Part II
CRIP ECOLOGIES AND SENSES

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5. *RHIZOPHORA*

Queering Chemical Kinship in the Agent Orange Diaspora

NATALIA DUONG

A camera peers down upon two women as they lay wrapped around each other on twin cots pushed together to create one bed. Their eyes are closed. A soft tinkling sound, like the first windup twists of a music box, and a bright whistling accompanies them. The women roll away from each other, then back toward each other, without attention to vertical or horizontal axes. Rather, the bed is flattened as the woman wearing pink creates a snow angel in the sheets. The viewer gazes in from this bird's-eye perspective. Each woman rolls about on her own, sometimes making contact with the other: a hand with an ankle, the bend of an elbow with a knee. Their eyes remain closed; as the music accelerates, so too do their movements. One woman mimes brushing her teeth while the other plays at yawning and drinking from an empty cup. The woman in orange thrusts a jacket at the woman in pink who puts it on, and she returns the gesture with her partner's sweater. They each continue to roll about the bed, reaching for more accessories—a headband, a skirt, a handbag—to complete their outfits. Finally, the woman in pink reaches for her partner, who nods as if to say "finished," before the two pedal their legs and feet in a running motion. The woman in orange waves to the camera as a smile illuminates her face. The scene fades.

This sequence is the first of a three-part triptych in a dancefilm titled *Rhizophora*. Described by its creators Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber as a videopoem, the film depicts a community of people who inhabit the Vietnam Friendship Village outside Hanoi, Vietnam, with whom the creators collaborated to choreograph this portrait of daily life. The Vietnam Friendship Village (also refered to as the Vietnam Friendship Village Project USA) is a center founded by US veteran George Mizo in 1988 and opened in 1998, which aimed to provide housing and community support for veterans and children

FIGURE 5.1. Waking Up scene from *Rhizophora*. Two women, wearing orange and pink, are lying in a bed made up of two mattresses on the floor. They are surrounded by jackets, sandals, papers, and pens. Courtesy of Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber.

affected by the chemical compound Agent Orange with the hopes of forging international "peace and reconciliation." The village is financially supported by nonprofit organizations in the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, and Vietnam. As such, it has been a site for diplomatic visits and humanitarian tourism and has become a crucial stage for political and international performances of reparation between Vietnam and other nation-states.[1]

In the videopoem, images of sense-based improvisational movement within a forest are interwoven throughout, bookending each of the three scenes: *thức dậy*/waking up (described above), *ăn trưa*/lunch, and *thời gian trà*/teatime. This film is similar to other visual and filmic portrayals of people exposed to Agent Orange in that it follows a somewhat documentary structure featuring the daily activities of those living with the effects of herbicide exposure, however it departs from previous representations insofar as it relies on a politics of play rather than scopic observation, which, I argue, disrupts how knowledge about Agent Orange, and disability in Vietnam, is formed. Through the interweaving of scenes in a mangrove forest, the film portrays both human and nonhuman bodies as targets of chemical warfare and the potential for trans-species kinships to emerge between them. While the film also traffics in its own complicated ethics, often brought on by negotiations of power in artistic collaborations between artists and the subjects who are documented, I argue that dance within the film articulates an important intervention into the representation of Agent Orange by animating human and nonhuman ecologies of kinship to consequently offer an important critique of methodologies used to represent and negotiate disability in Vietnam.

This chapter considers how dance can articulate a different relational experience of disability to highlight an ethics of care and kinship.[2] I analyze how the dancefilm *Rhizophora* disrupts the trope of other documentary portrayals of Agent Orange, as it relies on neither a shocking portrayal of disfigurement nor a teleological "overcoming" narrative of a disabled child's success "despite" their disability. Instead, the film depicts a community of people who come together through their relationship with disability. Consequently, following the work of Vanessa Agard-Jones, who theorizes a multiscalar *chemical (kin)esthesia* and *chemical kinship* engendered in response to the spraying of insecticides and fungicides in Martinique, I suggest that *Rhizophora* imagines the possibility of queering and cripping chemical kinships that exist as alternatives to normative familial structures, which emerge from a shared experience of living in contaminated bodies. Moreover, the film relies on sensorial and sensual experiences that engage the portrayal of disability in ways that interrupt a scopic regime aimed at visually detecting and biopolitically managing disability. Instead, through dance,

the film depends on touch, consumption, and play to reorient how the viewer becomes incorporated into crip worldmaking. The result is a dissensual experience that affectively attunes to a cosmos of trans-species kinship. As such, I turn to dance to provide a framework for theorizing an alternate economy of action and reaction, responsivity, and uses of force. This chapter asks how a relational *sense* of chemical kinship crips the transnational export of neoliberal legal and social discourses of disability in contemporary Vietnam.

Genealogies of Disability in Vietnam: Karma, War, and Sites of Care

Disability in Vietnam is a matter of genealogy. Though the globalization of medical understandings of disability have shifted how various impairments and bodily conditions are understood, the notion that disability is inherited through generations has always been central to a Vietnamese understanding of it. Despite increasing awareness of scientific approaches for identifying disability, many families maintain a hybrid belief that disability is an inherited trait that can be explained by both biological circumstance and karmic consequence. As anthropologist Tine M. Gammeltoft explains, disability in Vietnam is perceived to be a moral failure because of how it interrupts cultural, spiritual, and cosmological expectations about a child's ability to *care* for their biological family members as an expression of filial piety. Translating the work of social researcher Phạm Kim Ngọc, Gammeltoft explains, "Children with severe disabilities cannot but fail morally: since they are unable to 'perform their sacred responsibility of fulfilling duties to their parents and grandparents, looking after the worship of their ancestors,' they will never attain the full personhood that is acquired by fulfilling filial obligations."[3] Gammeltoft describes how Confucian values figure disability as an obstacle to the relational responsibility of filial care rather than as a biological or social circumstance that emerges within a singular body. This belief presumes that a disabled child cannot care for their parents, and as such cannot return the care given to them. Disability interrupts the cycle of care exchange in which parents are expected to become the recipients of care in their elder years and thus, according to Confucian beliefs, disability renders the child less than whole because the child is not capable of completing their caring duties.

Earlier conceptions of disability were formulated around a cultural and religious belief in karmic retribution, and later models focused on those disabled by war, while more recent conceptions of disability are founded on a liberal model of disability rights and empowerment through participation in a neoliberal workforce.[4] For this reason, Agent Orange in many respects has come

to be synonymous with disability in Vietnam because of the ways it is passed through generations and interrupts expectant economies of care. As a material form, Agent Orange is a chemical compound that was used by the United States and its allies to defoliate millions of acres in Vietnam, and nearby Laos and Cambodia, during the wars in Southeast Asia, often colloquially called the Vietnam War in the United States. While the United States and Vietnam are often the only two countries named in the web of this compound's exchange, recent reports have shown how the compound's travel was facilitated by other countries (New Zealand, United Kingdom, Japan, Philippines) either in production or distribution at US Army bases. The chemicals' spread is consequently much greater than previously expected. The compound, made up of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D) and 2,4,5-trichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4,5-T), contains trace amounts of the most toxic dioxin, 2,3,7,8-tetra chlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (TCDD), which has been correlated with increases in skin conditions, cancers, and other forms of cellular mutation. Its effects are often experienced multigenerationally, such that elevated dioxin levels have been measured in generations that were never directly exposed to the initial spraying. The "accidental" discovery of this chemical elixir occurred in a botany lab that was conducting an experiment to determine how to increase the speed of flowering for soybean plants with the hopes of increasing crop production. It is consequently important to mark how these technologies of warfare are coconstituted by a system of racial capitalism dependent on the productivity of human and plant bodies.

Consequently, Agent Orange, as a concept, is amply situated to intersect with all these various understandings of disability, as its effects can be traced to wartime exposure *and* its physical and visual manifestation often thwarts linear models of cause and effect, consequently materializing more mystic beliefs about disabilities' origins. In other words, Agent Orange satisfies those who employ empirical methods to seek medical and judicial reparation on behalf of those who were disabled "by" Agent Orange, and the chemical compound simultaneously fits into a schema of disability whose origins are not as easily identifiable but whose effects are understood to be passed through generations from ancestors to the present. In this way, a study of Agent Orange traces the simultaneous debilitation of communities through exposure to chemical warfare as a result of US imperialism, the cultural belief that disability is shared and inherited among biological kin, and also the continued hegemony of rehabilitation efforts premised on a belief in biomedicine and a linear teleology of cure.

In Vietnam, the 1986 economic reform Đổi Mới marked a shift from a centrally planned economy to a free market system, which consequently emphasized

a greater cultural valuation of independence. This change occurred alongside a larger global shift toward the neoliberal management of disability, which has resulted in a greater emphasis on the right to inclusion for disabled individuals. Accordingly, the National Law on Disability in Vietnam, drafted in 2010, reiterates much of the language advocating for sovereignty for disabled people found in policies put forth by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the World Health Organization. Centers that provide social support for people with disabilities in Vietnam often rely on vocational training or craft-making to cater to humanitarian tourists and further encourage investments in these circuits of "individual" labor. However, as anthropologists Gammeltoft and Xuan Thuy Nguyen have shown with their respective analyses of selective reproduction in Hanoi and the politics of inclusion for disabled persons throughout the country, these conceptions of disability, based on individual rights, directly contradict the ways in which disability is narrated as a *relational* process in Vietnam.

Because disability is believed to be inherited through one's ancestry, there is often a greater emphasis on, or expectation of, filial care for people with disabilities in Vietnam. Disability itself is conceived of as a condition that is shared among family members even though one member may be the only person who exhibits an "impairment." Experiences of disability are consequently deeply influenced by locally specific conceptions of the interrelationship between self and other, and self and nation. Programs that operate under a disability rights framework, proffered by institutions like USAID and the Disability Rights, Enforcement, Coordination and Therapies program that it cosponsors along with Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped, focus on, as the organization's title suggests, the enforcement of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities at the national level, while advocating for individual rehabilitation through the sponsorship of medical clinics and the expansion of a disability database in which disabled persons can be registered and surveilled.[5] These programs not only reproduce systems of surveillance established under colonial rule, they also presume an independent liberal subject as the recipient of "rehabilitative services," therefore faultily assuming an individualized experience of disability that is incongruent with what many in Vietnam articulate as their lived experience. For example, in her study of selective reproduction in Hanoi, Gammeltoft illustrates how the health of the individual body and the national body are intricately intertwined in the imaginary of Vietnam's mythic origins, socialist political foundations, and contemporary rhetoric about the standards of citizenship and subjectivity. Gammeltoft astutely considers how health—in particular reproductive health—is believed to be both a matter of individual

(familial) responsibility and a project of state-controlled management of population "quality." She notes how following Đổi Mới, the family unit came to replace agricultural cooperatives or work units, such that women's roles were recast as that of nurturers and caretakers for their individual families. However, importantly, these individual families were imagined to be part of a larger mythos about Vietnam's origin, as a country birthed from the union of the dragon father Lạc Long Quân and the mountain fairy mother Âu Cơ, who produced an egg sac from which one hundred human children emerged. In other words, Gammeltoft constructs a compelling comparison between these two origins of collective responsibility, between Vietnam's mythic origins and its sociopolitical history, which she argues is fundamental to understanding collective approaches to health in the nation.

However, the third part of Gammeltoft's argument gives me pause, wherein she considers that community spirit (*tinh thần cộng đồng*) arises from what she describes as "collectively felt emotions of sadness, solidarity, and sympathy, in a joint conviction that something must be done" about Agent Orange exposure.[6] Gammeltoft considers Agent Orange to be an "important site of subjectivity-making in Vietnam," where the "national humanitarian emergency" allows the previously divided country to come together and experience a common empathy about Agent Orange's devastating effects.[7] And while I appreciate the opening that Gammeltoft creates for understanding disability in a relational and social context, her articulation of the chemical compound's effects denigrates those exposed to it as a humanitarian emergency to be solved. Instead, I suggest that those who live with exposure offer compelling strategies for navigating alternative experiences of sociality, community, and, indeed, family. For example, we might ask, what forms of care are valued in the economy of care exchange privileged by Confucian values? And might parents of disabled children also describe ways in which they *do* receive care, and *are* cared for, by their children? Moreover, how might these values extend beyond the forms of biological filial piety, to include kinship structures that rely on other forms of communal being?

Centers like the Vietnam Friendship Village exist throughout Vietnam, though the Vietnam Friendship Village remains one of the only centers created specifically for the care of those exposed to Agent Orange. They offer alternative care structures for individuals whose families either do not have the financial or medical resources to care for them, or who otherwise decide that the individuals would be better cared for in a center like the Vietnam Friendship Village. Unlike other institutions for disabled people that have historically housed individuals against their will, centers like the Vietnam Friendship Village are places where families elect to send their kin. Some families even view it as a privilege to be a

part of the larger community, though, of course, each individual family navigates this decision differently. For some, the social stigma associated with caring for a disabled family member is too burdensome, and therefore the family might choose to bring their family member to the center to be cared for. Other families might lack the material and financial resources to care for their disabled family member and therefore celebrate the opportunity to have their family member cared for at the center, where basic needs like food, shelter, and accessible infrastructures are more readily available. For many, the decision is a complex set of affective and pragmatic negotiations often arbitrated by the elders of the family. Some centers are publicly funded by the Vietnamese government, such as the centers associated with hospitals, while others are independently run by nonprofit organizations sponsored by international grants and individual donations. It is also important to note that low socioeconomic status is common among families with people with disabilities, and that, as scholars of disability in the Global South like Helen Meekosha and Karen Soldatic have demonstrated, disabling events such as imperial warfare and colonization inextricably intertwine the impairment of bodies with the disablement of economic and social infrastructures, and, in turn, entire communities are debilitated.[8] In other words, disability in a global context cannot ignore the forces of global racial capitalism that further perpetuate the continued disablement of populations that are already underresourced. In the context of Agent Orange exposure, many of the families who were exposed came from a lineage of farmers. Those who worked the land were doubly exposed: first to the chemical residues in the soil, and second to land that would not reproduce new crops following herbicide dispersal. Consequently, centers like the Vietnam Friendship Village offer a temporary respite closer to urban centers where accessible infrastructure better supports the health and mobility needs of people with disabilities.

Though documentary narratives funded by individuals or organizations based in North America, Europe, and Australia often exhibit anti-institutional politics by depicting these centers as impersonal and overcrowded, these sites are also places where queer forms of care and kinship emerge. Given the history of deinstitutionalization and independent living movements in these Western geographies, it is not surprising that these portrayals are skeptical of centers focused on medical rehabilitation in which multiple people may share one sleeping space and "independent living" is not the main objective. As Nguyen reminds, French colonists established medical and educational institutions in Vietnam in the late 1880s to administer surveillance and social control, where bodily and behavioral deviance was monitored and quarantined. Two partic-

ular institutions that Nguyen cites were created for deaf and blind children who, by French colonial standards, were socialized into dichotomous gender roles and taught "productive" gendered activities such as knitting for the girls and learning to read and write Roman script for the boys.[9] Given this lineage of institutions for disabled people in Vietnam, including the geopolitical negotiations that led to the establishment of the Vietnam Friendship Village itself, contemporary deinstitutionalization can be seen as a decolonial process.

Yet, these community centers for people with disabilities often have newer, more accessible infrastructures that make mobility barriers less prohibitive for people that roll, hop, or traverse across space with varied rhythms. The structural supports, access to prompt medical care, and schooling at the centers often exceed the material means that families are able to provide in their rural hometowns. As residents are usually separated from their biological families, they forge new networks of care within these centers. The centers are thus both overtly medicalized—as some sites are literal extensions of hospital wings—and also a place of social gathering for people with disabilities who may otherwise be isolated from other forms of relationships because of persisting shame about disability's origins. Consequently, these centers importantly offer a place for disabled people to live together in community and to share important skills for navigating a social and political landscape that privileges ableist practices and beliefs. Skill-sharing ranges from pragmatic tasks like making clay flowers to sell to tourists to navigating the social dynamics of the canteen during lunch. Though individual experiences of the centers vary greatly based on each person's needs and expectations, the centers remain a pivotal space for fostering social bonds, both temporary and lifelong, outside the dominant social culture that can be isolating for disabled people because it continues to equate disability with shame.

Therefore, to crip a genealogy of disability in Vietnam is also to name the research methodologies still used to represent and manage disability as extensions of biopolitical control and discipline formulated within imperial logics. Though Agent Orange has been taken up by various studies as a discussion of the epidemiological inheritance of trauma, often these studies fail to articulate how calls for medical reparation of disability enact normalizing imperatives that further debilitate the communities these studies aim to benefit. Alternatively, I think with and against technoscientific frameworks, eloquently questioned by Michelle Murphy, when resisting the reenactment of what she terms "damage-based research," often perpetuated by ecology, epidemiology, and toxicology that, according to Murphy, eugenically differentiates between lives "worth" living or not.[10] Moreover, access to these forms of medical

rehabilitation is reserved for the types of bodies who can become emblematic of recovery—children, or young adults who are infantilized in media portrayals and made to represent narratives of the potential for cure. And, as Eunjung Kim reminds, imperatives toward cure can further perpetuate violent treatments on bodies who do not otherwise meet standards for normative inclusion.[11] So, while efforts to portray disabled children as evidence of wartime atrocities have resulted in some legal reparations for those exposed to Agent Orange in the form of monetary recompense, and I do not weigh lightly how monthly stipends aid the families navigating the aftereffects of the chemical compound, I am also interested in shifting epistemic methods for engaging with exposure toward sensory capacities that consider how kinship arises from multiple exposures, rather than focusing only on the "cost" of disability. In doing so, I do not aim to reify all forms of kinship as innately liberating, as the application of the term *kinship* has itself resulted in the naturalization of certain forms of relationality and further denigration of relations that exist outside these normative standards.[12] However, I gesture toward an assemblage of relations, what Anna Tsing terms "contaminated diversity," in order to consider the types of porous intertwining that occur because of "histories of greed, violence, and environmental degradation" alongside the interpersonal relations that are affectively assembled in places of cohabitation.[13] Kinship is the term that, temporarily, aims to work against the economies of aesthetic representation, and of biomedical and legal reparation, that portray individual disabled bodies as isolated sites of damage. Rather, kinship aims to materialize the affective bonds that sustain the lives of those living in community at the Vietnam Friendship Village. Building on Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's description of "care webs," formed through intersectional and interdependent disability justice frameworks within disabled communities in the San Francisco Bay Area, I am interested in how rhizomatic forms of care emerge in these communities of co-caring.[14] In other words, I want to hold these two realities in productive tension with each other: How might we understand the debilitation of communities exposed to Agent Orange as creating greater economic and social burdens for families who do not have the material resources to support their daily needs, respect their identification with medicalized forms of impairment as a political mechanism used to negotiate for reparation from the United States, and also acknowledge how exposure to Agent Orange opens up avenues for nonnormative kinship structures and affinities?[15] The friction among these multiple realities is the opening I experience when engaging with *Rhizophora*'s intervention into cultural conceptions about Agent Orange and disability in Vietnam.

Scopic Regimes of Contamination: A Genealogy of Visual Representations of Agent Orange

Early visual representations of Agent Orange in Vietnam, which I purposefully choose not to reproduce in this chapter, took the form of spectacular photographs aimed at shocking the viewer into a response. In an attempt to reveal the harmful effects of the herbicide on human populations, documentary photographers portrayed the most visually evocative forms of disability as indexes of war trauma induced by the United States' and its allies' deployment of Agent Orange. The photographs depicted the subjects in anguish. They remained unnamed, appeared in dimly lit spaces, with exaggerated dark shadows, and, more often than not, the photographers portrayed them through the barred windows of their living quarters to emphasize the metaphorical and physical quarantine of their bodies. Many were photographed in their beds—some were even tied to their beds with cloth restraints. As visual documentation of the Vietnam War proved to have such profound historical and political import, these photographs served the purpose of visually and affectively revealing another afterlife of imperial violence that the US government denied. These portrayals objectified the bodies exhibited within them to mark them as perceptible evidence that could be used in legal claims for reparations. Although the majority of this genre of photographic documentation emerged in the early 2000s, there are certainly examples of photographs that predate the twenty-first century, and examples of this evidentiary framing that continue to appear in popular news sources at the time of this writing.[16]

Diane Niblack Fox, an anthropologist who has closely surveyed the cultural and legal rhetoric of Agent Orange in Vietnam, succinctly summarizes how shocking pictures deployed portrayals of suffering as visual evidence of contamination and institutional neglect. She writes,

> In the pictures shown around the world of children from families such as these, Agent Orange has become a symbol of innocent suffering, intensified and perpetrated by the refusal of those who caused the suffering to take responsibility for their actions. These pictures have taken on a symbolic meaning that exceeds the literal truth claims of these images as representations of the effects of Agent Orange on individual bodies, pointing beyond the physical suffering of individuals to a more general malaise in the body of modern society as well as to the social forces that caused that suffering and shape responses to it.[17]

Fox argues that the affective force of the images, which draws on the image of a suffering child, has moved beyond the particular representation of the effects of Agent Orange to, instead, point toward the larger structural circumstances that reproduce suffering. The photos provide "truth claims" regarding the United States' use of herbicides but also document the lack of responsive action taken once the chemicals' effects were identified. Fox employs the term "malaise" to describe "modern society's" response because malaise, by definition, also has an unlocatable cause or source. The inability to verify a specific and singular result of Agent Orange exposure has also been cited as the main obstacle in securing definitive legal reparations from the US government and chemical manufacturing companies. The diffuse and "unlocatable" nature of the chemical compound's spread mirrors the movement that Fox describes in her description of the photos: from the individual body to a general affective discomfort felt at the level of the wider population. Visual indices thus become diffuse in their circulation despite attempts to ascribe causation between contamination and suffering. The floating signifier of "suffering" ultimately leads to the assumption that disability should be medically or reparatively fixed.

In the 2010s, another form of documentary emerged that featured a descriptive narrative of the daily activities of a disabled person in rural Vietnam. These documentaries tend to traffic in a *National Geographic* aesthetic, one that exotifies racialized bodies and enables an affective awe that results from the observation of disabled people "overcoming" their perceived limitations. At play in these visualizations are questions of affective response, which employ a presumed empathy between the viewer and the viewed that is meant to universalize the humanity of the persons portrayed and, consequently, universalize vulnerability to contamination.[18] In an effort to garner empathy, the documentaries depict suffering and overcoming as the only two possible experiences of disability. Often these representations reaffirm the exotification of disabled bodies or reify certain types of disability that are recuperable into routines of normative life and exclude bodies and behaviors that deviate from this expectation. Usually, the "recuperation" of a person's disability culminates in a heterosexual marriage ceremony in which the person's desirability is confirmed by their reinscription into heteronormative familial structures. No doubt this second genre of documentary emerged in response to the dehumanizing photographs that dominated the scopic field before them. Nevertheless, they contribute to the hierarchical privileging of certain forms of disability over others (often physical disability over neurodivergence) and portray inclusion into (re)productive life as the only reasonable desire for those exposed to chemical warfare.

Furthermore, many studies about the representation of Agent Orange unfortunately reiterate and reinforce ableist beliefs about the types of disability that can or should be visually represented. Historian Lisa Reagan, in an article comparing two documentary films about Agent Orange, maintains that the films act as testimonies reinforcing truth claims about the chemical's effects on bodies. In her description of the bodies that are portrayed, Reagan employs language that describes the films' protagonists as "lying on the floor, rolling around, their mouths open, feet twisted" with "missing eyes," or another as with "his mouth open, his mind apparently impaired."[19] In her attempts to contrast the more-graphic film with another film that Reagan deems more complimentary in its portrayal, she unfortunately reveals her own assumptions about how one is meant to equate these physical states—such as "an open mouth"—with "apparent impairment." In citing this comparison, I am particularly interested in Reagan's discussion of bodies rolling on the floor, for the ways her description mirrors my own description of the two women portrayed in the Waking Up scene in *Rhizophora* that I open this chapter with. While Reagan's conclusion is dependent on the assumption that rolling around on the floor is an indication of impairment, *Rhizophora* reinterprets this image into a playful and aesthetic representation of relational companionship.

In a similar fashion, communication studies scholar Jennifer Peeples conducts a visual analysis of Agent Orange representations in media and research studies and similarly replicates a rhetoric that ties certain bodily states to "obvious physical and mental disabilities." In Peeples's effort to summarize the types of images she noticed, her language reflects her own ableist anxieties about normative bodily structures and behaviors. She writes, "Roughly half of the images I collected for this time period were photographs of Vietnamese children with obvious physical and mental disabilities. Missing limbs, hydrocephaly, cleft palates, fused eyelids, deformed and twisted bodies, and vacant stares fill the frames of these images."[20] Peeples's description of bodies again links certain physical states to what she deems "obvious" disabilities; yet, I question this type of diagnostic language, which has often further perpetuated violence onto nonnormative bodies, particularly in circumstances in which disability is eugenically selected against after such visual identification takes place. How might these methods of visual analysis used in research also inadvertently replicate strategies of medical diagnostics that privilege normative bodies?

In addition, a politics of visualization is crucial not only to the representation of Agent Orange in media forms, but also to how medical establishments in Vietnam—both those funded by the Vietnamese state and others funded by supranational NGOs—treat disability. Gammeltoft describes in detail how the

Vietnamese state invested in prenatal screenings through 3D ultrasonography, with the hope of minimizing the future births of disabled persons. Gammeltoft recounts how midwives at a hospital "protect mothers and families from knowing about birth defects and protect them from the related fear and shame."[21] Similarly, Reagan describes a mother from the documentary in her research who recounts how the hospital staff and her family members did not allow the mother to *see* her child after he was born because he was, in their opinion, "deformed." Thus, the visuality of disability—both interpersonally and its mediatized representation—is representative of not only how conceptions of disability are produced within culture, but also how medical systems uphold the invisibilization of disabled people. Moreover, as these examples illustrate, studies that engage with the scopic regime of contamination that Agent Orange produces can further enact ableist distinctions between certain bodily states and what their visual natures suggest. It is within this genealogy of visual representation, both within media representations and the medico-political management of bodies, that I return to *Rhizophora*.

Dance as Intra-active Responsivity

Rhizophora is a genus of tropical mangrove trees that grow in Vietnam. It is one type of tree that was targeted for defoliation by the US military during its spraying of chemical herbicides. It tends to grow in brackish intertidal zones, which has resulted in the species developing plasticity to mercurial and harsh environments, where access to water and varying levels of salination would otherwise eliminate floral growth.[22] The mangrove tree's resilience and adaptability, along with the sonic resonance its name shares with rhizomes, inspired cocreators Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber to name their videopoem after it. The film does not merely aim to describe life narratively; instead it offers a place for play, where the senses challenge the sensible.

The sixteen-minute videopoem begins with a textual description of the *Rhizophora* plant. It reads,

> Rhizophora is a tree that grows in forests along the coasts of Vietnam.
> Its roots are called Rhizomes.
> If a Rhizome is separated into pieces, each piece can create a whole new plant.
> Rhizomes spread in all directions simultaneously.
> There is no beginning or end.
> Every point is the center.[23]

This introductory description illustrates forms of proliferation that exist outside of linear narratives. The allusion to "separated" pieces of the root that "spread in all directions" recalls the diasporic nature of Agent Orange, whose diffusion through waterways and bloodlines marks the continuance of wartime violence, but also marks forms of kinship that emerge between disparate populations held together by a shared experience of chemical contamination. The spread further connotes refugee populations who fled because of war and who now make up the Vietnamese diaspora in other nations. Rhizophora thus marks a biological thread woven among historic, political, social, and economic circumstances.

In the scene that I describe at the start of this chapter, which is the first full section in the film's tripartite portrayal, a politics of play interrupts the utility of morning ritual. The two women knowingly perform the routine for the camera while recognizing the presence of a viewer. The inversion of axes, in which the horizontal becomes vertical, creates a sense of displacement while the motionless camera creates an immovable frame for the action. This playful representation mobilizes possibilities for the mundane. It also features aesthetic styling as a desirable and integral part of care. Notably, throughout the entire scene, the women never leave the plane of their shared bed. Unlike the previous documentary portrayals, in which a bed is figured as a place of entrapment to which a disabled body is "confined," this bed is a place of partnership, of care, of humor, of imagination. It is a bed like the ones that disability justice advocate Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha describes as entire "worlds" from which care, activism, and politics emerge.[24]

In a conversation with one of the artist-creators, Julia Metzger-Traber recalled to me the manner through which this representation emerged from the daily activities of the residents.[25] In particular, she mentioned that the two women portrayed in this section were, in fact, close friends and roommates who had developed this symbiotic partnership to help each other with daily activities. They consequently decided to express this relationship in dance. For in dance, the weight exchange between bodies molds force into something to be received and traded rather than unidirectionally imposed. Each body is responsible, and enabled to respond. Perhaps the threat of unpredictability looms; however, it is mediated by the premise that every action is always already being received by another, new, consequent action. This is how dance produces new sensory horizons.

The sensory approach proffered by *Rhizophora* indeed opens into what Petra Kuppers has poetically named a *rhizomatic model of disability*, which holds together the haptic space between disability representation and its lived experience. Kuppers articulates how this model produces frictions between the

FIGURE 5.2. A scene from *Rhizophora*. One woman is wearing green, dancing against a white sky. The blurry outline of trees in the background. Courtesy of Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber.

signified meaning of words like *disability* and *pain* and the sensory-feeling of experiences, without singularly defining *one* experience of disability, but rather opening up multiplicity through an "abundance of meanings."[26] In describing how rhizomatic thinking refigures genealogies of kinship, Kuppers writes, "There is no necessary resemblance for disabled people, we mostly have to make our families ourselves, choose our community. Often, there is no patrilinear descent, no matriarch, no heteronormative narrative that duplicates itself into the future. To call for a ritual of non-essential, strategic disability community is a rhizomatic act: to put out feelers."[27] For Kuppers, the undoing of genealogies and heteronormative relations occurs through the extension of "feelers" that produce networks through sense. Against the tree-based genealogies that are central to Confucian-based notions of filial lineage that I describe at the start of the chapter, and the eugenic targeting of rhizomatic forms of foliage by chemical forms of imperial warfare, the experience of becoming with exposure extends outward in many directions at once to queer the forms of care that could result from exposure. The potential of kinship created through rhizomatic connections exists in their oscillation and vibrational spread, in which Kuppers observes what she terms a "dance."

Kuppers's sensory feeling of dance parallels Randy Martin's definition of dance as a site of action, an event in which politics are enacted. In Martin's seminal 1998 work *Critical Moves*, he defines dance as "the reflexive mobilization of the body—that is, as a social process that foregrounds the very means through which bodies gather. Through dance, the means and ends of mobilization are joined together and made available to performers and their publics. Dance, so conceived, does not name a fixed expression but a problem, a predicament, that bodies find themselves in the midst of, whose momentary solutions we call dancing."[28] This definition of dance foregrounds the meeting of bodies, and the relational fields created between them, as foundational to social processes. Martin suggests that dance is itself a form of processual inquiry, and also its own provisional response.

Similarly, performance studies scholar and longtime practitioner of Contact Improvisation (CI) Nita Little describes how dance encourages dancers to breach their attentional limit and engage differently with time.[29] She further articulates how CI facilitates the recognition that one's actions are coconstituted by the actions of others (human and nonhuman), which results in a process of actualization that is itself a manner of world-making. This attention to relation becomes a political way of engaging with others and expanding one's possibilities for being in, and with, the world. Little writes, "Actualizing is a political attentional action that is formative of our self-sensing. Being sense-able

is to be of the world we are experiencing, as distinct from being 'in' it and thus separate from it. When we actualize as the world in this way, the possibilities for motion increase exponentially. . . . As our bases are enriched in their potentials by the actions of attention that begin in new imaginings of the self, they result in enhanced relational potentials."[30]

Sensing through C1, for Little, is therefore not a passive act of reception, but rather a practice of worlding. Though the movement in *Rhizophora* is not a formal performance of C1, as many of the dancers do not directly engage with one another's bodies through contact, the improvisational sensory movement among the foliage similarly expands attentional limits to create new sensory experiences of time for the viewer. Time does not exist in a linear teleology of cause and effect, problem and solution, as is so often inscribed in models of medical cure. Rather, sensory interaction is about being sensitive rather than sensible by other rational standards. This actualization of the world gives way to increased "relational potentials" for bodies usually depicted as objects of care rather than in a relational exchange of care. What is engaging, then, about the female duet in *Rhizophora* is how care of self and other are interwoven or, rather, inextricable. The women arrive at this relation of care as a result of their interaction with each other in the Vietnam Friendship Village. Their kinship, as portrayed in this short scene, attests to another model of care outside of nuclear family structures, which often carry with them a dutiful obligation to rehabilitate karmic pasts. The care exchanged through dance in this scene importantly redirects the moral presupposition, cited by Gammeltoft, about a disabled person's "inability" to care for their kin. The bed becomes a place from which care is cocreated. Both Martin and Little conceive of a type of collision event in which dance enacts a process of becoming between and within exposed bodies. In this manner, dance embodies what Karen Barad has termed the "intra-activity" of entities whose differentiation is in fact an act of connection and commitment rather than separation.[31]

Writing from the perspective of feminist science and technology studies, Astrid Schrader provides a parallel approach for expanding the frame of witnessing action and reaction to consider the "response-ability" of bodies intra-acting with one another. Schrader challenges how scientific experiments come to value certain observable characteristics as "ecologically and/or politically relevant" while limiting its reception to other potential modes of data collection. Through observing the dinoflagellate *Pfiesteria piscicida* and its intra-actions with fish, Schrader notes how the organisms' ontologies are defined by their interactions with and responses to their environments. Though Schrader employs the term *response-ability*, which could invoke a discourse that reifies an ableist hierarchy of responsiveness, I'm interested in how disability studies could crip

her attention to the interactions and coconstitutions of changing environments. Part of Schrader's turn toward the term *response-ability* is also embedded in her call for more "responsible" scientific frameworks of causality—particularly in response to claims that the dinoflagellate *Pfiesteria piscicida* is a toxic entity. Her claim, therefore, is less about reifying an ontological ideal level of responsiveness as an "ability," and more about the suggestion that methods of witnessing and measuring change and adaption, and codifying levels of toxicity, are limited by linear models of cause and effect that fail to measure the intertwining of events over time. This call to witness a larger ecology of entwinement between bodies and environments that are deemed "toxic" is fundamental to understanding how systems for measuring toxicity become sedimented within observational methods, as in the case with Agent Orange. The history of confinement for racialized, lower-class, and disabled human bodies deemed "toxic" is inextricable from these practices; in Vietnam, following the wars in Southeast Asia in the 1970s, disability became codified as a toxic "social evil" to dispel.[32] Important to Schrader's formulation, therefore, is the expansive possibilities and indeterminacies of ontological intra-acting that acknowledge how organisms act and react in ways that may not be recognized by current systems of observation, but which are fundamental to processes of materialization.[33] This telos of becoming is fundamental to performance, particularly in improvisation, where the action unfolds as a sequence of reactions. To think dance, then, is to question the ontology of causation and a subsequent teleology aimed at resolving the separation between cause and effect. More specifically, dance provides a helpful methodology for sensing, in its particular attention to embodied exploration, adaptation, intra-action, and play.

The social and political meanings of play are vast and dependent on the cultural contexts in which play occurs. Play can be social, and an isolating retreat, figured within the imaginary, or believed to be a method of progressing the self. Play demonstrates power relations among those who play, and implements the social rules of the playing space. Play is accessible to some, while regarded as a scarce indulgence for others. Importantly, play is often figured as the opposite of work, though the relationship between play and productivity has certainly shifted culturally in the past few decades. The Vietnamese word most closely related to *play* is *chơi*, which references everything from a game or activity to a buoyant personality. Although the full range of play's meanings is beyond the scope of this particular chapter, I am particularly curious about two types of play that I witness in the videopoem. Play theorist Brian Sutton-Smith classifies these two versions of play as the *rhetoric of play as imaginary* and the *rhetoric of play as frivolous*. By Sutton-Smith's delineation, the first form of play

describes improvisation, flexibility, and creativity in human and animal worlds, whereas the play of frivolity is usually ascribed to the "idle or the foolish" who "enact playful protest against the orders of the ordained world."[34] These two descriptions of play describe the speculative projection that play enables—a type of performative space that does not reenact prescribed circumstances of the social order, but works to expand and resist them. Play is also often restricted to the realm of childhood, so I also caution against the universal infantilization of those who engage in play, particularly within the context of neurodiverse populations, who are often socially treated like children in need of protective "care" and "development." As I mentioned, Agent Orange representation has relied heavily on the portrayal of children to foreground a narrative of rehabilitation through development. Thus, I do not aim to prescribe that play aids in the progressive development or rehabilitation of the self, as a psychological perspective may purport. Rather, I'm interested in how the haptic space created through dancing bodies, between the subjects of the film, and between them and the flora, opens up a playful space both for imagining as a political practice and for embodying those resistant spaces that upset normative orders of the world.

The third section in the film, titled *thời gian trà*, or teatime, was choreographically modeled after a ritual teatime that the residents shared daily, in which Đô, one of the residents featured in this section, would invite his friends to gather and have tea. However, again, it is not a literal portrayal of this communal activity. Instead, there is an immense sense of play in this scene whose animated and disjointed nature reorients the viewer's sensual and kinesthetic engagement with the subjects of the film. The camera moves, along with the residents, through enlarged flying UNO cards as two women emphatically throw brightly colored cards at each other in a game that takes place among equally brightly colored playground equipment and twisted neckties. Unlike the still frame of the Waking Up scene, the camera incorporates the viewer into the animation of bodies as it dips and weaves through the actors and surrounding foliage. One actor who has been hiding behind a palm tree emerges liltingly from behind its fronds with a teapot and teacup, animating the cup in a cyclical gesture as he sways toward another man seated in a wheelchair. The seated man, eyes closed, begins to respond to the teacup's initiations with his nose, following these olfactory impulses as if inhaling the smell of imaginary tea as the cup circles his torso. Throughout this duet, playing cards continue to cut across the frame, peppering the lilt of the men's dance with the gravitational fall of the cards. Then, a woman in red with a crown upon her head enters waltzing with a staff. The staff becomes her companion in this dance. She steps in and

FIGURE 5.3. Teatime scene from *Rhizophora*. One woman is wearing black and yellow, holding large playing cards. Courtesy of Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber.

out of the camera's frame as the viewer is both invited into this waltz and simultaneously distanced from her experience. She does not dance for the camera, but rather among the interactions that surround her. Here, in the experience of play, within a community of residents who are often relegated to a realm of the outside "other," often selectively chosen against, I notice a shift in the sensible. The enactment of surreal excess in this scene does not reperform daily routine; it seems to suggest a parallel experience of disability often obscured by narratives of cure. In fact, what is sensible about the scene gives way to another affect altogether. Perhaps, even, a *sense* of companionship.

What differentiates *Rhizophora* from its documentary predecessors, then, is a rupture from the narrative of Agent Orange victimhood that requires repair by recuperation into heteronormative life. More specifically, dance in this context facilitates dissensus—a refiguring of the sensible through the redistribution of the senses articulated by Jacques Rancière. *Rhizophora* does not depict able-bodied others (parents or caretakers) who care for the residents; rather, they are portrayed through interactions with one another. Each of the scenes commingle functional activities with a choreographic interpretation of them. In doing so, the dance negates the very pragmatism inscribed by the activities. Alternatively, the dance becomes central to understanding the essence of each of these activities, even though the expenditures of energy far exceed what would be considered sensible for achieving the daily task. Dance consequently offers a sensory exposure to what otherwise would appear to be mundane activities. Unlike other documentary films that aim to narrate a "day in the life" of a disabled person in Vietnam by relying on realist portrayals of the person reenacting their lives for the film's audience, *Rhizophora* traffics in the possibilities of the absurd and fantastic that are facilitated by sensory experiences of the subjects' lives. It enacts Murphy's concept of *alterlife*, which she defines as a "becoming with exposure, [which] exists in the profoundly uneven and interdependent distribution of life chances."[35] Consequently, rather than a sense of empathy or "pity" for the subjects of the film, *Rhizophora* ignites a sense of joy and play as it incorporates viewers into an ongoing process of relation and exchange with the dancers. The stakes are shifted such that imagination and play become sensible responses to environmental harm.

Kinship Matters

Drawing from the works of those who insist on the mattering of matter, and the emergent relations among them, I propose that *Rhizophora* importantly refigures what is sensible and *dissensible* in relation to Agent Orange.[36] If the

sensible is sedimented by regimes of observation that define normative boundaries of sense (limited to distinct delineations among sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch), and further reify rational standards for the use of these senses for meaning-making, then the *dissensible* redistributes these taxonomies of sense by entangling multimodal sensory-feelings without a predetermined purpose or end.

Throughout the film, small scenes interstitially weave the more choreographed representations of daily life. In these connective moments, the dancers wear brown and green clothing and move improvisationally in a landscape of foliage. The viewers are to presume that these trees represent (or are) the *Rhizophora* mangrove trees from which the film takes its name. In these scenes, the movers do not overtly perform a narrative arc that ends in the consummation of heterosexual coupling or pairing, nor do they replicate their own daily activities to be witnessed by outside others. Rather, they move sensorially within the space, subtly responding to the ecology of plant and human bodies that surround them.

A close-up of a hand emerges alongside a dense layer of vegetation. The image is accompanied by the sound of string instruments, likely cellos, creating short resonant strokes as if the cellos themselves are warming up their resonant hollows for sound. Like the tentative nature of the score, fingers emerge like tentacles probing the leafy frame created by the appendages of the tree. A dance materializes in the close-up between the hand and its environment, producing a sensory relation that stretches outward. The scale of this engagement further dissects the subjects of the film to feature what Erin Brannigan calls the "microchoreographies of organs" as flows of energy pass over and through the surfaces of porous bodies.[37] The close-up of the hand within the leafy environment draws attention to the liveliness of both the hand and the trees that frame it. Liveness is coconstituted by their haptic interaction. Dance, as epistemology, materializes the friction between these multiple scales of becoming with exposure.

In this final scene, in which the residents are engaged in their own, multiple, sensory worlds, they seem to dance just for themselves. The viewer is contingently invited into the dance as the camera moves about the scene, creating an affective kinesthesia; however, the dancers also choreographically actualize a world all their own, alone and together, at once. The videopoem returns to the scene of the forest where it began; however, now, there are many bodies among the trees. The dancers move with sense, eyes closed, gently articulating with fingers and toes. The camera cuts between close-ups of various bodies, to suture together the dirt in the toes of one mover to the blinking eyelids of another,

FIGURE 5.4. A scene from *Rhizophora*. Many people are wearing brown and green, dancing in a forest. Courtesy of Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber.

from the fronds of a fern to a braid of hair. In the final shot, the camera zooms out to show each body moving to a separate rhythm in its own microworld, in proximity but not in explicit relation to the others. As the cello cuts out, the dance continues.

Ultimately, *Rhizophora* produces a different sense of being in the world by disrupting linear narratives to cut together different interactions between disabled bodies. The scenes are not portrayals of disability being recuperated into a narrative of normative life, but rather they are depictions of autonomous moving, sensing bodies actualizing communal worlds through their collective movement explorations. The film thus renders a politics and poetics of dance as an eco-phenomenology through which disability rhizomatically participates in world-making. Contamination is not rendered an object of shock to be analytically resolved. Instead, it becomes a moving entity that lives in and through moving bodies. As such, *Rhizophora* offers alternative sensibilities for engaging with disability, dance, and the changing environment that surrounds us.

Perhaps what is most inviting about *Rhizophora* is its appeal to sense *with* ecologies of human and plant bodies, attuning us to the intra-activity of bodies exposed to, living with, affected by, and composing the matter of an Agent Orange community. While these haptic encounters observed in *Rhizophora* occur through dance, on film, and in an institutionalized space, the videopoem playfully invites the viewers to consider how exposure entwines bodies in ways not yet recognized by normative perceptual systems—outside regimes of scopic observation and the institutions built to perpetuate them. These scenes invite us to reconsider how cellular, chemical, and extant bodies coexist and are woven together, not only by their communal targeting by the US military complex, but also as porous bodies in a process of becoming through their mutual exposure. The decimation of landscapes can be calculated in more than just its loss of profit for human-centered agriculture or its effects on a chain of food production that serves human bodies.

To consider, witness, and experience dance in an epoch of contamination and indeterminacy therefore is to attune to sensory modalities for navigating an exchange between bodies and, consequently, the matters that are created between them. Dance figures action and reaction in a coconstituting bind that destabilizes narratives of a sole initiator. Instead, an impulse generated in one body is transferred among bodies and alters the composition of those bodies in its transmission. So too, do the attentional limits of these bodies expand into multiple spatial and temporal frames at once. These sensory exchanges, at the cellular level, are bodies that open themselves to potential reexposure, acknowledging and inviting their porous boundaries to commingle with that

of the foliage. As disability, especially in relation to Agent Orange, has been managed by the quarantining of contaminated landscapes with concrete barriers and fences, and, consequently, bodies exposed to Agent Orange continue to be kept separate, the possibility of mutual exposure between a trans-species ecology of bodies is ever more critical. Thus, to acknowledge the alterlives of sensing human and nonhuman bodies in their processes of becoming is not to ignore the uneven distribution of exposure's consequences. Rather, the friction created by these meetings of bodies offers multiple sensory entries into the debilitation of exposed ecologies, and also a network of care and kinship practices that emerges as alternative avenues for living with contamination.

NOTES

1 I have previously critiqued the rhetoric of diplomatic reparation put forth by the founders and funders of the Vietnam Friendship Village; however, I also acknowledge the gathering space that centers like the Vietnam Friendship Village offer. For more information, http://www.vietnamfriendship.org/.
2 Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, 8.
3 Gammeltoft, *Haunting Images*, 142.
4 Nguyen, *Journey to Inclusion*, 25.
5 USAID, *Disability Rights Enforcement*.
6 Gammeltoft, *Haunting Images*, 75.
7 Gammeltoft, *Haunting Images,* 73.
8 Erevelles, *Disability and Difference*; Meekosha and Soldatic, "Human Rights"; Nguyen, *Journey to Inclusion*.
9 Nguyen, *Journey to Inclusion,* 34.
10 Murphy, "Alterlife and Decolonial Chemical Relations," 496.
11 Kim, *Curative Violence*, 14.
12 Kroløkke et al., *Critical Kinship Studies*, 8–11.
13 Tsing, *Mushroom*, 33.
14 Piepzna-Samarasinha, *Care Work*, 33.
15 Helen Meekosha and Karen Soldatic articulate the importance of acknowledging identifications of impairment within the Global South as an important site of political identification used to initiate the redistribution of resources. They write, "Recent international claims for retributive justice can be linked to a global politics of impairment, such as the Vietnamese Agent-Orange Movement against the US military complex. These political mobilisations around retributive justice for created impairment are rarely mentioned in the global disability rights movement. Impairment, positioned in this way, draws heavily on medical science to make claims for a global resource transfer from the North to the South, as a strategy for 'global payback' for crimes committed under the colonisers' project" (Meekosha and Soldatic, "Human Rights," 1392).
16 SWNS, "This Is the Legacy."

17 Fox, "Agent Orange: Coming to Terms," 234.
18 Kashi, *The Leaves Keep Falling*; Catherine Karnow, *Agent Orange: A Terrible Legacy*.
19 Reagan, "Representations and Reproductive Hazards," 58.
20 Peeples, "Imaging Toxins," 201.
21 Gammeltoft, *Haunting Images*, 57.
22 Schmitz, "Growing on the Edge."
23 *Rhizophora*, film directed by Davide De Lillis and Julia Metzger-Traber, 2015, https://vimeo.com/111310332.
24 Piepzna-Samarasinha, *Care Work*, 72.
25 Julia Metzger-Traber in discussion with the author, April 12, 2016.
26 Kuppers, "Toward a Rhizomatic Model," 226.
27 Kuppers, "Toward a Rhizomatic Model," 233.
28 Martin, *Critical Moves*, 6.
29 Contact Improvisation (CI) is a form of improvisatory movement based on the exchange of weight between bodies. It was formally developed in the 1970s in Europe and the United States and is primarily characterized by its use of physical touch and its emphasis on the process of responding to constantly changing physical realities rather than on producing a predictable result or product (Paxton, "A Definition," 26). The dancing in *Rhizophora* is not a formal practice of Contact Improvisation; however, I find that the principles of CI help to contextualize the improvisatory movement in the videopoem in ways that demonstrate how sense-based movement can expand attentional limits to changing environments.
30 Little, "Restructuring the Self-Sensing," 254.
31 Barad, "Nature's Queer Performativity," 125.
32 Nguyen, *Journey to Inclusion*, 37.
33 Schrader, "Responding to *Pfiesteria piscicida*," 297.
34 Sutton-Smith, *Ambiguity of Play*, 11.
35 Murphy, "What Can't a Body Do?"
36 For further discussion of the intersections of materialism and race, racial capital, settler colonialism, and disability, see the discussion among Kyla Wazana Thompkins, Michelle N. Huang, and Chad Shomura in issue 6.1 of *Lateral: A Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*, and Mel Chen's seminal work, *Animacies*.
37 Brannigan, *Dancefilm*, 45.