

**Activist Poetics: Intersecting Ecopsychology and Poetry to Inspire
Environmental Action**

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Abstract.

“Activism” is often associated with aggression, extremism, romanticism, and destruction rendering it ineffective and polarizing. Given the unstable state of Earth’s ecosystems today, environmental activism needs to be as powerful as possible in creating change. My senior project investigated where art and ecopsychology fit into activism and how poetry can inspire action. To explore this, I immersed myself in the world of activist poetry. I read through dozens of published modern and historical artistic initiatives in addition to research on poetics, writing, and storytelling. I self-selected three books for their environmental and emotional relevance. Together, Rupi Kaur, Innosanto Nagara, and Christopher Poindexter demonstrated a power in language that articulates personal and emotional human-nature experiences. These poets respectively use techniques that conjure images of place, call on real-world figures, and metaphorically converse with the non-human. Analysis such as this afforded me tools to write what I could eventually call my own environmental activist poetry book. Thus, I have produced *Each Step In*— a book of my own poems, illustrations, and spoken word pieces— in an effort to connect with an audience of potential change-makers. My hopes are that readers can experience alongside with me the many emotions— those turbulent and those empowering— that come with acknowledging and confronting global environmental injustice. Bigger picture, those looking to maximize the efficacy and longevity of environmental activism can engage with rhetoric found in this book and beyond in search of what it looks like to successfully inspire action.

Keywords.

Environmental Anxiety; Poetry; Ecopsychology; Mindfulness; Activism

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I promise I will change the world
just to prove how much I love you.



1. *Introduction.*

My overarching goal of this research is to overlap ecopsychology and activism with poetry. This section will set the context for art in activism, beginning with the big picture of what sustainability is and why there are activist efforts working to achieve it. From there, I introduce activist burnout to highlight what challenges environmental activists face, and ecopsychology to present what methods many environmental activists are currently practicing to combat burnout. I then establish definitions for what I will be basing my methodology: relationship, nature, environmental activist, and activism. Finally, to set the framework for my methodology, I connect these concepts to introduce the role of art in activism, its history, and benefits that its creativity offers to action.

1.1 Sustainability & Activism

Environmental sustainability is a term contemporarily used to encompass a concept of living that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Fulton, Clarke, Albán, 2017, p. 47). The conservation movement is largely grounded on this definition, however conservationist Robert Metzner argues that this is an anthropocentric viewpoint that is grounded in an ethic that assumes natural resources be conserved only to the extent that human consumption can be maintained (n.d, para 12). The widespread employment of an industrially driven worldview has played an enormous part in the environmental crisis we face today (n.d, para 12). Metzner conversely introduces an emerging ecological worldview in which the role of the human in nature shifts from exploitation and management, to stewardship and restoration; from living in conquest of nature, to living as part of nature; from dominion, to co-evolution.

As this ecological world-view had emerged in academia, several disciplines began to question their own conceptions of, and approaches to, sustainability. Richard Stedman (1999) argues that though definitions of sustainability are rooted differently among different practices, they are all connected by their critique of the modern industrial worldview. In quoting another environmentalist, Stedman says, "Sustainability is, therefore, a shorthand for '... commitment to

ecology - sustainable agriculture, sustainable economics, sustainable forestry, sustainable communities, and sustainable development, [each of which] refer to the specific discipline or intellectual domain under the transformational influence of the emerging ecological worldview” (Stedman 1999). Environmental activism plays a direct role in promoting and achieving sustainability. Therefore, sustainability — in its more ecologically centered definition — requires environmental activism via many different avenues. My work on environmental activism, with the backdrop of the ongoing sustainability movement, accordingly needs to promote this commitment to ecology.

1.2 Ecopsychology & Activist Burnout

Activism can often be a draining life to lead. Environmental activism specifically needs attention because, “Environmentalists sometimes despair at the magnitude of the task their movement has taken on” (Brown, 1995, p. xiii). Many activists express the very real, overwhelming feeling of “activist burnout” (Madison & Scalmer, 2006, p. 226). The field of ecopsychology, one that explores the intersection of ecology and psychology, takes an approach to addressing these feelings of inundation in a way that “brings together the sensitivity of therapists, the expertise of ecologists, and the ethical energy of environmental activists” (Brown, 1995, p. xiv). One ecopsychology program named Joyality — spearheaded by Australian ecopsychologist, Eshana Bragg — is intended to empower activists via the lenses between these different fields. Amongst these tools are activities aspiring to help the participants “connect deeply with nature,” and “become empowered to take action for a sustainable future” (Joyality, n.d, para 3). More and more academics are seeking to dissect the link between nature and motivation for climate related action.

In *Activist Ecopsychology* (2014), one of Bragg’s two main steps towards change is to “reconnect with nature, each other, and our deeper selves” (Bragg, p. 16). Furthermore, she writes that, “Drawing upon this nurturing strength, inspiration, and wisdom helps us face the challenges, fully comprehend the power of natural and social systems, and motivate and sustain positive action” (Bragg, 2014, p. 16). Over twenty years ago, Theodore Roszak compiled a book called *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind* (1995) in which he shares “the work of environmentalists who display a healthy curiosity about their need to find a more

sustainable psychology, one that will appeal to affirmative motivations and the love of nature.” In other words, Roszak’s ecopsychology book is intended to communicate the connections that environmentalists have with nature and explore the ways in which these individuals practice a relationship with nature to help them maintain a healthy and grounded psyche. Roszak, in a chapter called *Where Psyche Meets Gaia*, specifically calls to attention the need for psychological health among activists saying, “It is a timely concern; there is an urgent need to address the amount of anger, negativity, and emotional burnout one finds in the movement” (Roszak, 1995, p 3).

1.3 Definitions of Relationship, Nature, Environmental Activist, and Action

To explicitly research the correlation between environmental activists’ relationship with nature and environmental action, four things must first be defined: 1. A relationship, 2. nature, 3. an environmental activist, and 4. action.

1.3.1 Relationship with Nature

A relationship is naturally two sided. Anthony Hernandez, on his blog post on “The Importance of Healthy Relationships,” says a meaningful, healthy, and sharing relationship helps both parties maintain a positive outlook and keep from feelings of depression, anxiety, anger, and overwhelm (Hernandez, 2015, para. 1). Translating this to a human-nature relationship, controlling these exact emotions would also ground an activist. However, in a relationship between a person and the natural environment, communication isn’t verbal and the ability to dissect that side of the relationship becomes more challenging. It requires deeper-than-analytical connection. That being the case, artistic creativity is a necessary mediator in the relationship between humans and the environment.

Nature, as used here, follows the leading definition in the Oxford English Dictionary (2017): “The phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations.” In scaffolding this definition with the double-edged take on the term relationship, a relationship

with nature is one where the human is interacting with plants animals and the landscape all with an awareness of and connection to those aspects of nature interacting right back.

1.3.2 Environmental Activism

An environmental activist, in this study, is one whose main goal is to reach other bodies of people on matters involving sustainability. Simply put, “Activists believe that change is possible. They convince others of that possibility” (Madison & Scalmer, 2006, p 224). I apply this definition to environmental activism in that an environmental activist aims to convince others that positive environmental change is possible. Whilst considering the previously mentioned definition of sustainability, environmental activists can collectively have a myriad of foci, backgrounds, and approaches.

1.3.3 Oppositions to Activism

Activism can often be seen in a bad light as demonstrated by controversy involving the non-governmental environmental organization known as Greenpeace. The Canadian newspaper named *The Globe and Mail* has a published article called “Greenpeace is a Menace to the World” (Wente, 2017). This article commentates on the “relentlessness” of a Greenpeace campaign that fights against a logging company in Montreal, Quebec called Resolute Forest Products Incorporated (Wente, 2017, para 3). Quoting a video featuring Innu Band Council Member, Jack Pickard, the article demonstrates how activism can be met with defensiveness when approached with a non-negotiating tactic. Pickard says, “Greenpeace, in our view, is a group that goes to the extreme, that doesn't seek a balance between conservation and forest management” (Wente, 2017, para 17). Because Greenpeace is a well-known activist group, it is a fair example of what skeptics think of when they contemplate activism. The argument Jack Pickard has against Greenpeace here embodies why activism might be painted as unproductive and overly radical: they can be, ironically, too resolute—too indefatigable towards one end of the spectrum so that they eliminate all room for empathy with the opposing party.

In another example, Hans Noel (2014) with the *Washington Post* has an article called, “How Ideological Activists Constructed our Polarized Parties.” It argues that while ideological activism

doesn't "polarize" parties, per say, it places people into "distinct" parties in a way that leaves little room for any in-betweeners. The U.S has arrived at this distinct, two-party system. "Ideological activists [who] had to force the parties to change, on race, on women's rights, on defense spending, etc. And they continue to do so. Now, there are few conservative Democrats, and even fewer liberal Republicans" (Noel, 2014, para 8). When this article is juxtaposed with the one about Greenpeace v. Resolute, it becomes clear that as activism gets more and more predetermined in its efforts and fixed towards one solution and one solution only, room for progress dwindles.

1.3.4 Definition of Action/Types of Activism

In response to these oppositions, when the three definitions— relationship, nature, and environmental activist— are viewed together with support from Alan AtKisson's "Avenues of Action" (1991) as referred to here from a worksheet crafted by Eshana Bragg in 2015, these definitions allow us to look at four main avenues of environmental action whilst regarding the relationship with nature that they could potentially cultivate in an activist. Therefore, an environmental activist doesn't have to be ideological or radical in any way, rather simply a catalyst for change and— after what has just been laid out— to be a catalyst for change, the commonly regarded idea of an "activist" must be shifted from one who is extreme and steadfast, to one who is practical and empathetic.

There are several avenues of action one can take that, while they don't go to extremes like that of Greenpeace, they are very much valid forms of activism. The first avenue of action is individual action. This comprises of a lifestyle change, or "anything you can do personally to address the environmental issue" (Bragg, 2015, p 1). Examples of these activities include incorporating activities such as meditating and sitting with nature, recycling at home, or installing a rainwater catchment tank into one's lifestyle. The second avenue of action is "communic-action." This means efforts to "share information, ideas and stories about the environmental issue and sustainability solutions" (Bragg, 2015, p 1). An example of this would be an individual who has started a blog about their experience as an environmental activist. The third avenue of action is community organizing, or structural efforts to involve the community (Bragg, 2015, p 1). For instance, the Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies in Australia, or

CERES, is a community-based learning organization that puts together events in which individuals come together to grow food and make change. The fourth avenue of action is political organizing. This avenue addresses change via “putting pressure on political, legal and corporate systems (Bragg, 2015, para 3). For example, environmental organization Friends of the Earth organizes campaigns and events often with a mission to influence government policies, legislation, and corporate behavior.

These avenues of action can be influenced by a relationship with nature, most obviously in individual action where the individual can cultivate a personal and independent relationship with nature. However, nature can be involved in communic-action by opening up a conversation about, or simply including human-nature relationship rhetoric in speaking. The larger reaching goal here is to create a social space where it becomes normal, encouraged, and desirable to be in nature. The community organizing avenue of action has great potential here in that community events can integrate nature in a way that has people engaging with the natural space and receiving its psychological benefits both directly and indirectly. Lastly, political organizing is a type of action where nature and a relationship with nature can be intentionally integrated into urban spaces and enforced in policy.

Overall, environmental activism manifests in several different ways, but it is the incorporation of both art and nature into these avenues of action that is thus far under-examined, for the two of them together contain the power and potential for activists to move forward in a psychologically clear and fundamentally compassionate manner.

1.4 Art & Activism

While activism is a pertinent avenue for environmental change, arguably, so is art. Here, I present where art has space and purpose in activism. I also highlight how an activist’s capacity to promote change can be improved via a relationship nature and how ecopsychology strives to do this on a more general level. Ecopsychology is grounded on an understanding that human well-being is reliant on a connection between human and nature. Ecopsychology means, therefore, the intersection between human beings and the natural world through ecological and psychological

lenses. Finally, I apply these principles—art, activism, and ecopsychology—to the four avenues of action to introduce how many different realms of activism can benefit from art and nature.

The connection between art and activism has long been studied for its effectivity in creating monumental change. Activism without art can often come across as pushy and demanding, as seen in the Greenpeace example, but the integration of art creates space for an audience to reflect inwards, confronting them with their visceral reactions. Jan Cohen-Cruz, in *Community Art and Activism*, writes that, “Art can open a space for critical thinking. By its definition, art is a non-proscriptive space, an ‘imagine if,’ not an ‘accept this or else.’ As such, it offers a built-in antidote for even the most well-meaning activism's tendency to tell people what to think and do” (Cohen-Cruz, 2002, p. 7). She discusses the capacity that art allows for people to question the norm, challenge habitual ways of life, and reconnect with their own desires—the type of self-reflection that is a necessary prerequisite for activism (Cohen-Cruz, 2002, p. 6). Art, therefore, ascribes validity to the desires held by a community when incorporated in a grassroots scenario, “as opposed to a top-down approach that any political entity, right or left, could use” (Cohen-Cruz, 2002, p. 6). It then becomes clear why art plays an important role in activism by acting as a form of communication accessible to individuals and communities on a deeper level. Without it, activism falls short in its ability to spread ideas through communities.

1.5 Ecopsychology and Environmental Activist Poetics

Overlapping ecopsychology and activism with poetry has been done before, as demonstrated by poet, writer, teacher, and founder of Planetize the Movement, Drew Dellinger. In an interview with Mary Tucker in 1996, Dellinger spoke on environmental justice issues (3:18), “human-earth relations” (4:20), cosmology (5:30), why rhyme, rhythm and repetition is an important form of communication (9:30), and overall why communication was his chosen approach towards environmental justice. His comments on “human-earth relations” intersect with my explanation of a “human nature relationship.” His answer comes just after expressing that “the same worldview that exploits humans is the same worldview that exploits nature” (3:18). The relationship that Dellinger wishes humans would adopt is a less exploitative, resource oriented worldview towards one that recognizes the sacredness in the earth—in every plant, human, and animal.

Not only is the environment an entity by which we should establish a relationship so that we can achieve a wiser understanding of the universe, doing so also addresses environmental justice issues. On top of that all, Dellinger explains why spoken word poetry is the best way that he finds to communicate this practice. Much like myself, Dellinger finds that science falls short in communicating emotions. He agrees that, “poetry is absolutely critical to understanding life and reality. I think reason and rational thinking is, of course, an important role of knowing, but we need the artistic, the spiritual, the mystical, and the poetic.” In quoting French idealist philosopher and Jesuit priest named Teilhard de Chardin, Dellinger gets at the notion that science is great at describing the “without” of things, the surface of things, but we need something like poetry to have a feel for the within of things. He says, “poetry and the arts awaken us to the essence of reality and there is a deep wisdom that is more powerful than rational thought.

Art is a necessary addition to the process of communicating science, the environment, ecopsychology, and activism. My project builds from this literature in a way that applies theories like that of Dellinger and incorporates arguments like those against Greenpeace into a spoken word project itself. Standards of assessment can follow artists and speakers who attempt to put art and the environment in communication. My methodology will be a further examination of ecoactivist poetic literature in addition to an analysis of existing artistic content.

2. Methods.

Overall, my methodology set out to explore established environmental activism, my own role as an environmental activist, and my personalized style of art that I would use to communicate my ideas. This approach fits into my overall research design by bridging my investigation between existing art, literature, and activism, with that of my own to answer the question, “how can poetry inspire environmental action?”

2.1 Australia: Environmental Activists’ Relationships with Nature

Prior to the methods I carried out in the U.S during winter and spring quarters, I conducted research while studying sustainability and environmental action abroad in Melbourne, Australia. There, I assessed environmental activists’ relationships with nature to better understand how such a relationship can motivate them to do what they do and keep from burning out.

I approached this question through the ‘triangulation’ of three different methodologies. ‘Data triangulation’ is a method used in qualitative research that incorporates multiple methods into one study to collect a body of knowledge that is potentially more in-depth and nuanced (Mertens, 2012, p 75). My first method was to attend environmental rallies, protests, and campaigns, and other environmental movements in Melbourne to 1. Randomly connect with activists for potential interviews and 2. Establish myself as an activist in the city during the 4-week ISP period, October 29th to November 27th, in which I could reflect on in my second methodology. Melbourne was selected to be the only site of my research because it a hub for activists of all kinds, fosters numerous environmental organizations, and hosts activist rallies, campaigns, and protests on a regular basis. I chose to study “environmental activists” that I met at environmentally relevant events and through others so that I could stay within the realm of activism while simultaneously connecting with activists utilizing many different approaches to make change.

The second component of my methodology was to participate in Eshana Bragg and Rachel Taylor’s Joyality program in which I undertake meditative and grounding practices from which I can observe my own feelings and emotions around nature and activism. My third approach to

answering this question was to sit down with a wide range of activists—from communication activists, to political and community organizers—and ask questions regarding challenges in activism, how they cope, and how much time they spend in nature. Alternative methods could have included surveys, however I decided against it because I felt the question would be better answered through conversation and personal reflection.

I would like to integrate this knowledge into my senior project by turning my results into advice in a creative and emotionally accessible way.

2.2 Content Analysis

My methodology upon returning home was a literature review of research done on environmental activism, drawing from readings I have collected from my time in Australia. With this, I could critique current approaches to environmental activism and further highlight the movements and articles that use or advocate for nature in an artistic way. Second, I carried out a content analysis of existing activist spoken word pieces, poems, and songs to gain further insights on their strategies, philosophies, and successes. Content analysis involves searching through databases for related material and analyzing them together for a holistic approach to answering a question. In achieving this, I searched for key words and topics that are often used in activist art: ecoactivism, activist poetics, ecopoetry, environmental activism, and more. In addition to these online searches, I selected and dissected three poetry books that I felt intersected poetry, nature, and activism. I drew inspiration from three main poets: Rupi Kaur, Innosanto Nagara, and Christopher Poindexter. I looked for ways that they employed literary form and structure, illustration, design, storytelling, and chapter sectioning to inform my own book. Those books were *The Sun and Her Flowers* by Rupi Kaur, Innosanto Nagara's *A is for Activist*, and *Naked Human* by Christopher Poindexter.

In addition to noting the rhetoric and aesthetic of the books, I also measured my emotional responses to different poems and the inspiration I felt to do something. In doing so, I could understand how these professional pieces can be best internalized into that of my own. This content analysis was meant to expose me to many styles of art and expand upon my own.

2.3 Creating the Book

My methodology for writing the poems themselves came from thirty minutes to two and a half hours set aside every day to sit down and write. The structured time multiple times a week provided me with the space and time to generate a long list of poems. I set the goal of 100 poems by mid spring quarter to allow myself time to edit, publish, and print in addition to having a substantial page count. My approach to naming the book came from a running list of possible book titles to be finalized by the time I would publish. I employed Adobe InDesign and Illustrator to create visuals and aesthetics by tracing over photographs, sketches, and images through the lens of Rupi Kaur's artwork.

Potential limitations of my methodology include subjectivity in my content analyses. Additionally, I am limited by time and resources to review several other environmental activist poetry books. These limitations impact my results in a way that would otherwise facilitate my overarching understanding of what it means for one's work to successfully inspire action.

3. Results.

3.1 Aesthetic: Adopting Rupi's Methodology

In Rupi's book, *The Sun and Her Flowers*, she breaks each chapter up to tell a story of Wilting, Falling, Rooting, Rising, and Blooming. I reflected this simplicity and storytelling in my chapter titling (Appendix A). Those chapters are WithinWithout, BodyLandscape, TimeCirle, and One. To me, they all mean the same thing, but the phrasing of each chapter allowed me to tell my story of this ongoing personal transition from ego, to universal. From my own environmental anxiety, to a recognition of (and comfort with) my role in this a collective whole.

I also gave my shot at simple line sketches to embellish my poems in the similarly revealing way that Rupi is able (Appendix B). I added specific shades of pink and yellow to many of them. These are colors of warmth, happiness, and springtime. They are colors that are inconspicuously ubiquitous. These colors capture the essence of my optimistic and bright outlook on the future of action and activism.

3.2 Storytelling: Adopting Christopher's Methodology

I dissected Christopher's work to learn about the fusion of storytelling and poetry, particularly how a stand-alone poem can tell a full story. Storytelling in poetry surreptitiously invites the reader to explore their own feelings— those past, present, and future— on overwhelming issues like environmental and social injustice. Storytelling became one of my favorite ways to write. It looks different than my typical rhyming poems. I found myself less likely to rhyme, though still some did. In place of rhyming, I had space to be transparent about moment to moment emotions. I could be writing the end of a story and the whole story all in one (Appendix C page 17 and page 39).

3.3 Rhyming: Adopting Innosanto's Methodology

Innosanto wrote a (technically) children's book called "A is for Activist" where he goes through the alphabet rhyming his way through social, political, and environmental matters. Because nearly all of the poems in my book rhyme, it was important that I analyzed an example of where

that is done alongside environmental action. The words that rhyme speak to one another as represented in Appendix D in the last few words on page 15 of the book: “pollution,” “solution,” and “revolution.” That last stanza is also where I first wrote the words that would become the book’s title.

3.4 Naming the Book

I decided on *Each Step In* after asking myself what message I wanted to get across to my audience. For the majority of the time I had been carrying out this project, the book was called *Everything Must Nourish*. While I was sad to let that title go because of the exuberance that comes with the word *Nourish*, I ultimately decided it had the exact demanding connotation that my literature review had advocated against. *Everything Must Nourish* is a statement, but *Each Step In* is a call to action. It can be read two ways that I know of. First, we each need to step into the movement for change to happen. Second, each step we take ought to be in the right direction. In this way, a statement is still being made but is simultaneously masked by its dual way of interpretation.

3.5 Self-publishing

I received financial support from CEP’s Individual Support Grant (ISG) to print the first edition of my book. With that, I was able to widely distribute my book to local libraries, high school students, UW professors, and all those who helped create my project along the way (see acknowledgements on page 4).

I published and printed the [first edition](#) using the online website Blurb. The [second edition](#) is currently published both on Blurb and on Amazon’s Createspace. I chose to publish with Createspace after reading an [FAQ with Rupi Kaur](#) on her path to success at just 25.

4. Conclusion.

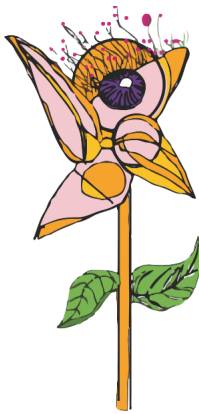
This study can be widely spread by helping activists acknowledge where their motivators are rooted. Through poetry, readers can reflect on their emotions and transform them into passion, and eventually into action. *It will take a collection of activists who can take care of themselves* for the environmental movement to be effective and sustainable. The process of creating the book connected me with a newfound reception to nature that has opened doors in my journey as an activist. The more that I practice sitting in nature and observing and reflecting and writing on its processes and its relevance to my own processes, the better I become at contextualizing my ideas in a form I can express. As an activist whose approach to making change is through spoken word, deepening my relationship with nature has helped me process and articulate my own experience. Such transparency is a very powerful way to get through to many people, and if not many, then profoundly deep with those who are most willing to engage.

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withinwithout.



7

bodylandscape.



26

timecircle.



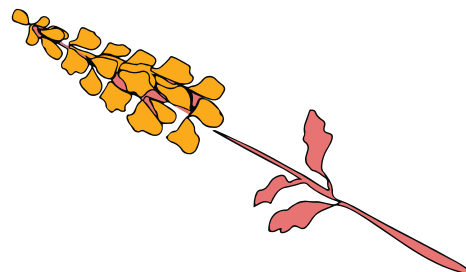
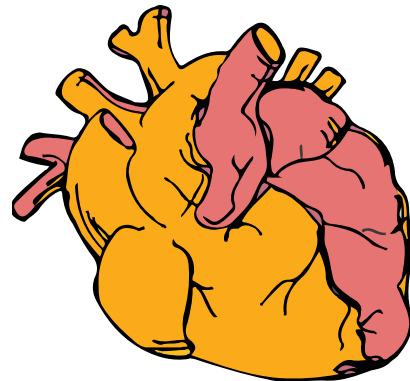
40

one.



48

Appendix B: Line Sketches



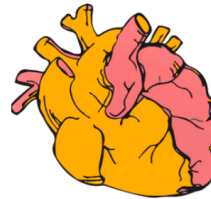
APPENDIX C: Storytelling

Kayla Carrington

Put it in the box that's mine, check it off.
Let me get lost inside of
wire framed thoughts.
I wake up on rocks
under a blue duvet with grey dots.
I knew I couldn't stay long, yet
I couldn't find a thing wrong with
the blue on the blanket or the hue of the 'clouds,' so
I saw no reason to leave now.
Breathe in,
breathe—"Ow!"
I couldn't see beneath me, just the dreams far out
I couldn't see the screams because they only made a sound
I couldn't see the bleeding till the blanket turned brown.
~ Undetected Discomfort

Each Step In.

I lay my heart out in the cold
hoping it will dry.
"It's my only option," I say
"I have to try."
Three days go by and I'm inside
heartless.
I've set aside
darkness
to be a resting carcass
ingesting catharsis.



Sweetheart,
I'm weak in parts
I speak in scars
my technique's been barred
my work week's gone bleak
my cheeks taste antique
I critique my physique
till I remember
the outside.
and how dry now
my heart is.
I try it on,
it's cold.
I try again,
~ Bold

Kayla Carrington

"It's not my place," she went on.
Her voice caught in the wind
carried so quickly away from her lips
away from the women that stood before her
so that soon
it was as if she said nothing,
as if she touched no one,
as if she were no where
near
home.

~ Disquiet

I douse myself in lavender
hoping I too
can show that I am thriving.
A fragrance that attracts.
A desire amongst the birds and bees,
deciduous like my sporadic sadness
intercepted with springtime perfection.
Every now and then,
I bloom.
I am the moon, too
I have phases
applicable only to the way I am perceived,
not to the way that I am.
I am myself, doused in lavender.



Each Step In.

Suddenly.
The song of the sun
was filling them up
as quickly
as it had departed.
They started to dance,
their hands amongst the plants,

nothing.

was static.

APPENDIX D: Rhyming

Each Step In.

Kayla Carrington

They say that actions speak louder than words, yet.
I am left wishing that my choosing no meat
could speak
the image
of a cow
getting beat.

That it could rhyme and riff and rally on stage,
that it could say, "Hey, take action.
Don't stand back. Don't disengage."

That it were easier to explain the why behind the what—
Why do I get angry anxious sad and afraid?
What am I doing when I purchase free trade?
How do I explain the farmers underpaid?
How do I use emotion as a teaching aid?
and not another crusade.

Passage.

Experienced by us all. Us, we—
rock, root, shell, ship, tree,
what is your conception of Me?
How does it feel?
to be licked by water
to be taken by the wind
to lay eggs to a daughter
to live just around the bend
just out there enough
in the cold aired bluff
where below there is stuff we don't know.
We *know* there are feelings even science can't show,
signs some things will go,
trying to let the people know that
Trying is something to be proud of.

Fall behind and you can pick it from the ground up.
What is time when you're restricted to the now, "but,
what's that flying through the air?"
Looks like a giant, "I don't care!"
filling my lungs up with despair
and pollution. New solution—
we *Each Step In*
to this here revolution.