Scrappy Reading; Or, Reading the Breakdown in a Small Place

Hannah Nelson-Teutsch,
University of Würzburg

Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988) is built on scraps: a preface penned thirty years after the initial publication opens onto crowded chapters riddled with names and dates, people and places, redolent with "rot" (preface). Kincaid's account of a sovereign Antigua, as it emerges in the afterlives of slavery and decolonization, calls upon the decompositional logics of the breakdown, because only the breakdown can unsettle the workings of Empire.[1] Novelist Antonio Benítez Rojo conceives of Empire as a machine—"the Grandest Machine on Earth" (435); although, really there are multiple machines, each "a kind bricolage, something like a medieval vacuum cleaner"; "the suction of an iron mouth" (434) that takes and takes and takes. Empire is attuned to the vital necessity of *flow*; Empire cannot be attempted without what Kincaid describes as "a firm commitment to indoor plumbing" (ch. 1); Empire refuses to be well acquainted with rot. And so, by interrupting the flow—by lingering in rot—Kincaid demonstrates the ways in which the breakdown can meaningfully renegotiate postcolonial environmental relations.[2]

With this coda to a special issue on post/colonial ecological solidarities, I consider scrappy reading as both an invitation to and methodology for reading the breakdown—not a singular and specific breakdown (or at least, not *only* a singular and specific breakdown), but breakdown as a condition—a state—or, better yet, to borrow from Édouard Glissant, an "expanse of Relation" (62). Scrappy reading moves into, around, and through—which is to say both by way of and in pursuit of—the breakdown.[3] The breakdown—as it stretches to encompass fracture, collapse, decomposition, and disability—is no accident; the breakdown is evidence of *debility* (Puar); of what Calvin Warren terms *metaphysical violence*; of a system in effect; a well-oiled machine. And yet, because the breakdown is also always the site of the cast-off, the remnant, the discard, and the *wasted life* (Bauman) that the system produces to sustain itself, the breakdown is also always a site of possibility.[4]

Postcolonial studies stakes a particular claim to the breakdown as a site of possibility, rooted, as the field remains, in negotiating all that might emerge from the dismantling of Empire. The environmental humanities, which attends critically (if not exclusively) to literary and cultural representations of a climate collapsing, can also stake a strong claim to the breakdown. In union, the postcolonial environmental humanities (DeLoughrey *et al*.) surfaces vital considerations of what

the Oxford English Dictionary defines as "chemical or physical decomposition"; of the "fracture or dislocation of machinery resulting in a stoppage"; of "collapse"; and yet, what of the breakdown "of the animal functions, or health (esp. of the mental powers)" ("breakdown, n.")? There can be no fully articulated reckoning with breakdown that does not move with, and from, Crip and Mad ways of knowing the world.[5] Disability studies has long attended to the ways in which those who operate in close proximity to the breakdown do radical—critical—epistemological work: *cripistemological* work (Johnson and McRuer). Unsurprisingly, then, it is disability studies that offers a framework for conceiving of the breakdown as a site of possibility even as it connotes what Arseli Dokumacı terms *shrinkage.* Dokumacı develops the concept of *shrinkage* to describe the ways in which, "when the environment's offerings narrow, and when its materiality turns into a set of constraints rather than opportunities, the improvisatory space of performance opens up and lets us imagine that same materiality otherwise" (7). Dokumacı conceives of *shrinkage* as contraction that develops by way of attrition: a whittling away, a lessening, "a diminishing" (18). I am interested in shrinkage that occurs by way of accumulation and what kinds of improvisational moves, which is to say responsive and relational moves, the heap—*the dump* (Marder)— affords as the breakdown becomes a very small place.[6]

As I consider the possibilities for postcolonial ecological solidarities that emerge in a small place by pursuing a scrappy approach to reading into the breakdown, I move with Kincaid's text close at hand. What follows, however, is not a close reading of *A Small Place*—this article is scrappy in its approach and its content; incompatible with a conventional academic approach that culls from primary source material for productive purposes and reaching instead for a form and method that honor the scrap. In this scrappy work, Kincaid's *A Small Place* accompanies me—a "companion text" (16), in the parlance of Sara Ahmed. To proceed as companions is to make things personal, and this work will get personal. Kincaid is making a "prolonged visit to the bile duct" (ch. 2), and we are in this together.[7] So, with Kincaid, I make my way, via the logic of the scrap, into the breakdown and a very small place.

Scrappy Reading

Scrappy reading names three distinct and yet closely connected approaches. First, scrappy reading conjures the long history of practices that Deidre Lynch describes as "dispersive readings" (481)—the work of anthology, commonplacing, and scrapbooking, as well as quote-tweeting and citation; work that conceives of the breakdown of a text as a site of possibility.[8] Second, scrappy reading attends to the remnant, the refuse, the rubbish—to that which Mary Douglas has influentially described as "matter out of place" (36). Scrappy reading thereby introduces the theoretical provocations of discard studies: a systemic approach to waste and wasting as

fundamental to maintaining or disrupting structures of power.[9] Finally, scrappy reading positions the reader *at odds*, not with the text, necessarily—although perhaps, why not—but with the world. Scrappy reading in this sense proposes a reader who is, in Ahmed's words, "not being accommodated by a world" (12). For Ahmed, the work of knowledge production that is "generated by the practical experience of coming up against a world" (13-14) is "sweaty"; thus, a sweaty concept "is worldly, but is also a reorientation to a world, a way of turning things around, a different slant on the same thing. More specifically, a sweaty concept is one that comes out of a description of a body that is not at home in the world" (13). Scrappy reading is nothing if not sweaty—it is laborious; it marks up the page, calls for scissors and glue; it shifts and relocates the printed word; and, like a sweaty concept, it emerges from a body that is not at home in the world and attends to matter that, like the body that cannot be accommodated, must, therefore, be wasted.[10]

I am devoted to the scrap as that which the system cannot abide; the scrap shorn of its romantic associations with the fragment, and its fulsome recuperation in the glean. My devotion makes me an outlier among ecocritics. Even among those who, rather than taking "an earth-centered approach to literary studies" (Glotfelty xviii), look to the muck and the mire—to the *dirty nature* Heather Sullivan describes or to Timothy Morton's *dark ecology*—the scrap is consistently set to work "cultivating unexpected collaborations and combinations" (Haraway 4), which is to say, *compost*.

Composting is "a material labor whereby old scraps are transformed—through practices of care and attention—into nutrient-rich new soil" (Hamilton and Neimanis 501). The care-work of composting rehabilitates the scrap, transforming the remnant that is unwanted—revolting—into productive matter, the stuff of life, the earth's own wormy deliverance. Compost is always instrumental, oriented towards what it can do for us. Compost, it has been suggested, can act as salve; can salvage what is left of this imperiled earth by affording new possibilities for growth and transformation.[11] Compost, then, is a material metaphor operating in the service of what Arjun Appadurai terms an "ethic of possibility" (299-300); a locus of the hope that is required to transform environmental relations in this present moment in support of a livable future.

I compost, and I like to imagine a future world in which I flourish; and yet, I find in these ethical practices a measure of what Eli Clare describes as "the ideology of cure" (15). White, Western environmental writing has historically been located in meditations on—and demands for—a return to a pristine nature. Since the 1990s, the very idea of a pristine nature to which anyone might return has been thoroughly debunked (Cronon); and in its place, notions of repair and the *sustain* of sustainability harken instead to regimes of environmental maintenance. And yet, a review of the evidence clearly indicates that the environmental devastations of this present moment are the direct result of ongoing and continuous processes of enslavement, colonial oppression, and extractive capitalism (Portner *et*

al.). To repair this devastated world, then, is to maintain and support the oppressive systems that have imperiled it from the get-go.

Therefore, while very gratefully acknowledging the ecofeminist labors of the composters who have come before me, I would like to absolve the scrap of the onus to come to fruition as compost. I am not interested in compost; I am interested in the scrap itself; because, unlike compost, the scrap is untethered to an imagined future. Like me, the scrap is slowly breaking down, not once, but always, over and over and over again. Like me, the scrap is falling apart, going bad, rotting away, becoming, as Jamaica Kincaid's protagonist declares herself, "undone" (ch. 3). The scrap can operate alone, but as a form it affords the book, the heap, the pile. Like misery, the scrap loves company. To connect by way of the logic of the scrap—to scrap—is to participate in the labor of the breakdown, and in another sense, to fight—"to quarrel, to squabble; to engage in heated argument or angry dispute" ("scrap, v." def. 2.c). A scrap in this sense is its own sort of breakdown—a breakdown of the social order, of civility. A scrappy approach, then, is without institutional support; it suggests lay knowledge; it operates against expertise. A scrappy approach to reading might well be thought of as a kind of *study* in the sense suggested by Fred Moten and Stefano Harney: "a mode of thinking with others separate from the thinking that the institution requires of you" (qtd in Halberstam 11).

Katherine May's *Wintering* (2022) offers an account of scrappy reading as study that emerges, tellingly, from a period of what Alice Hattrick terms *sick time*, which is both "the time of relapse and re-diagnosis, naming and categorization, treatment and advice" ("Dredge") and the burgeoning awareness of unexplained illness as a presence already known and nearby—a coming to community. As May negotiates an extended leave and then an abdication from academic life (she is, or, was, the director of an MA program) following months of pain in want of a diagnosis, she approaches reading in new ways:

> Downstairs at 4am, I set to work. It felt like an act of mania to get up in the middle of the night, but with a hot cup of tea in my hand, it seems more like an urge towards sanity […] This is a time in which only a few activities seem right. Mostly, I read at this hour, roaming through the pile of books that live by my favorite chair, waiting to offer up fragments of learning, rather than inviting cover-to-cover pursuits. I will browse a chapter here, a segment there, or hunt through an index for a matter that's on my mind. I love the loose, exploratory reading that happens in the night, free of the day's obligations. For once, I am not reading to seek escape; instead; having already made my getaway, I am able to roam through the free, extra space I've found, being as restless and impatient as I like, reveling in the play of my own absorption. (94-95)

It is interesting to observe, in May's account, the ways in which the scrappy reading that she describes—reading that emerges in a body that is not being accommodated by the world; reading that takes shape out of sight of the day's obligations—moves through texts with an intuitive lust for the breakdown: "a chapter here, a segment there" or a

"hunt through an index" (95). "Roaming," "free," and "loose," the scrappy reading that May describes is a fugitive movement—a "getaway" (95).

Likewise, in a vexingly under-explored preface, Jamaica Kincaid opens *A Small Place* with vivid descriptions of the getaway, played out first as her account of exile from Antigua as a sixteen-year-old girl, and then later as a woman—a mother—thirty-nine years old, pregnant with a second child, ordered to bed by the doctor, and confronted in the midst of a difficult pregnancy with clippings—hostile texts—texts that "arranged and rearranged themselves in different orders"; texts that regarded the reader as "angry and unpleasant"—words of "warning" (Preface). Kincaid, the reader in this vignette, is occupied with reviews of *A Small Place*, which are scraps in every sense of the word—in that they are bits and pieces of broader material entities (newspapers, magazines, journals); in that they are often clipped, sheared from the object that held them close and shuffled about before being relegated to a new assemblage (the scrapbook; or perhaps, the scrapheap); and, in that they are, in this case at least, "pugnacious," "quarrelsome" little texts ("scrappy, adj." def. 2).

As for me? Like Kincaid, I am also a woman—also a mother—thirty-eight years old, at home—sick, these days—with two children, who are almost always also sick; I too have texts heaped around me, in tabs open end to end, files spread across the glow of a screen, and stacks of borrowed books that threaten to overtake the bedroom; texts that seem to offer countless approaches, ideas, theories, and readings that demand consideration.[12] The texts are persistent and daunting; they must be cut down to size, excerpted, extracted, and made to tell a new story; this is the scholarly work of research in literary and cultural studies, a scrappy practice in that this work, like the review, excises and hoards, building by way of elaborate assemblage towards critique; and, all the while, this work is scrappy in a second sense, in that it is precarious—poorly funded, insecure, bloated with side work; the work comes calling at all hours; the ever-present sense of failure builds up like a plaque on the brain, exhaustion corrodes all sense and sensibility, breakdown is inevitable.[13]

Reading the Breakdown

Breakdown is never an individual or an isolated failure; to paraphrase Mary Douglas, where there is breakdown, there is a system at work (36). In the breakdown, connections are forged between the foundering of the climate and entangled earth systems; the fraying, flooding, weakening, rusting, cracking, crumbling, and rotting of structures and infrastructures, and the disabling of bodyminds.[14] It is in the breakdown that the scraps, to which scrappy reading attends, reveal systemic machinations. Waste exposes conditions naturalized and normalized by relations of power for what they truly are: imposed and therefore imperfect, prone to glitch, fault, failure; dependent on

wasting to evacuate that which the system cannot stomach. Looking to the remnant to see the system at work requires a methodological approach Max Liboiron and Josh Lepawsky term, after the Russian formalists, *defamiliarization*: "to make the familiar strange by stopping the viewer from moving along familiar conceptual routes" in order to reveal that "what is normal is a cultural process, not a natural given state" (10-11).

In *A Small Place,* Kincaid makes good on the promises of defamiliarization right from the start. Upon arrival in Antigua, Kincaid writes, "you emerge […] into the hot, clean air: immediately you feel cleansed, immediately you feel blessed (which is to say special); you feel free" (ch. 1); and the blessings—the freedom—Kincaid offers are tantalizing; too good to be true—it's a trap. You think you are clean, Kincaid suggests, but how could you be – you who have blown in from afar, trailing your carbon emissions, trading on cheap exchange rates. You are a remnant of Empire, like the oil refinery that emerged under the shadowy auspices of "the foreigner who did the bad things in the Far East" before "something went wrong" (ch. 3) and the rust set in; like the nearly new automobiles straight from Japan that sputter and quake on the leaded gasoline that is all the island pumps out—a zombie fleet of moving scraps (ch. 1); like eleven million dollars in French aid gobbled up and then gone (ch. 3); you are an "ugly thing, that is what you become as a tourist, an ugly, empty thing, a stupid thing, a piece of rubbish pausing here and there to gaze at this and taste that" (ch. 1), just another scrap on the heap.[15]

As Kincaid describes it, Antigua is awash in scraps that began piling up in 1492 with the arrival of Western settler colonialism (preface). In prose that sweeps across a wasteland, Kincaid lingers on all that languishes: "the utility poles [that] are old and rotten, [...] they sag and then fall down under the weight of the wire and cables" (ch. 3) and the sign on the road, "a rusting, beat-up thing left over from colonial days" (ch. 1); the sewage that flows directly into the water because "in Antigua, there is no proper sewage disposal system. But the Caribbean Sea is very big and the Atlantic Ocean is even bigger, it would amaze you even to know the number black slaves this ocean has swallowed up" (ch. 1). By way of the breakdown, Kincaid comes to grips with Antigua's postcolonial ecological condition—the co-presence of the water "that water—have you ever seen anything like it?" and "the contents of your lavatory" and the "black slaves this ocean has swallowed up" (ch. 1). Decompositional logics invite a reckoning with the scraps of Empire as not only present and co-constituting, but also active and at work (rather than fossilized and sedimented), "fizzing" as Lauren Fournier puts it, "with the vitality of transnational materialities while remaining attuned to the charged valence of the very notion of life, both historically and in the present (95).

Michael Rothberg, in his influential reading of *A Small Place*, identifies the very same passage that draws together the sea, the sewage, and the bodies of enslaved Antiguans to theorize an *implicated* approach to subjectivity that is attuned to the ways in which historical

forces continue to shape a lived experience in the present moment, while recognizing that those living today are neither the perpetrators, nor victims, of the atrocities that break down this world. In theorizing implication, Rothberg is making an argument for systemic reform—for redress—and, most pragmatically, for reparations. I am absolutely and unequivocally for reparations as an ethical imperative, yet I find in Kincaid's refusal of reparations—"nothing can erase my rage—not an apology, not a large sum of money, not the death of the criminal" (ch. 2) —a reminder that reparations always function as a kind of systemic maintenance work; a way to keep the machine running.

Kincaid is against repair. Kincaid is here "to blow things up"; to make life "generally unlivable" (ch. 2), because to proceed otherwise would be to suggest that the machine *can* be repaired; that the violence of the breakdown is a glitch, a fault, a failure—it is not.[16] Jasbir Puar employs the concept of *debility* to describe the ways in which the system is dependent upon the production of waste and wasted life. Conceptually, debility moves beyond disability to refer not only to those who have already been "deprived of some ability" ("disabled, *adj*.," def. I.), but also to those for whom injury or illness are likely if not inevitable. Theorizing the breakdown as both disabling and debilitating "exposes the violence of what constitutes 'a normal consequence'" (Puar xvi) and insists that breakdown is not an accident or an aberration (at least not always and not only an accident or an aberration), but an "'expected impairment'" (Livingston qtd. in Puar xvi); an inevitable byproduct of the system at work.[17] Thus, the intimacies that arise in the ocean—where "the contents of your lavatory might, just might, graze gently against your ankle as you wade carefree" (ch. 1) within the very water that has "swallowed up" lives wasted—utterly wasted—by Atlantic modernity (DeLoughrey)—are not—cannot be—an argument for repairing the system. The only alternative is the breakdown.

To refuse repair in favor of the breakdown is to insist, as Kincaid does, on coming "undone" (ch. 3). The undoing at the heart of *A Small Place* emerges in chapter three, as Kincaid's protagonist confronts "the place where the library is now":

> above the dry-goods store, in the old run-down concrete building, [it] is too small to hold all the books from the old building, and so most of the books, instead of being on their nice shelves, resting comfortably, waiting to acquaint me with you in all your greatness, are in cardboard boxes in a room, gathering mildew, or dust, or ruin." (Ch. 3).

Kincaid is careful to implicate *you* in this undoing—"Oh, you might be saying to yourself, why is she so undone at what has become of the library" (ch.3)—and although *you* have been staked to the text and activated by way of direct address, you are not summoned to a small place merely to take it all in; you have been called to make common cause with what Jack Halberstam describes as "the brokenness of being" (6). Kincaid's library discourse surfaces the entangled systems of oppression that produce and maintain debilitating postcolonial ecologies and names you, a tourist from "North America (or worse,

Europe)" (ch. 1)—as complicit in those systems, while simultaneously insisting that *you too* are being broken down by them. Kincaid's representation of breakdown as *common,* which is to say both ordinary and shared, moves from the idea that breakdown is never an individual, or an isolated, failure to make a more expansive claim: breakdown is not a failure at all; breakdown is a site where "collective affinity" (Dokumacı 13) can be forged, and alternatives for negotiating postcolonial ecological conditions can be "improvised" (26). The breakdown as a locus of transformative—*improvisational*—solidarity, then, is not only common, but also *a commons:* a resource that is collectively cultivated and maintained to nurture and support those brought together by what is shared (Linebaugh; Berlant).

Although they do not identify the breakdown as a commons, Max Liboiron and Josh Lepawsky emphasize breakdown as a site of radical, transformative potential when they observe how waste—"matter out of place" (Douglas 36)—functions in relation to the system that produces it. "To act as if something is 'out of place,'" argue Liboiron and Lepawsky, "means it is a genuine threat to overthrowing systems in power, not that something is simply tossed to the side of the road" (79). The genuine threat that abides in the scrap is the potential that lurks in the breakdown; that potential is *ordinary*—that potential does not cohere exclusively in "rejected and extraordinary bodies" (Johnson and McRuer 134); the breakdown belongs to all of us, although never equally and not all at once. Approaching the breakdown as *ordinary* is taking what Dokumacı terms an "ecological approach" to disability; an approach, which "does not—and cannot— take disability as 'a category inherent in certain minds and bodies' but instead considers it as a particular *mode of inhabiting* a constrained or 'shrunken' world of possibilities" (Dokumacı 13 emphasis original). Breakdown, then, is always more than a shared space—a commons. As a mode of inhabiting a shrunken world, breakdown is the work of commoning: "an active, living process" that manifests in "acts of mutual support, conflict, negotiation, communication and experimentation" (Bollier 2).[18] Breakdown is a transformative practice that can only emerge in, of, and for the breakdown. As waste and wasted life come together, the breakdown shrinks to the point that breakdown can—*must*—emerge as a process and a practice for renegotiating postcolonial ecological solidarities.

Kincaid's *A Small Place* is small in almost every sense of the word. The printed book brings together a scant eighty-one pages, and the island territory that gives the text its name stretches no more than twelve miles in any one direction; and yet, when I refer to the text as a small place, what I am most interested in is the steady accumulation of scraps that produces within the text, the "seeming narrowness" (10)—the *shrinkage*—Dokumacı theorizes. The accumulation that shrinks *A Small Place* coalesces by way of what Michael Marder terms *dumping,* as "fragments of thoughts and bodily functions, interpersonal relations and environmental factors, technological inventions and the

mechanisms of psychological identification commingle and accrete in an uncanny, perhaps sublime, and definitely incoherent aggregate" (Marder xiii–xiv). Marder's description of *dumping* deftly articulates the ways in which Kincaid crowds *A Small Place*. Take for example, one brief passage, in which Kincaid considers a single meal:

> When you sit down to eat your delicious meal, it's better that you don't know that most of what you are eating came off a plane from Miami. And before it got on a plane in Miami, who knows where it came from? A good guess is that it came from a place like Antigua first, where it was grown dirt-cheap, went to Miami, and came back. There is a world of something in this, but I can't go into it now. (Ch. 1)

As Kincaid breaks down what really constitutes a "delicious meal" in Antigua, the illusion of "some delicious, locally grown food" shatters. True to her word, Kincaid has blown it up. You may still "long" for "some nice lobster, some local food" (ch. 1); but you can no longer "see yourself" at dinner. Instead, you are confronted by "Miami," "a plane," and before that "another plane," "a place like Antigua," the gut-ache of "grown dirt cheap," "Miami" again, and finally "back" to Antigua (ch. 1).[19] As the scraps pile up, a straightforward reading becomes quite impossible—you can no longer proceed as a tourist might, caught up in the casual flow, the effortless glide, "pausing here and there to gaze at this and taste that" (ch. 1). You have been denied your dinner; you have been forced to reconsider your route. Rather than forward and onward, the accumulation—the *shrinkage*—of *A Small Place* requires a new approach to the text; a reader is forced to go slow—to start up and then abruptly stop again—to re-route; there is simply no other way to get around.

It is the constraints of accumulation—of *shrinkage*—that arouse in the text a decompositional poetics predicated on punctuation, interpolation—breakdown. Kincaid reroutes the glide of the run-on sentence—fully laden and yet laboring to say more—to slow things down with a full stop. A comma, or more than one, strings together disparate thoughts in a vibrant listology; semi-colons flower amidst the scraps, articulating nuanced connections (and of course, when it all becomes too much, parentheses can disrupt those same connections and hold space for new ways of knowing). The dash—which does all this and more—is perhaps the most notable—the dash connotes intimacy—stream of consciousness—a corollary to the movement of the mind made visible on the printed page. The poetics of the breakdown that emerge in response to shrinkage are not an attempt to unify the text – far from it. Decompositional poetics are on the side of the scrap; the poetics of the breakdown work to make the text scrappier still.

The scraps that build up in *A Small Place*—both the remnants of the work of dismantling the world that began in 1492, and the work of Kincaid's decompositional poetics—inhibit flow. And, as shrinkage works to deny flow, a small place is an invitation to broken-down bodyminds that move at an uneven pace. In the casual run of the list, in the stacking of phrase on phrase, in each and every aside, *A Small*

Place offers up an abundance of opportunities to stop, recover; and, if necessary, begin again. To rest, and in resting to refuse the flow, is to disrupt the systemic exploitation of lives and lifeworlds by developing what Avery Gorden (who is paraphrasing Toni Cade Bambara) calls "a practice for being unavailable for servitude" (qtd. in Nelson 8).[20] In a small place, reading can be just such a practice; an act fundamentally at odds with productive logics. To read in a small place, then, is not only to embrace a slow and steady pace – to rest – but, in doing so, to refuse productive work in favor of what Jessica Hurley describes as "a radical futurelessness […] a formal afuturity that transforms the present" (20). To inhabit the breakdown—to move by way of the logic of the scrap into and through the breakdown—is to recognize that the shrinkage of a small place fosters a practice of tending to the present moment, each word, each phrase, each meandering sentence that contains "a world of something" (Kincaid ch. 1). Rather than the forced march of progression, a scrappy approach to reading the breakdown in a small place develops its own rhythms.[21]

I am at the mercy of new rhythms these days. On these days—sick days—the mornings are a blur; the days are a long, low afterburn. I should be answering emails—or better yet, writing—but I cannot make room for productivity; the keyboard on my computer is broken—it functions only at a desk, but my desk cannot accommodate both my body and the bulk of a feverish two-year old. I abandon the computer—I cannot contort myself into progress; I break down; I rest. This rest, though, this rest is sweaty work; I am feverish, I am flush with refusal; I am never alone. There are so many of us here, sick; there are toys everywhere; too many dirty coffee cups, dirty clothes, dirty diapers; empty medicine bottles and worn-out blister packs; it is very hard to maneuver in here, and so I improvise. I skim a digital copy of Kincaid's text; a copy that I can manage with one hand; quiet pages that will not disturb my daughter lying limp across my chest. To read in a small place is to make moves in defiance of constraint—to take to the bed; to pick up a screen; to use one hand; to drift off and then return; to move phrase by phrase; to stick around as long as it takes. Sticking around—lingering in exhaustion and in pain—is not only (not always) a refusal of futurity, a denial of the demands that press onwards towards recovery and a more livable future; settling in—staying put —forging new ways to live in the interminable present is also a practice of recognition.

A small place forces a reader into close proximity with all the scraps that build up in the breakdown, scraps that reveal a system at work and insist upon debilitating outcomes that are ordinary and shared. Proximity invites—demands—intimacy; in the heap, there is no escaping the scrap. The recognition that emerges in a small place does not—cannot—occur at a distance; recognition in a small place is always, as Kincaid puts it, "a prolonged visit to the bile duct" (ch. 2); recognition in a small place is a "bitter" and "dyspeptic" prospect—a bilious prospect—a visceral prospect. The visceral intimacies of a small place give rise to what Sharon P. Holland, Marcia Ochoa, and Kyla Wazana Tompkins describe as "the theoretical pressure that the

visceral conjures as the line between subject and object—the line between my shit and your shit—becomes increasingly obfuscated" (394).

In the breakdown of barriers between my shit and your shit, vital solidarities emerge as the 'places where bodily edges and categorical distinctions blur or dissolve'" (Alaimo "Forward" xv).[22] As secure subject positions become unfixed and unstable, new attachments emerge. The recognition that develops in a small place is solidarity that refuses to stay put; solidarity that looks to the work of *breakdown* for new ways to come together. Practicing rest and refusal are vital to the work of nurturing and sustaining the breakdown; and yet it is in collectivizing this work of rest and refusal—in the recognition of breakdown as a shared labor—a common practice—that new forms of postcolonial ecological solidarities emerge in a small place. Scrappy reading, then, is both a "social encounter between an active reader and an active text" (Bradway viii) and a stretch towards connections that emerge among and between readers, even at a distance. Drawing on Alison Kafer's reading of Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's activist performance art, I mean to suggest that scrappy reading is "a way to imagine [a self] as part of a larger collectivity"; scrappy reading, like Piepzna-Samarasinha's autoerotics (another improvisational act emergent in a small place) "transforms the [small place] from a site of isolated pain or individualized pleasure into a site for coalition building" ("Queer Disability Studies" 101).

Gathering Ruin

A scrappy approach to reading; or, reading the breakdown in a small place—this text, my offering to pile atop the heap of words spilled to make sense of the work of making sense of breakdown as it eviscerates us—is then both an acknowledgement of the breakdown closing in, and a celebration of the ways in which the constraints of a small place can afford new possibilities for the breakdown, can free the pen from what Kincaid describes as the "rot" of a big place that stills the tongue, the fingers, and the brain (preface).

If a scrappy approach proposes that it is where and when a text is broken down that the text is at its most animated—and reading the breakdown insists that the process and the practice of breaking down a text is a collective and collaborative *approach*—then to site the encounter of scrappy reading—of reading the breakdown—in a small place is to look to the ways in which a text that is *animated* by ruination can afford readers new opportunities to conceive of the breakdown as a *commons* and to suggest that there is radical potential in taking up and taking on—in *improvising*—breakdown as a practice of commoning.[23] A small place, such as this text, such as this special issue, such as our shared project of thinking about ecological solidarities across post/colonial worlds, names a realm in which undoing can be sought out and engaged as a practice of coming together beyond the reach of those systems that work to co-opt the

collective and the work of coming undone. Into the breakdown, then, with love

---

Notes

[1] Throughout the body of *A Small Place,* Empire gets the lower-case treatment, which I read as a grammatical slight—a dig—a reminder that despite "all this fuss over empire," the British have come and gone; "this empire business" has been consigned to what Kincaid calls "the rubbish heap of history" (ch. 2). As Kincaid trawls the rubbish heap of history, she is confronting a lower-case empire (ch. 2); in the Preface, however, with some mileage between then and now, Kincaid chooses to capitalize Empire in order to attend specifically to the British and "the irrevocableness of *their* bad deeds" (ch. 2; emphasis mine). In thinking with Empire, I mean to conjure both a specific and particular violence, a known enemy—the English, who "should, at least, be wearing sackcloth and ashes in token penance of the wrongs committed, the irrevocableness of their bad deeds," and a more general form of oppression that travels, takes shape, lays waste, ages, succumbs to the scrapheap, and nonetheless persists. For more on forms and their portability, see Caroline Levine's *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (2017).

[2] There is no shortage of postcolonial ecocriticism attendant to the wasting of Empire at work in *A Small Place.* I am particularly indebted to Jane King's "A Small Place Writes Back" (2002), Ann Laura Stoler's "Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruination" (2008), and Kylie Crane's "Ecocriticism and Travel" (2019). And yet, it would be a mistake to conceive of breakdown as located only and always in texts and environments of the global majority. As Kincaid takes pains to emphasize in *A Small Place*—and as I work to elaborate here—the breakdown belongs to all of us, although our claims and our complicity will always differ.

[3] Borrowing phrasing and purpose from Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha and her thoughts on suffering, I turn to the breakdown "not because it is okay *but because this is what we have*" (qtd. in Kafer "Queer Disability Studies," 100; emphasis mine). To attend to breakdown and its *affordances* (Levine) is not—and should not be—a celebration of ruination, but rather a move to consider, as Stoler puts it, "how people live with and in ruins" (196) from beyond the limited confines of the *damage-based narrative* (Tuck).

[4] In theorizing discard studies, Max Liboiron and Josh Lepawsky emphasize that it is vital not to conflate waste and wasted life—"our theories of waste and wasting should not fail to distinguish between blue bins and concentration camps" (27). As I make an argument that draws human lives and material remnants together in the breakdown, I am attuned to the dangers of conflation, and yet I am also convinced that the intimacies of the breakdown are a fertile nexus for critical inquiry. In making these connections, I am entirely indebted to Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963).

[5] Alison Kafer offers a definition of the term *Crip* that moves with and from community: "'Crip' has long circulated in disability studies and activism as a term of identity; as poet-activist Eli Clare explains, '*Queer* and *cripple* are cousins: words to shock, words to infuse with pride and self-love, words to resist internalized hatred, words to help forge a politics. They have been gladly chosen—*queer* by many gay/lesbian/bi/trans people, ... *crip* by many disabled people.' Clare's reference to 'queer' as encompassing 'gay/lesbian/ bi/trans people' illuminates a defining element of 'crip': much as 'queer' can refer to a wide range of positions, 'crip' frequently stretches far beyond the mobility impairments implied by 'crippled'" ("Queer Disability Studies" 94). For a definition of Madness and Mad Studies, look to endnote thirteen.

[6] Improvisation is spontaneous—"without preparation"—"the action of responding to circumstances or making do with what is available" ("improvisation, n." def. 1.a., 2). In thinking with improvisation, I mean to emphasize movement that emerges not according to dictates from on high, but in response to local desires emergent in particular and individual bodies, which are always—and yet never in the same ways or to the same degree – constrained by circumstance, which is to say moving around in a small place. For more on improvisation, see Reason (2004) and Reardon-Smith, Denson and Tomlinson (2020).

[7] In approaching this work with Kincaid, I do not wish to create false equivalencies; what I am seeking is the coalition that Fred Moten demands—the coalition that emerges out of *recognition:* "your recognition that it's fucked up for you, in the same way that we've already recognized that it's fucked up for us […] that this shit is killing you, too, however much more softly" (Moten and Harney 140-141).

[8] For a highly abridged survey of scholarship on dispersive reading, see Hess, *How Romantics and Victorians Organized Information* (2022); Gruber Garvey, *Writing with Scissors* (2012); Wisecup, *Assembled for Use* (2021); Stokes, *Old Style* (2022); Elkins, *Crafting Feminism from Literary Modernism to the Multimedia Present* (2022); Hayles Gledhill, "Tumblr and the Romantic Sentiment Album: Bricolage and the Culture of the Margins" (2018) and Day Good, "From Scrapbook to Facebook: A History of Personal Media Assemblage and Archives" (2012).

[9] Waste and wasting systems are only now emerging as a nexus for literary criticism (see, for example, Morrison, *The Literature of Waste,* 2015), and a waste studies approach is rich with possibilities; and yet discard studies, which "rather than focusing on material waste and trash as the primary object of study […] looks at these wider systems of waste and wasting" (Liboiron and Lepawsky 2-3) offers a perspective that merits consideration along with and not instead of a waste studies approach. For more on discard studies, see Liboiron and Lepawksy, *Discard Studies: Wasting, Systems, and Power* (2022), and for specific literary readings for waste, see both Baldeep Kaur's and Alisa Preusser's articles in this special issue.

[10] These days, sweaty labor is also invariably associated with the warming of the climate crisis. As Shana L. Redmond puts it, "[t]he temperature is rising and the water is too, the sky is dense, and the ground is giving way. We in the Anthropocene are holding onto our seats and our loved ones, shoulders tight and backs sore from the messy work we've inherited and that which we've made for ourselves. Something is broken. Whether or not it can be repaired may not be the right question. It's hot in here" (par. 1-2).

[11] For more on composting, see de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More-Than-Human Worlds* (2017) and Hoppe, "Responding as Composing: Towards a Post-anthropocentric, Feminist Ethics for the Anthropocene" (2019), among others.

[12] The breakdowns associated with motherhood and mothering move influentially and consistently throughout Kincaid's novels (see Natov (1990); Donnell (1993); Dance (2010); Fulani (2011); Özkan (2020)) and offer up fertile ground for further consideration at the intersection of feminist and disability studies.

[13] I first came to Crip studies to make sense of pregnancy, which I experienced as a disabling event; at times, profoundly so. In the wake of two pregnancies, and as a precariously positioned parent wending my way through a pandemic, I have become well-acquainted with sick time and with my own particular Madness. Thankfully, "Mad Studies offers a lens to make sense of the increasingly maddening effects of the world in which all of us live" (Beresford

6–7); Mad studies "has a place for *all* our firsthand experiential knowledge […] This is a venture we can all work for together in alliance" (Beresford 7; emphasis original). For more on Mad studies, see LeFrançois *et al*., *Mad Matters* (2013) and Bruce, *How to Go Mad without Losing Your Mind* (2021), among others.

[14] I move into my consideration of bodyminds by way of Sami Schalk's introduction: "The term bodymind insists on the inextricability of mind and body and highlights how processes within our being impact one another in such a way that the notion of a physical versus mental process is difficult, if not impossible to clearly discern in most cases" (5–6).

[15] For more on Kincaid's use of *you* in *A Small Place*, see also Frederick (2003), Schroder (2011), Shoemaker (2020), and Sorlin (2014), among others.

[16] This kind of fugitive breakdown has become a hallmark of environmental writing and action in recent years (see, for example, Malm, *How to Blow Up a Pipeline* (2021)) although the long history of sabotage is perhaps best understood as Empire's consanguineous other.

[17] For more on disabled and disabling environments, see also Carrigan, "Postcolonial Disaster, Pacific Nuclearization, and Disabling Environments" (2010).

[18] Dokumacı associates this approach with the work of Alison Kafer, Julie Avril Minich, and others whom she relies upon in thinking relationally about disability; and, like Dokumacı, I wish to acknowledge the careful cultivating of ties that has emerged in the work of Kafer (2013) and Minich (2016), as well as my own inspirations in this space—not only Ahmed (2017), Schalk (2018), May (2020), and Hattrick (2021), but also the work of Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018) whose activism, performance art, and writing has so deeply influenced my own work.

[19] My reading of this particular passage is indebted to Helena Feder's incisive contemplation of the same section of *A Small Place* in *Ecocriticism and the Idea of Culture* (2014); and yet, where Feder identifies a *consolidation*—"the historical, material interconnectedness of social and ecological worlds, human and more than human, and the interconnected forms of domination at work in global capitalism" (107)—I am most interested in the ways in which Kincaid's reading functions as a *breakdown.*

[20] For more on rest as refusal see Hersey, *Rest as Resistance: A Manifesto* (2022).

[21] For more on rhythm in the works of Jamaica Kincaid, see Simmons, "The Rhythm of Reality in the Works of Jamaica Kincaid" (1994).

[22] I conceive of Stacy Alaimo's theory of the dissolve as the breakdown's new materialist other. Whereas the dissolve tends towards diffusion and insubstantiation, the breakdown insists on relations of power between unequally distributed scraps that fester and take up space. Unlike the dissolve, which, Alaimo ventures, "may be useless in terms of social justice and climate justice, in that it does not provoke consideration of differential human culpabilities and vulnerabilities" (*Exposed* 166), reading the breakdown is fundamentally and essentially a tool for negotiating differential culpabilities and vulnerabilities.

[23] To conceive of reading as *an approach*—an "act of coming nearer" ("approach, n." def. 1) —emphasizes convergence while remaining critically ambiguous about the nature and number of those on the move. With this ambiguous framing of the act of reading, I mean to dislodge the idea of the reader as the critical actor. The text in this scenario is not static; the book—like the reader—is active, or better yet, *animated*, a term Jemma Deer uses to describe "the ways in which literary writing has a strange and active 'life' that

has the power to disturb, startle and transform the contexts in which it is received, the futures into which it is born" (1).

Works Cited

Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke UP, 2017.

Alaimo, Stacy. "Forward." *Disability Studies and the Environmental Humanities,* edited by Sarah Jaquette Ray and Jay Sibara. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017, pp. ix-xvi.

Alaimo, Stacy. *Exposed.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

Appadurai, Arjun. *The Future as Cultural Fact.* Brooklyn: Verso, 2013.

"Approach, N." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: Oxford UP, December 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4102727796.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts*. Oxford: Polity Press, 2004.

Benítez-Rojo, Antonio. *The Repeating Island.* Translated by James Maraniss. Durham: Duke UP, 1996.

Beresford, Peter. "Introduction." *The Routledge International Handbook of Mad Studies,* edited by Peter Beresford and Jasna Russo. New York: Routledge, 2022, pp. 1-16.

Berlant, Lauren. "The Commons: Infrastructures for Troubling Times*." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 34, no. 3, 2016, pp. 393-419.

Bollier, David. "Commoning as a Transformative Social Paradigm." *The Next System Project,* https://thenextsystem.org/node/187. Accessed 8 May 2023.

Bradway, Tyler. *Queer Experimental Literature: The Affective Politics of Bad Reading.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

"Breakdown, N." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford UP, September 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/8312427356.

Bruce, La Marr Jurelle. *How to Go Mad without Losing Your Mind: Madness and Black Radical Creativity*. Durham: Duke UP, 2021.

Carrigan, Anthony. "Postcolonial Disaster, Pacific Nuclearization, and Disabling Environments." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 4, no. 3, 2010, pp. 255-272.

Clare, Eli. *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure.* Durham: Duke UP, 2017.

Crane, Kyle. "Ecocriticism and Travel." *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing,* edited by Nandini Das and Tim Youngs, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2019, pp. 535-549.

Cronon, William. "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, edited by William Cronon. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1995, pp. 69-90.

Dance, Daryl Cumber. "Emily and Annie: Doris Lessing's and Jamaica Kincaid's Portraits of the Mothers They Remember and the Mothers That Might Have Been." *Journal of West Indian Literature* 19, no. 1, 2010, pp. 1-21.

De la Bellacasa, Maria Puig. *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

DeLoughrey, Elizabeth. "Heavy Waters: Waste and Atlantic Modernity." *PMLA* 125, No. 3, 2010, pp. 703-712.

DeLoughrey, Elizabeth, Jill Didur, and Anthony Carrigan. *Global Ecologies and the Environmental Humanities Postcolonial Approaches.* New York: Routledge, 2015.

Deer, Jemma. *Radical Animism: Reading for the End of the World.* London: Bloomsbury, 2021.

"Disabled, Adj. & N." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: Oxford UP, September 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/8902227751.

Donnell, Alison. "When Daughter's Defy: Jamaica Kincaid's Fiction." *Women: A Cultural Review* 4, no. 1, 1993, pp.18-26.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger.* 1966. London: Ark Paperbacks, 1988.
Dokumacı, Arseli. *Activist Affordances.* Durham: Duke UP, 2023.
Elkins, Amy. *Crafting Feminism from Literary Modernism to the Multimedia Present.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2022.
Fanon, Franz. *The Wretched of the Earth.* New York: Grove Press, 1963.
Feder, Helena. *Ecocriticism and the Idea of Culture.* London: Routledge, 2014.
Fournier, Lauren. "Fermenting Feminism as Methodology and Metaphor: Approaching Transnational Feminist Practices through Microbial Transformation." *Environmental Humanities*12, no. 1, 2020, pp. 88-112.
Frederick, Rhonda D. "'What If You're an 'Incredibly Unattractive, Fat, Pastrylike-Fleshed Man'?: Teaching Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*." *College Literature* 30, no. 3, 2003, pp. 1-18.
Fulani, Ifeona. "Gender, Conflict, and Community in Gayl Jones's *Corregidora* and Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 32, no. 2, 2011, pp. 1-30.
Garvey, Ellen Gruber. *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012.
Gledhill, Evan Hayles. "Tumblr and the Romantic Sentiment Album: Bricolage and the Culture of the Margins." *Transformative Works and Cultures* 27, 2018.
Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation.* Translated by Betsy Wing, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010.
Glotfelty, Cheryl and Harold Fromm. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996.
Good, Katie Day. "From Scrapbook to Facebook: A History of Personal Media." *New Media & Society*15, no. 4, 2013, pp. 557-573.
Halberstam, Jack. "The Wild Beyond: With and For the Undercommons." *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study,* by Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, Minor Compositions, 2013, pp. 2-13.
Hamilton, Jennifer and Astrida Neimanis. "Composting Feminisms and Environmental Humanities." *Environmental Humanities* 10, no. 2, 2018, pp. 501-527.
Haraway, Donna. *Staying with the Trouble.* Durham: Duke UP, 2016.
Hattrick, Alice. *Ill Feelings.* E-Book, Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2021.
Hersey, Tricia. *Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto.* Boston: Little, Brown Spark, 2022.
Hess, Jillian. *How Romantics and Victorians Organized Information: Commonplace Books, Scrapbooks, and Albums.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2022.
Holland, Sharon P., Marcia Ochoa, and Kyla Wazana Tompkins. "On the Visceral." *GLQ,* vol. 20, no. 4, 2014, pp. 391-406.
Hoppe, Katharina."Responding as Composing: Towards a Post-anthropocentric, Feminist Ethics for the Anthropocene." *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*21, no. 2, 2020, pp. 125-142.
Hurley, Jessica. *Infrastructures of Apocalypse: American Literature and the Nuclear Complex.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020.
"Improvisation, N." Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford: Oxford UP, July 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3152152479.
Johnson, Merri and Robert McRuer. "Cripistemologies: Introduction." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 8, no. 2, 2014, pp. 127-147.
Kafer, Alison. "Queer Disability Studies." *The Cambridge Companion to Queer Studies,* edited by Siobhan B. Somerville, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020, pp. 93-107.
Kafer, Alison. *Feminist, Queer, Crip.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2013.
Kincaid, Jamaica. *A Small Place.* E-Book, Daunt Books, 1988.

King, Jane. "A Small Place Writes Back." *Callaloo* 25, no. 3, 2002, pp. 885-909.
Larkin, Lesley. "Reading and Being Read: Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* as Literary Agent." *Callaloo* 35, no. 1, 2012, pp. 193-211.
LeFrançois, Brenda A., Robert Menzies, and Geoffrey Reaume. *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies.* Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2013.
Levine, Caroline. *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2017.
Liboiron, Max and Josh Lepawsky. *Discard Studies: Wasting, Systems, and Power.* Cambridge: Michigan Institute of Technology Press, 2022.
Linebaugh Peter. *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2009.
Lynch, Deidre. "Walter Scott's Loose Leaves: Books, Scraps, and Dispersive Reading." *Novel* 55, no. 3, pp. 480-500.
Malm, Andreas. *How to Blow Up a Pipeline: Learning to Fight in a World on Fire*. Brooklyn: Verso, 2021.
Marder, Matthew. *Dump Philosophy: A Phenomenology of Devastation*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021.
May, Katherine. *Wintering.* London: Rider, 2020.
Minich, Julie Avril. "Enabling Whom? Critical Disability Studies Now." *Lateral* 5, no. 1, 2016.
Morrison, Susan Signe. *The Literature of Waste: Material Ecopoetics and Ethical Matter.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
Morton, Timothy. *Dark Ecology.* New York: Columbia UP, 2018.
Moten, Fred and Stefano Harney. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study.* London: Minor Compositions, 2013.
Natov, Roni. "Mothers and Daughters: Jamaica Kincaid's Pre-Oedipal Narrative." *Children's Literature* 18, 1990, pp. 1-16.
Nelson, Maggie. *On Freedom: Four Songs of Care and Constraint.* New York: Penguin Random House, 2021.
Özkan, Hediye. "Disguised Subjugation as Education: Colonial and Maternal Pedagogy in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*." *Litera: Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies* 30, no. 2, 2020, pp. 325-342.
Piepzna-Samarsinha, Leah Lakshmi. *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*. E-Book, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2018.
Pörtner, H.-O. *et al*. "IPCC, 2022: Summary for Policymakers." *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* edited by H.-O. Pörtner et al., Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2022, pp. 3-33.
Puar, Jasbir. *The Right to Maim.* Durham: Duke UP, 2017.
Reardon-Smith, Hannah, Louise Denson and Vanessa Tomlinson. "Feministing Free Improvisation." *Tempo* 74, no. 292, 2020, pp. 10-20.
Reason, Dana. "Navigable Structures and Transforming Mirrors: Improvisation and Interactivity." *The Other Side of Nowhere: Jazz, Improvisation, and Communities in Dialogue*, edited by Daniel Fischlin and Ajay Heble, 2004, pp. 71-86.
Redmond, Shana L. "The Roof is on Fire." *American Studies Association*, 2022, https://asa.press.jhu.edu/program22/info.html. Accessed 1 Mar. 2024.
Rothberg, Michael. *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators*. Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2019.
Schalk, Sami. *Bodyminds Reimagined.* Durham Duke UP, 2018.
Schroder, Anne. "Where the Other Half Lives: Touring the Sites of Caribbean Spirit

Possession in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*." *Postcolonial Travel Writing,* edited by Justin D. Edwards and Rune Graulund, 2011, pp. 116-137.
"Scrap, V. (2)." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: Oxford UP, July 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/6927068239.
"Scrappy, Adj. (2)." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: Oxford UP, July 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1037999682.
Shoemaker, Lauren E. "A Structure of Terror in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*." *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*19, no. 1, 2020, pp. 85-106.
Simmons, Diane. "The Rhythm of Reality in the Works of Jamaica Kincaid." *World Literature Today* 68, no. 3, 1994, pp. 466-472.
"Small, Adj. & N. (2)." Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford: Oxford University Press, December 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/6856887207.
Sorlin, Sandrine. "Ideological Crossings: 'You' and the Pragmatics of Negation in Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place*." *Études de Stylistique Anglaise,* 2014, pp. 11-25.
Stokes, Claudia. *Old Style.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022.
Stoler, Ann Laura. "Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruin and Ruination." *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2, 2008, pp. 191-219.
Sullivan, Heather. "Dirty Nature: Ecocriticism and Tales of Extraction – Mining and Solar Power – in Goethe, Hoffmann, Verne, and Eschbach." *Colloquia Germanica* 44, no. 2, 2011, pp. 111-131.
Tuck, Eve. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities." *Harvard Educational Review*, 79, no. 3, 2009, pp. 409-427.
Warren, Calvin. "Black Care." *Liquid Blackness* 3, no. 6., 2016, pp. 36-47.
Wisecup, Kelley. *Assembled for Use: Indigenous Compilation and the Archives of Early Native American Literatures*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2021.