisper shatters the silence. She grinds fish sauce, tamarinds, salt, chilies, and sugar in the hollow heart of the stone mortar. The pungent scent fills the air. Amidst the rhythmic thrum of the pestle, her gaze holds mine, ensuring the weight of her tale takes root—a symbolic journey through the shadows of history:

"ការដើរនៅពេលយប់គឺមានគ្រោះថ្នាក់បុរសស្លៀកពាក់ខ្មៅមើល."

"Walking alone at night is dangerous with the man in black watching."

The shadow lingers at the edges of her memory—a silent reminder of the Khmer Rouge.

What does it mean to walk in the shadow of someone like that?

Imaginary spaces of conciliation, where such memories might find release, remain tethered to the land and the bodies that survived (Garneau, 2012). Walking is an act of memory and creation, a way to honor history lessons while forging paths that resist its most violent repetitions.

My feet press against the earth—my mind caught in a threshold, somewhere between the man in black and the father I never truly knew. I cannot move forward without carrying him with me—each step an imprint, a scar, settling deep into the bones of my feet. The weight of it becomes part of me.

My feet, too, seem to remember. With each step, the ground forces its way through the skin. Knitting itself into the framework of my body. Like an osseous anomaly—a small, extra splinter of bone emerging where the body once bore pressure repeatedly like a mill grinding corn—a natural response to weight.

But what is the weight of memory?

What shape does it leave in me?

My feet are not just bones—they are records. The way they bend, stretch, and resist speak of a history—perhaps not only my own but ones I cannot escape. My feet carry the marks of his absence, his steps lingering in the shadow of mine, but in a way I never chose. My toes curl to grasp what is lost, finding unexpended threads of connection.

Pa calls me to dress and walk with him to the Wat. Draped in robes of bright orange, Monks chant a melody both hypnotic and ancient. We bow, a humble dance before their presence. The monks gracefully dip lotus flowers into a golden, water-filled vessel. In a single, fluid motion, pink blossoms pirouette on their green stalks, scattering droplets of lotus-scented water.

A sacred ballet unfolds—a tapestry of reverence in the tranquil heart of the Wat.

Pa locates a seat for us on the floor of the communal stilt building. After the monks have chosen from the offerings, he hands me a bowl of food. "I was at the University when it happened," he said. "I was a professor. I saw the tanks from my office window as they drove down the national highway."

I know what he has to say is urgent; as a Khmer man, he would often tend to the fruit trees or nap in the living room rather than socializing.

His voice is rhythmic, his sentences short. "I raced downstairs to my moto to get home to Mak and your three brothers. We didn't know what to do. First, we were told we would be sent to a work camp in Kampong Cham. But I bribed a man in black to send us to Battambang, where we had family. I didn't know they were mass-killing intellectuals in Kampong Cham."

His voice cracks. "The man in black separated Mak and me from your three brothers. The boys were sent to reeducation. They were taught to be men in black—to supervise the labor and punishment of the adults."

His face becomes tender. His eyes no longer see me but relive ghosts from his past.

His shoulders soften as he speaks. "Mak was pregnant when we were forced into the rice fields. The baby would have been a girl (srey) child, but she lost her due to the amount of labor and a lack of nutrition."

His pauses stretch for an eternity. "We were unfortunate for so long for losing our baby srey." His face and shoulders soften, and he breathes deeply. Then he turns to look at me, "But, now she has returned to us, beloved Sarai."

Do these bones grow differently? Life lived long before me. The land beneath shifts, and I understand less and more with each step. Something is growing in my bones, shaped by the tension between foot and earth, motion and stillness. I don't just walk forward. I walk back. I walk in circles, revisiting and re-feeling the pressure and the absence.

Like accessory ossicles that appear in response to constant motion, my body makes something new in space where there once was nothing—shaped by repetition—by the pattern of lost and found.

It's a question I'm still learning to ask: if I inherit the paths he walked, do I inherit the bones he never knew to grow?

Walking and Memory

Walking is the thread that binds the following stories together. A bridge across time and space. Four cultures, four traditions—yet all rooted in walking as a way to reconnect with what has been lost.

Our first steps are always

u
n
ev
en.

One foot,
then the other.
Slow at first, uncertain, attempts to find balance.

The Jewish people have walked through centuries of diaspora, genocide, and slavery. From the stories we tell about the significance of walking, the exodus out of Egypt, 40 years in the desert, to the Spanish Inquisition, where many walked to neighboring Portugal, North Africa, or the Ottoman Empire, carrying with them fragments of their culture and faith (Baer, 1961), to the forced marches of the Holocaust, walking has been both a means of escape and a testament to endurance.

My ancestors walked to preserve their lives and faith, carrying in their steps the weight of unimaginable loss and the stubborn hope of survival. My family's story is one of walking—walking for solace, for a way to carry the weight of trauma passed down like heirlooms, tarnished but unyielding.

My biological father walked, too.

During his military service in Japan, he found himself in the company of Hopi and Diné tribal members. He saw something in their rhythm—a way of walking that was more than movement.

A method. A theory.

They tried to teach him that walking wasn't just about the journey; it was ceremony, an act of being with the land and its stories.

When he returned to the U.S., he continued to walk, hitchhiking to Hopi mesas and Diné lands, searching for something.

Peace.

Perhaps.

He brought me back gifts from those journeys: dolls dressed in Diné ribbon dresses, statues, and storybooks. Although he wasn't present, those gifts were his way of teaching me how to walk.

Heal;

They were fragments of something larger—something he was searching for himself, something that took my walking to be able to name.

For the Diné, walking is sacred. The Long Walk—a forced march in the 1860s—left deep scars, yet the Diné people have reclaimed walking as a ceremonial act (Denetdale, 2007; Iverson & Roessel, 2002). The Diné resisted erasure. The concept of Hózhó, walking in beauty and harmony, became a counter-narrative, emphasizing balance and resilience even amidst displacement. They walk in prayer, their steps carrying offerings of corn pollen to the land and sky (Begay & Maryboy, 2000; McPherson, 1992; Wilson, 2008). For the Hopi, walking is intertwined with their spiritual worldview. The Salt Pilgrimage, a ceremonial pilgrimage, is a journey through arid deserts to gather salt from the Grand Canyon, tracing ancestral paths and weaving stories into the landscape (Geertz, 1994; Kimmerer, 2013; Whiteley, 1988).

Walking is how I imagine him, though healing is never simple. It hasn't been for me. I was born Jewish, adopted, and raised far from my roots. I grew up in the echoes of displacement. Trauma reverberated in the frequency of drug and alcohol use. Brave Heart (2003) duly names this the historical trauma response. It is a wound that never entirely closes, reshaping the lives it touches.

I carried my wounds on me while walking in Cambodia, another people and land shaped by a violent history but alive with resistance. Under the Khmer Rouge, countless families were forced into death marches, evacuated from their homes, and sent to labor camps (Chandler, 2008). Those who survived carried the scars of those forced steps, yet some walked back—to their villages, Wats, and rituals that tethered them to their history and land.

There, I found Khmer families who welcomed me into their lives and stories. They showed me how they honored their past—not by erasing the pain but by weaving it into their rituals. For Pchum Ben Khmer, people walk around the Wat—their steps deliberate, their prayers whispered into the stillness of the early morning—leaving rice, candies, and bottles of water to honor and feed their ancestors. It reminded me of the Jewish tradition of yahrzeit, the annual remembering of the dead. Both rituals share a common purpose: reconnecting with what has been lost and binding the present to the past through acts of care and remembrance.

My Khmer family taught me how to walk differently—how to move with intention, to see walking as an act of healing, a way of reclaiming, rooted, not wandering. Smith (1999) calls for decolonizing methodologies as an academic pursuit and a way of being. To walk, she might argue, is to engage directly with land, history, and community. It is to reject abstraction, to insist on presence.

My father's walking was part of this legacy, though he didn't name it as such. As I trace the pathways of my father's life, I am reminded of Tsing's (2015) observation that disturbance can sometimes lead to livability. The fractures in our histories can become spaces of growth, much like the mushrooms she describes thriving in the ruins of capitalist destruction. The Hopi and Diné people tried to teach him how walking may bridge past and present, pain and peace. It wasn't about forgetting; it was learning how to carry with ease, finding space for new bone growth.

In Cambodia, I found a different rhythm. Mak, my Khmer mother, would tell stories while grinding spices with a mortar and pestle. The rhythmic motions of her hands became a kind of walking, too—a ceremony of memory and survival. Wilson (2008) speaks of research as ceremony, a relational act that honors the land and its stories. Mak's rituals were like that: acts of grounding, being present with the weight of history.

The Khmer Rouge had left scars on Mak's family, scars that she carried differently than my own family carried theirs. Yet, in her ceremonies, I saw resistance. In her stories, I found parallels to my own. Tuck and Yang (2012) remind me that *Decolonization is not a Metaphor*. Neither is walking. It is a refusal to stand still in the face of trauma.

To Kimmerer (2013), walking becomes a way of listening to the language of other beings, engaging with the land not as a backdrop but as an active participant in our narratives. The rhythm of our steps intertwines with the rhythms of the earth, forming an ecology of reciprocity and recognition. Each step presses against the earth—unsteady yet sure. To walk is to encounter the echoes of history. Each step resonates with what has come before, each pathway carved by decisions long past. Walking is not knowing in advance. It is becoming with the land, its textures and its silences. In this rhythm—feet striking the ground, breath rising and falling—theory ceases to be static. Walking is not a metaphor. It is a method. It is theory's undoing and its remaking.

This movement—tentative, deliberate—c r e a t e s s p a c e.

Between Movement and Stasis: Theory in Action

Walking embodies the tension between repetition and transformation, offering a lens for evolving possible futures.

Walking as a method offers an opportunity to deepen educational research practices by integrating personal, ecological, and socio-political dimensions. In practical terms, it invites educators and researchers to step beyond the classroom, literally and figuratively, into the spaces where learning occurs organically. Walking ethnographies can uncover the hidden curricula of urban landscapes, revealing how spaces teach, exclude, or empower individuals. Walking alongside the communities with whom we co-create knowledge can disrupt traditional power dynamics and foster relational, participatory approaches to research.

Moreover, walking aligns with post-qualitative methodologies by rejecting predetermined frameworks and embracing the contingent and the emergent. Each step an opportunity to engage with the materiality of the histories embedded in environments and the affective dimensions of bodies walking in space. This methodological openness is particularly valuable in education, where rigid structures often dominate. Walking allows for a more nuanced exploration of how learners and educators navigate their shared environments.

Walking as Pedagogy

Walking resists traditional epistemologies, pushing against the boundaries of ontological enclosure (St. Pierre, 2011). The act itself is uncontained and uncontainable, emerging from and entangled with the environments it traverses. Walking becomes an experiment in atonement to the material, the fleetingness, and the rhythm. Walking is theory set into motion, temporality embodied, and inquiry situated in the landscapes it touches. In these steps, I hear echoes of Solnit's (2001) reflections on walking as a way of thinking and discovering, a practice that bridges the conceptual and the physical. Walking as a mode of inquiry is a practice that grounds theory in lived experience. By inhabiting space and time differently, researchers open themselves to the possibilities that theory stirs with each step.

Walking disrupts traditional educational practices by emphasizing embodied learning over abstract theorization. In an academic context, walking fosters a pedagogy of presence, where students and educators engage directly with their environment, transforming learning into an active and relational process. One way to integrate walking into educational research methodologies

would be for scholars to step outside the confines of classrooms or labs and engage with communities and landscapes to be grounded in material realities. This shift counters the compartmentalization of knowledge and reconnects theory with the tactile and immediate.

Educational professionals can adapt the reflective practice of walking into rethinking curricula, pedagogy, and policy. The rhythm of walking facilitates deeper engagement with theoretical texts, translating abstract concepts into embodied understanding.

One such educational strategy to incorporate walking as a reflective practice in research would be to offer *walkshops*. These site-based walking discussions would have participants navigate spaces that are materially tied to specific socio-political or historical issues. For instance, while discussing critical race theory, students walk through a neighborhood affected by redlining, grounding abstract discussions with material culture. Such practices encourage students to perceive learning as a dynamic, participatory act rather than a static knowledge transfer. Walking becomes a counter-narrative to positivist, sedentary education, prompting educators to rethink the spatiality of teaching and learning.

Walking in Contemporary Crises

Walking carries urgency, a quiet rebellion against the inertia of inaction. To walk is to confront landscapes scarred by extractive politics, ecological collapse, and colonial histories. Each footstep bears witness to these scars, becoming a tactile engagement with histories that are too often rendered invisible. Walking amidst these realities is witnessing—it changes the very structure of our bones. Repetition forges new ways to be attuned to systems in crisis and the precarity of bodies within them.

This is not a metaphoric transformation but a literal one. The body becomes a site of inscription where the rhythms of the land and the trauma of its histories leave their marks. Each step is a negotiation between resistance and surrender, between the will to move forward and the weight of what has been. In walking, the researcher does not stand apart from the crises they study but becomes entangled within them, their body and mind shaped by the rhythms of the terrain, by the echoes of the histories carried in the land itself.

Walking becomes an act of reckoning—a way of moving with, rather than apart from, the interconnected crises of the present. It demands an openness to the fleeting, to the fragile, to the ephemeral. It is a reminder that theory is not a static object but a rhythm, a pulse, an unfolding. Walking, as a method and a mode of inquiry, refuses the certainty of fixed epistemologies. It situates itself firmly in the flux of life, bearing witness to what is while opening a pathway to what could be. Walking intersects with the urgent global displacement crisis as a sociopolitical act. The historical forced marches of the Khmer Rouge's evacuation of Phnom Penh and the Diné's Long Walk exemplify how walking has been used as a tool for displacement and violence. These events echo the contemporary refugee crises, where walking often becomes a desperate act of survival. By acknowledging these histories, the field of education can use walking to explore how communities intersect on migration, memory, and the act of reappropriation as resistance.

Indigenous ceremonies of walking from the Hopi and Diné tribes serve as vibrant acts of reclamation and resistance, reaffirming relation with the land and its sacred significance. These practices challenge extractive paradigms and offer alternative frameworks for sustainability and stewardship, which are increasingly relevant in educational discourse (Cajete, 1994; Escobar, 2018).

Walking additionally provides a framework for examining neoliberalism's impact on public spaces and mobility. Urban walking reveals patterns of exclusion and accessibility, highlighting how socio-economic disparities manifest in the physical landscape. Future research from within the field of education might study how walking routes to schools reflect broader systemic inequities, linking these findings to discussions of policy and reform.

To be in relation with is to demand movement, presence, reflection, and reckoning.

As a form of resistance, walking challenges traditional frameworks and invites us into spaces of ambiguity. It is within this ambiguity—where movement and stillness converge—that theory's potential emerges, grappling with its simultaneous vitality and uselessness. This tension, the pull between movement and stasis, urgency and futility—is where theory feels vital and useless, alive and inert. What can theory truly offer in the face of ecological grief, dispossession, and displacement, where the weight of history bends present realities into distorted shapes? Perhaps, as Manning (2016) suggests, theory must shift its scale, becoming *minor*, fragmentary, and nomadic—a thread to weave through the gaps rather than a monolith to impose from above. Walking, then, becomes an enactment of minor theory: a step-by-step refusal of closure, an embodied questioning of how we come to know, live, and act in this fragile web of remembering, care, and imagining. Walking resists the need to predetermine outcomes, instead embracing what Butler (2022) describes as theoretical plasticity—responsiveness to the urgent issues of the moment.

Each step contains its own unspoken inquiry, its own unfolding. To walk is to engage not with answers but with the cadence of questions—where does the ground give way, where does it hold? This embodied act disrupts the certainty of grand theories, those abstractions polished smooth by distance from lived experience. Instead, walking demands an intimacy with the uneven terrain of the real—a willingness to stumble, pause, and find meaning in the rhythm of movement rather than its destination.

Expanding Mobility and Theory

As I reflect on walking as a method, theory, and rhythm of life, I am reminded that this metaphor and application have their limits. Walking has been my way of navigating pain and memory, but I recognize it may not serve as a universal lens. Not everyone can walk, and to frame this theory without acknowledging the diverse ways we move through the world would be to erase those experiences.

Walking, for me, is a way of being in relation to the land, to memory, to others. In rethinking walking, I draw inspiration from disability justice activist Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018), who teaches us that accessibility is not a one-size-fits-all concept. For some, this relation manifests differently—through the movement of wheels, the stillness of breath, or other adaptive tools that enable connection. Each form of movement holds its own rhythm and resonance, shaping and being shaped by the spaces it traverses.

Conclusion: Walking Toward Possibility

Walking returns us, again and again, to what Manning (2009) describes as the "preacceleration" (p. 13)—the not-yet of thought, a pregnant space where the potential for new ways of being flickers on the edge of realization. This aligns with Springgay and Truman's (2018) oblique contours, which emphasize the non-linear and relational nature of walking as a practice that defamiliarizes place and opens up possibilities for critical engagement. To walk in this way means to dwell in the liminal, where thoughts and movement interlace, where walking becomes a way to navigate the tensions between what is known and what is still forming.

Yet, walking is not a solitary act. It asks us to carry the weight of these tensions in others while making space to wonder together. Walking, as theory, too, needs space to breathe and shift its weight in resisting the dogmatic rigidity of calcification. Walking is not just a method but also a metaphor for theory's ongoing and unfinished work. It is a practice grounded in the present, moving towards the horizon.

In this movement, walking aligns with the urgency of the contemporary moment. It resists the demand for neat solutions, choosing instead the messy, relational, and dynamic processes of becoming. Walking as minor theory reminds us that, even in the face of loss, there is a rhythm to be found—a rhythm that opens the door to reimagining, to healing, to action.

This interplay between walking and theory underscores the broader tensions surrounding the use(lessness) of theory in research. While walking as theory may seem abstract, it confronts the tension between the abstract and the applied, challenging researchers to justify how theoretical frameworks contribute to or hinder knowledge production. Walking, as a theoretical and methodological approach, amplifies this tension. On the one hand, walking appears simple and tangible, yet on the other, it holds profound metaphorical and epistemological potential.

Abstract theories often risk alienating educators and learners from their day-to-day realities, while purely pragmatic approaches may overlook the deeper systems and structures shaping those realities. Walking offers a middle ground: a method that is both reflective and active, grounding theoretical inquiry in the physical and relational act of moving through space.

Walking disrupts traditional hierarchies of knowledge by situating theory within the body, the land, and the community—an approach that resists the linearity often imposed by positivist research paradigms, offering instead a fluid and emergent way of knowing. Walking becomes theory in action, where each step is an act of inquiry, an engagement with the material and historical conditions that shape our world. This interplay underscores the use of theory as a dynamic force, activated and reactivated through lived experience.

When divorced from immediate, measurable outcomes, theory becomes a useless abstraction. Walking addresses systemic educational inequities and policy failures, shifting the western priority of solution-focused inquiry to rewiring the mind to focus on the conditions that necessitate them. Walking as a method and theory offers complexity to conventional methodologies when the researcher is a situated embodied participant within the study, challenging researchers to dwell in the discomfort and ambiguity of unexpected insights and transformative possibilities.

Walking reorientates, shifting perspective on the land and the histories we carry. It is a way to queer linear trauma and healing narratives (Ahmed, 2006), embracing the complexity and multiplicity of lived experience. Similarly, Simpson's (2017) call for radical resistance through Indigenous practices informs my understanding of walking as a form of defiance—against the erasure of histories, against the commodification of land, against the linearity of colonial

temporality. At the intersections of healing, I pay respect to Jewish resistance, Khmer traditions, and Hopi and Diné wisdom These lessons are not just personal; they are political. As trauma is not just an event but an experience that reshapes the self (Caruth,1996). Walking reshapes each step of becoming. A way to navigate the complexity of memory and identity, to reconcile the fragmented pieces of bone that have grown in our feet.

Walking is about something other than arrival. It is about the journey—moving forward while carrying what came before. My father walked to find peace. My Khmer family walked to honor their ancestors. I walk to connect, to remember, to heal. The land remembers, too. It holds all the footprints of those who came before, the echoes of their stories, each step teetering between the tensions of repetition and transformation, daring to imagine futures different from our ancestors while remaining grounded in their lived knowledge.

In walking, we add to the tapestry, weaving together histories.

Navigating the tensions between theory's use and uselessness, walking emerges as a practice that bridges abstraction and action in educational research by offering a flexible and embodied approach to inquiry. Movement is used as a metaphor and practice to address urgent socio-political challenges. By grounding theory in the act of walking, researchers can uncover new pathways for understanding, teaching, and transforming the complexities of our contemporary moment. In this, walking rethinks theory's use(lessness). It insists that theory, like walking, must remain open, porous, and incomplete.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, S. (2006). *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others*. Duke University Press.

Anyon, J. (2008). *Theory and educational research: Toward critical social explanation*. Routledge.

Baer, Y. (1961). *A history of the Jews in Christian Spain*. Jewish Publication Society.

Benjamin, W. (1968). Theses on the philosophy of history. In H. Zohn (Trans.), *Illuminations* (pp. 253–264). Harcourt, Brace & World.

Brave Heart, M. Y. H. (2003). The historical trauma response among Natives and its relationship with substance abuse: A Lakota illustration. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*, *35*(1), 7–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/02791072.2003.10399988

Butler, J. (2022). *What world is this? A pandemic phenomenology*. Columbia University Press.

Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountain: An ecology of Indigenous education*. Kivaki Press.

Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Chandler, D. (2008). *A history of Cambodia* (4th ed.). Westview Press.

Denetdale, J. N. (2007). *Reclaiming Diné history: The legacies of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita*. University of Arizona Press.

Escobar, A. (2018). *Designs for the pluriverse: Radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds*. Duke University Press.

Garneau, D. (2012). Imaginary spaces of conciliation and reconciliation. *West Coast Line*, *46*(2), 28–38.

Geertz, A. W. (1994). *The invention of prophecy: Continuity and meaning in Hopi Indian religion*. University of California Press.

Iverson, P., & Roessel, R. (2002). *Diné: A history of the Navajos*. University of New Mexico Press.

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teachings of plants*. Milkweed Editions.

Manning, E. (2009). *Relationscapes: Movement, art, philosophy*. MIT Press.

Manning, E. (2016). *The minor gesture*. Duke University Press.

McPherson, R. S. (1992). *Sacred land, sacred view: Navajo perceptions of the four corners region*. Brigham Young University Press.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. (2018). *Care work: Dreaming disability justice*. Arsenal Pulp Press.

Simpson, L. B. (2017). *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance*. University of Minnesota Press.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. Zed Books.

Solnit, R. (2001). *Wanderlust: A history of walking*. Penguin Books.

Springgay, S., & Truman, S. E. (2018). Walking as a methodology for the politics of social change. In S. E. Truman & S. Springgay (Eds.), *Walking: Feminist research and practice* (pp. 1–16). Palgrave Macmillan.

St. Pierre, E. A. (2011). Post-qualitative research: The critique and the coming after. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 611–625). SAGE Publications.

Tsing, A. L. (2015). *The mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. Princeton University Press.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1*(1), 1–40. https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630

van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. Penguin Books.

Whiteley, P. M. (1988). *Deliberate acts: Changing Hopi culture through the Oraibi split*. University of Arizona Press.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Publishing.