



**Keynote address: *Rhythmic routes:
developing a nomadic physical practice
for the daily commute***

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

Rhythmic routes: developing a nomadic physical practice for the daily commute

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How can the contemporary performance practitioner maintain a deterritorialised, nomadic existence within the regulated systems of twenty-first century mobile life? Elliott and Urry (2010) argue that ‘life “on the move” appears to unfold faster and faster in the early days of the twenty-first century, as people become more reliant upon interdependent, digitised systems’. In contrast, the nomad is an aspirational figure, ‘cut free of roots, bonds and fixed identities’ (Pearson, 2010). Responding to the increasingly globalised context of mobilities and Braidotti’s (2011) notion of ‘becoming-nomad’, this keynote asks whether nomadism can offer an alternative to the physical cultures created through the systemisation and repetition of everyday journeys. Rejecting conventional narratives of the ‘weary and dystopian commuter’ (Edensor, 2011), we aim to develop a series of performative interventions that reimagine commuting as a creative and productive embodied practice with the potential for nomadic disruptions to the routines and rhythms of our everyday journeys.

Keywords: commuting, mobilities, nomadism, performance, journeys

Introduction



The road to Glasgow.

It may seem counterintuitive to respond to a conference theme on the sociology of physical cultures¹ by discussing commuting, which has often been dismissed as a ‘desensitising’ experience in which Richard Sennett (1996) identifies a ‘disconnection from space [as] the body moves passively’ through urban roadscapes (1996, p.18). Likewise, Jean Baudrillard refers to the ‘effortless mobility’ of car journeys (2005, p.66), and Michel de Certeau points out the ‘immobility’ engendered by train travel (1988, p.111). However, this paper conceives of commuting as potentially far more active and embodied than these critical representations suggest. Like Tim Edensor, we distrust the popular perception that the commuter is ‘a frustrated, passive and bored figure, patiently suffering the anomic tedium of the monotonous or disrupted journey’ (2011, p.189). Instead, we conceive of commuting as a fertile ground for creativity, productivity and transformation.

Our key assertion is that commuting has the potential for a performative engagement with landscape, and that the physical practice of commuting offers a rich variety of

experiences of mobility that work against the 'desensitising' systems of contemporary mobile life. In attempting to develop an alternative mode of engagement with our regular daily journeys, we explore concepts of mobility drawn from nomadic theory. Commuting is often portrayed as a problematically limited, constrained and regulated mobile practice. In contrast, Mike Pearson sees the nomad as an aspirational figure, 'cut free of roots, bonds and fixed identities' (2010, p.20). Drawing on the nomadic theories of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1988), and Rosi Braidotti (2011), we aim to develop a performative 'counterpractice', reimagining our own commuting routes as creative spaces, and our travelling selves as 'nomadic subjects'. In this keynote, we discuss the early stages of this ongoing collaboration.

For Braidotti, 'nomadic subjectivity' is an opportunity 'to identify lines of flight, that is to say, a creative alternative space of becoming that would fall not between the mobile/immobile, but within [both of] these categories' (2011, p.7). This linking of 'lines of flight' with 'a creative, alternative space of becoming' offered us a valuable starting point and in March 2014 we both set out to walk our commutes. David walked 48 miles in three days from his home in Glasgow to the University of the West of Scotland in Ayr. A few days later, after a ferry journey from her home on the Cowal Peninsula, Laura walked 27 miles to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow over the course of one day. Ostensibly, our commutes close down lines of flight to fixed paths across 'striated' landscapes (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). These walks aspired to the opposite—open routes through smooth spaces.

Our commutes



Clyde Estuary at Greenock.

Laura's journey from her home in Innellan on the West Coast of Scotland is made up of four parts. The 'rhythms' of her commute between Sandy Beach, where she lives, and her place of work in Glasgow, are as follows: a ten minute drive from her house to the ferry terminal in Dunoon, a 25 minute ferry across the Clyde estuary, a 44 minute train journey from Gourock to Glasgow and a ten minute walk up Hope Street from Central Station to the RCS.

David's car journey from Glasgow to Ayr takes him initially through a maze of residential streets, roundabouts and traffic lights to the ramp at the end of Great Western Road where he joins a short stretch of the M8 south through the city and over the River Clyde to join the M77, which cuts through the Ayrshire countryside before meeting the A77 at Kilmarnock. This is 'Route 77', according to the sign for Balbir's Restaurant which marks the final stage of his journey, and David has always enjoyed the connection to the great American highway.



Crossing the M77.

In 2013, we started this project by keeping commuting diaries, documenting the range of activities undertaken during our regular journeys to and from work. Laura kept a record of her journeys in a notebook every day between September and December:

Tuesday 15th October

7:00 leave house, 7:15 boat, 7:47 train, 8:45 arrive at work.

17:25 train, 18:20 boat, 19:00 arrive home.

On both journeys today I read Rebecca Solnit's *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*. I like it and a statement in capital letters on the back cover reads NEVER TO GET LOST IS NOT TO LIVE.

Monday 28th October

16:55 train, 17:50 boat, 18:30 arrive home.

I take my suitcase on the train and finish reading the book my Aunt Mo has lent me called *Olive Kitteridge*. It is falling to bits as she read it on her travels to India. It travelled with me to Manchester but was not read.

Reflecting on her commuting diary Laura observed behaviours that she performs repeatedly: mainly reading and sleeping! She enjoyed noticing how many books had been passed on to her from friends and family, and how the books were on their own journeys through 'striated space' being physically marked by their journeys and the bodies that facilitated their wanderings.

Meanwhile, limited by his role as driver, David used the hands-free mobile phone device in his car to phone spoken diary entries to himself, which he later transferred to MP3 files.

“ *It's drizzly but the sun is cutting through the clouds and picking out the oranges and... and browns of the autumn trees and it makes me think this is so much better than having to commute on an Underground train or... a busy city. I really value this time to drive through the countryside every day.*”

Extract from David's spoken diary entry.

These diary entries immediately reveal an active and productive use of travel time. However, there are also significant parts of our journeys that more closely resemble Sennett's version of desensitised travel (1996). For example:

Monday 4th November

6:30 leave house, 6:45 boat, 8:45 arrive at work.

There is a boat refit on from the 4th to the 16th of November so I have to leave my house at 6:30am to get in for 9am. There is a long gap between the boat and the train, and the train at this time of the morning is very cold.

I read *Uncle Silas* (on loan from my sister) and doze on the train.

Sunday 24th November

18:00 Western ferry, arrive home 19:00.

I drive so cannot do anything with the time.

There are also moments when we are prevented from undertaking the necessary journeys:

Thursday 5th December

Both boats are off due to high winds and the road is flooded so I cannot travel to work today. This is the first time this has happened this year and I miss the second year show that I am supposed to be assessing which I am really disappointed about.

Laura's journey is much more open to disruption than David's due to the modes of transport involved.

This process of keeping commuting diaries prompted us to look for ways to open up our journeys and to more meaningfully connect with our commutes and the spaces that we move through.

Commuting and collaboration



David Overend and Laura Bissell walk their commutes.

To paraphrase Deleuze and Guattari (1988) the two of us wrote this paper together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd. In practice, this made it difficult to find time to work together, and with both of our lives including full-time lecturing posts and long commutes, we were initially anxious about when we would find time to travel to places together to explore our ideas around journeying as a performative practice. It was this very practical consideration that dictated that the first stage of this project was for us to accompany each other on our commutes and it was during these specific and purposeful journeys and the subsequent meal at each other's homes that we were encouraged to critically analyse our daily repetitive journeys.

Tuesday 24th September

17:25 train, 18:20 boat, arrive home at 19:00.

The train is busy. David and I travel back to my house together to talk about our project. David tells me that his commute is very different as his is solo in a car while mine is mainly made up of public transport surrounded by other bodies and has four different stages. We talk about lots of things that are going on in our lives (work, relationships, performances we have seen) but we don't talk much about the project until we are at my house and having some

dinner that I have cooked the night before. We come up with some areas to research and both agree that doing each other's commute is an important part of this process. We arrange for me to do David's commute on the 7th October and through this conversation I see my commute through David's eyes. I drive him to the ferry at 20:45 and David travels back to Glasgow alone.

Monday 7th October

17:28 train to Ayr, 18:30 arrive in Ayr.

When I get on the train to Ayr I am struck by the fact that it is the same design of train that I get to Gourock on my journey home. It feels counterintuitive to be going elsewhere at the same time as I would normally be going home. On the journey to Ayr I do very little, I look out of the window and notice the changes in the light. I meet David in Ayr and he drives us back to Glasgow on the M77. We arrive at his house at 19:30. We have dinner at David's house with his partner Victoria and discuss work and our project. I get a taxi to the station and get the 21:50 train home and arrive at my house at 22:15. I am very tired and do little on the journey.

Our initial conversations around this project encouraged us to consider the commute as a time and space of possibility and creative resistance—a way of reimagining aspects of the working day.

The etymology of the word 'commute' is from the Latin 'commutare' which means 'to change, transform, exchange' (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). We are interested in the potential of this repetitive journey from home to work as creative or transformative. Braidotti claims 'the imagination is not utopian, but rather transformative and inspirational' (2011, p.14) and we wanted to use this collaborative project as an opportunity to experience these journeys anew, to revise them and reimagine them. The commute is often perceived

as a boring, stressful and frustrating experience (Mann and Abraham, 2006). However, for Edensor this 'everyday realm' of 'habit, routine, unreflexive forms of common sense, and rituals [...] paradoxically also contains the seeds of resistance and escape from uniformity [through] the intrusions of dreams, involuntary memories, peculiar events, and uncanny sentiments' (2003, pp.154–155). We have found that the experience of being in transit lends itself to such moments of imaginative departure.

Thursday 14th November

11:50 boat.

I get this boat as it looks like there will be disruptions today due to high winds so I leave earlier than I need to. On the train I meet Margaret, a historian who lives in my village who I have been working with for the past three years on the Innellan Archive Project. This project has involved researching our village and three books have been published so far—Margaret is working on the next one. We are both trustees of the village hall so we catch up on some hall matters and then Margaret tells me she is on her way to London and is flying from Edinburgh at 7pm but that she plans to spend the entire day journeying there. I tell her about our commuting project and she tells me that she loves the journeys she makes as much as getting to the place. She calls it an 'adventure'. Margaret is 65 and we are friends. This is not the first time we have bumped into each other on the journey to Glasgow and I always enjoy our chats. She tells me that on a commute one day she was reading a book called *Alone in Berlin*. The man sitting across from her offered to rip out the last ten pages so that she would not gobble them up (Margaret had restricted herself to five pages a night to make it last longer—a thing I could never do!). The man says he offers this service to anyone he meets who is reading this book (which is his favourite). Margaret rips out the ten pages and gives them to him. When she gets to the end of the

book she emails him and he sends her the pages through the post. Margaret tells me this was a number of years ago and that they have become friends and frequently exchange emails and thoughts on books and history after this chance meeting on a train journey. The randomness of chance encounters of bodies sharing a space while in transit can lead to lasting relationships and remote friendships.

Laura Watts and Glenn Lyons account for 'imaginative departure', as movement leads to an 'ambiguity of place', a 'liminality' that can foster 'a valued sense of creativity, possibility and transition' (2011, p.109). We have aspired to engage with our commutes as spaces of creativity and productivity and used the 'gift of travel time' to mobilise a critical engagement with our mobile practices (Jain and Lyons, 2008).

Boundaries / becoming / rhythm / corporeality

Four key concepts define the theoretical landscape through which we walked. Loosely, these correspond to the work of Deleuze and Guattari, Braidotti, and Lefebvre. However, as our experiences have shown, there are no clear boundaries here. We are moving through heterogeneous and multiple spaces, and routes interweave, blur into each other and amalgamate. These concepts offer us a structure, then, but should not be understood as discrete, fixed categories:

- First, convergences and divergences of paths and routes and their relationship to the boundaries and barriers that contain and define them.
- Second, notions of becoming, changing and transferring.
- Third, patterns and rhythms of commuting and ways

of documenting and analysing these processes.

- Fourth, the corporeality of commuting as an embodied practice.

For Deleuze and Guattari, nomad space is *smooth*, defined by ‘the variability, the polyvocality of directions’ (1988, p.382). Moving within vast, open spaces such as deserts, tundras and steppes, nomads make paths, moving from point to point through the landscape. However, as opposed to sedentary societies, the points of a nomad journey are ‘strictly subordinated to the paths they determine’, rather than the other way round (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.380). Importantly, although commuting does not fit easily within this model, this is not to say that the commute precludes a nomadic relationship with the environment:

Even the most striated city gives rise to smooth spaces [...] Movements, speed and slowness, are sometimes enough to reconstruct a smooth space. Of course, smooth spaces are not in themselves liberatory. But the struggle is changed or displaced in them, and life reconstitutes its stakes, confronts new obstacles, invents new places, switches adversaries (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.500).

Bearing in mind Deleuze and Guattari’s warning that we should ‘never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us’, we are setting out to ‘confront new obstacles’ and ‘reconstitute the stakes’. This notion of *reconstitution* resonates with Braidotti’s concept of nomadism as ‘a myth, or a political fiction, that allows us to think through and move across established categories and levels of experience’ (2011, p.26). Braidotti advocates ‘nomadic shifts’, ‘a performative metaphor that allows for otherwise unlikely encounters and unsuspected sources of interaction, experience and knowledge’ (2011, p.27). In these shifts, our everyday practices are opened up to the creative processes

of *becoming*, offering an ‘acute awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries’ and ‘the intense desire to go trespassing, transgressing’ (Braidotti, 2011, p.66).

For Braidotti, nomadism is ‘a cohesion engendered by repetitious, cyclical moves, rhythmic displacements’ (2011, pp.57–58). In the case of commuting, repetitions, cycles and rhythms are paramount. Here, we turn to Henri Lefebvre’s project of *Rhythmanalysis* (2013), which acknowledges repetition as a key concept. Stuart Elden suggests that:

In the analysis of rhythms—biological, psychological and social—Lefebvre shows the interrelation of understandings of space and time in the comprehension of everyday life. The issue of space and time is important, for here, perhaps above all, Lefebvre shows how these issues need to be thought together rather than separately (2013, p.1).

For Lefebvre, ‘each of us has our preferences, references, frequencies; each must appreciate rhythms by referring them to oneself, one’s heart or breathing, but also to one’s hours of work, of rest, of waking and of sleep’ (2013, p.20). This model can be applied to commuting as the rhythm of the journey itself is relative to the other rhythms that make up a day. Importantly, the living body is central to an analysis of these quotidian rhythms (Lefebvre, 2013, p.77).

Later in this paper, we explore the embodied rhythms of our walking commutes, and the alternative timescales that we travelled within, as key factors in counteracting the condition of the ‘dystopian and functional’ commuter and the ‘dreary and alienating’ commute (Edensor, 2011, pp.189–196). What follows is an account of the beginning of our research journeys made up partially from our written responses and critical reflections on our reimagined commutes. Our focus is on our walked commutes in relation

to the key themes of boundaries, becoming, rhythms and corporeality.

Boundaries



Fences mark the boundaries of prohibited areas on both walked routes.

Shortly after leaving his flat, David followed a path along the River Kelvin. In his written account of the walk, he reflects on the way in which our routes through cities often follow fixed paths:

I [...] realise how much of the city is cut up and divided by fixed routes and paths. This grid of different boundaries and trajectories comprises bridges, footpaths, cycle lanes, roads, railways, canals and flight paths [...] But as I walk from point to point, following some routes and crossing others, I do not feel hemmed in or constrained. There is a freedom in this journey and an exhilarating sense of moving beyond the prescribed uses of urban space (Overend, 2014).

For both of us, undertaking our journeys independently, we enjoyed this sensation of transgression. Laura recounts a moment when a fellow pedestrian breaks out of a

designated route:

[A]s I am about to walk around the cordoned section to allow me to move towards Gourock, the woman in front of me undoes the catch on one of the metal gates, opens it and walks through [...] I follow her lead, glad of this minor transgression of the authoritative paths and designated walkways that the area by the water assigns (Bissell, 2014).

We are wary about the claims that can be made for such activities and want to avoid what Doreen Massey dismisses as ‘the least politically convincing of situationist capers’ (2005, p.46). However, these moments of quotidian transgression have offered many important formative experiences during our walks, many of which involved a rupture or break in an established pattern or rhythm that we have previously felt frustratingly locked into.

Becoming

Laura undertook her walk on the 26th of March 2014, a journey which corresponded to the final two stages of her commute—the train journey from Gourock to Glasgow and the walk from Glasgow Central station to the RCS at 100 Renfrew Street. By altering the pace of this two-hour commute to take place between 7am and 7pm—the hours of her usual working day—Laura intended to open this journey up to creative possibility, diversion and interruption. She hoped to ‘become’ something different through this process of journeying and employ Braidotti’s ‘myth’ of the nomadic subject to ‘[blur] boundaries without burning bridges’ (2011, p.26). Laura hoped to learn something about her journey by undertaking this task, and for it to become something other than a functional and transitory commute through the spaces between home and work.

Braidotti's focus on process and 'becoming nomad' is analogous to looking for a marker on a road or path: 'the nomadic subject is not a utopian concept, but more like a road sign' (2011, p.14). For much of Laura's early route, particularly in the Argyll and Inverclyde stages, the road signs are supplemented by another with the Gaelic version of the town name. Often there are four signs which read as a list: district, town, PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY, and the Gaelic version. She notices that a large number of the signs also have stickers on them, added by people. Signs are objects that invite us to look at them for information or guidance, but these have been augmented by the public, creating an alternative meaning to that which was intended. What the signs are signifying is also in a state of becoming, the meaning malleable and open to interpretation, obliteration, and subversion.



Road sign for Greenock on Laura's walked route.

Rhythm

Edensor points out that commuting takes place within 'routinised, synchronic rhythms [which] are bureaucratically regulated and collectively produced' (2011, p.196). For Lefebvre (2013), the establishment and regulation of such rhythms is one of the key ways by which late capitalism produces and controls space. Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari identify 'the function of the sedentary road, which is to parcel out a closed space to people, assigning each person a share and regulating the communication between shares' (1988, p.380). By attempting to establish a 'nomadic trajectory' we aspire towards the opposite: movement within what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as 'an open space' (1988, p.380) and the potential to take up Edensor's project of 'tailor[ing our] journeys in accordance with [our] own strategies, imperatives and feelings' (2011, p.196). Here, we present some of the ways in which we attempted this by engaging with our commutes as *rhythmic routes*:



Filmstrip from video at:
<[www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/
Bissell_Overend_rhythmic-
routes_SJoP0201.DOI.10.14439sjop.2014.
0201.03.html](http://www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/Bissell_Overend_rhythmic_routes_SJoP0201.DOI.10.14439sjop.2014.0201.03.html)>

We surrender to the hypnotic quality of the turbines, which offer a regularity and rhythm approximating the effect of music. Our ambulatory rhythms sync up with the rotations of the blades and we adjust our pace accordingly. One foot after the other meets one rotation after the other. At the same time, in this exposed location, rain beats into our faces and blasts our bodies with icy water. The wind is blowing in tremendous gusts, which drown out all other noises, but in the occasional dip, our ears tune into another constant sound—the faint, humming drone of the windfarm.

The rhythm of my usual commute is determined by the four stages of travel, the different modes of transport and the associated pace/rhythm/environment, but within its four distinct sections there are sub-rhythms. For the train journey, the stations demarcate the rhythm of the journey in terms of the time and space between stops (initially long periods of travel and infrequent stops and then towards the end syncopated with short bursts of travel and frequent stops).

While the pace of my walking remains largely the same, I still look to the road and rail signifiers to assert my sense of rhythm for my alternative commute.

From the viaduct at Stewarton to the A77 at Symington, I pass over, under and across a series of other paths. Rivers, roads and railways intersect my route and carry others on different paths to other destinations. All of these have their own distinct rhythms and functions. As Edensor acknowledges, 'all spaces are dynamic and continually pulse with a multitude of co-existing rhythms and flows' (2011, p.200).

In my car, the rhythm of the road takes precedence as my 'insulated mobile body' remains oblivious to everything else (Edensor, 2011, p.200), but this walk allows me to seek out, sense and immerse myself in multiple rhythms including weather, seasons, animals and people who use and inhabit the landscape that the road cuts through. As I approach Symington, there is a brief moment when I can see the A77, the Firth of Clyde and a Ryanair plane taking off from Prestwick—routes and rhythms coexisting.

Corporeality

As David reached the southern boundary of the golf course at Pollock Park, his route was blocked by a high metal fence:



My dilemma is whether to add more miles to my journey by trailing the perimeter looking for an exit, or to attempt to cross into the adjoining field.



The solution presents itself as I notice a missing railing which I suspect has been removed deliberately to open up a walking route. I make my way through woodland and clamber over another, lower, fence and land in squelchy



mud. Following the high wire fencing that separates the field from the M77, I enjoy a feeling of subversion and recall Rosi Braidotti's vision of nomadism



as the intense desire to go trespassing. Whether or not this is strictly trespassing, it is a moment which embodies the spirit of this journey: moving



against prescribed uses of space, and reimagining my route a space of creativity and transgression.

However, just as I cast myself



Filmstrip from video at:
<[www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/
Bissell_Overend_rhythmic-
routes_SJoP0201_DOI_10.14439sjop.2014.
0201.03.html](http://www.scottishjournalofperformance.org/Bissell_Overend_rhythmic_routes_SJoP0201_DOI_10.14439sjop.2014.0201.03.html)>

*as the heroic psychogeographer,
I come face-to-face with a large
Highland cow. Its menacing
state, sharp horns and slow,
deliberate, movement towards
me make me nervous and I look
around for an exit route in case
things turn nasty.*

*Unfortunately, I'm now too far
from my entry point to retreat
and the section of fence I am
beside is too high to easily
climb over. The cow lunges
forward and a surge of
adrenaline catapults me over
the fence before I have time to
think. On my way over, I
scratch my shin and slightly
cut my finger. Writing up my
notes, almost exactly a week
later, the cut is still faintly
visible, a corporeal document
of this encounter.*

These moments of pushing, testing or breaking the body punctuated our walks, which were defined by physical endurance as much as situationist escapism. Opening up the possibility of corporeal intrusion into our commutes provided an alternative to Sennett's passive commuter bodies (Sennett, 1996, p.18). Our experiences have also led us to question the suggestion that our everyday journeys are passive.

Conclusion

On the first day of his walk, David cheated and briefly broke the task of his continuous journey on foot, returning by taxi to his home rather than spending the night in a soulless budget hotel. The following morning, returning as a car passenger to resume the walk where he left off, he noted that he was 'already thinking of [his] commute differently, pointing out places [he] walked through the day before and noticing features of the route of which [he] had previously been unaware' (Overend, 2014). Similarly, Laura noted her aspiration that the walk would allow her to 're-experience [her] commute in an active and embodied way' in order to 'emancipate' [her]self from what Braidotti refers to as 'the inertia of everyday routines' (Braidotti, 2011, p.90). Our work so far has shown potential in this respect as both of us feel that the walk has changed the way we experience our commutes in ways that correspond to our key themes.

First, although we continue to follow the same roads, railways and ferry routes, we no longer feel as limited by, or contained within, these prescribed patterns. We have developed the appetite and tools to go 'off route'. In this sense, we have inserted 'nomadic shifts' into our regular journeys (Braidotti, 2011).

Second, Braidotti's insights into nomadism as a way of reimagining subjectivity have allowed us to consider the commute in terms of 'becoming'. The change in time and space as we travel these repetitive routes provides a liminal space for commuters to be always 'becoming'. The sense of departing, moving, travelling and arriving all indicate moving in, through and out of places and the transitory and fluid sense of fixed time and space allow for a space of creative imagining.

Third, we have encountered multiple rhythms that are co-

present with our commutes, whether synchronously or asynchronously. Our walking journeys have offered us an opportunity to encounter this rhythmic multiplicity beyond those elements that are foregrounded during our regular commutes.

Fourth, we have pushed ourselves beyond the ostensibly passive bodily experience of commuting towards a more overtly corporeal engagement with the space of our commutes. We had the cuts, bruises and blisters to prove it.



David during his commute by bicycle and Laura after her swim across the Clyde estuary.

As we continue our research in this area, we will find new ways to reimagine our regular journeys, as we aspire to become nomadic commuters. Since we completed the walks, David cycled his commute, experiencing the journey at a different speed and rhythm, and Laura swam to the West Bay in Dunoon across the Clyde estuary.

To develop this project we hope to explore the relational potential of our commutes by asking people to join us on our journeys and hope to encourage others to consider the creative potential of the everyday journeys that they take. We are going to keep journeying together and hope to explore the potential of the repetition of our commutes over a much longer period of time. What is it for a body to move between two places repeatedly? What is the 'change' or 'becoming' within the body through this process? The challenge for us now is to maintain a sense of our commutes as spaces of becoming and to continue to reimagine what our journeys are and consider the potential of what they could be.

Note

1. This keynote address was delivered at the *Pace, penalty and pirouette: the sociology of physical culture* symposium at Glasgow Caledonian University in June 2014. See Palmer and Whiteside et al., 2014 for more information.

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