The Legibilities of Mood Work

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Abstract *This essay explores how mood marshals bodies, objects, technologies, sensations and flights of fantasy to articulate the labour of living. For us, mood is a contact zone for the strange and prolific coexistence of self and world, through which we sense out what is actual and potential in an empirical context. We refer to this labour of sensing out as mood work, which is both a habit and an emerging sense of form, often inchoate and yet pronounced in practices, socialities, scenes, social circles, events, and landscapes. Mood works are not easily read, but they are legible and, as such, they can be sensed out and followed. Through ethnographic writing, we explore legibilities of mood work at two spatiotemporal sites, the United States of the 1950s, when action and attachment in everyday life magnetised around the object of the good life, and Germany in the early twenty-first century, where domestic spheres were newly animated by the technoscientific promise of renewable energy development. In mapping legibilities of mood work at these sites, we consider how writing itself is a form of mood work, a method of attending and composing that pulls ethnographer and audience into the shared sensing out of worlds.*

Keywords the good life, ethnography, worlding, technoscience, energy, matter, everyday life

Mood is a contact zone for the strange and prolific coexistence of sense and world. An orientation alert to something already set in motion, it is a mundane register of labours to sense out what is actual and potential in an historical moment or a situation.[1] Mood work marshals bodies, objects, technologies, sensations and flights of fancy into forms of partial coherence. Its legibilities are inchoate and yet pronounced in practices, socialities, scenes, social circles, events, and landscapes. Here we attend to these legibilities themselves as emergent forms, or breaking events. They press, promise, enfold, and ponder worlds being thrown together.

Our ethnographic approach follows mood work's legibilities in two case studies: the United States of the 1950s and Germany in the early twenty-first century. These sites serve as catchments of compositional modes of being in the world. Or, in other words, we take the ethnographic objects of these case studies to be experiences/experiments[2] of and in self and society that are attuned to the contingent sensory-aesthetic-concrete materials at hand.[3] We take the self, experience, and the social itself as kinds of circulation, as a motion of re-associations and reassembling,[4] as nodes of impact, and as engines of ordinary initiation. With Derek McCormack, we foreground experience/experiment as a 'milieu through [which] new refrains might

1. Lauren Berlant, 'Intuitionists: History and the Affective Event', *American Literary History*, 20 (2008): 845-860; Kathleen Stewart, 'Atmospheric Attunements', *Environment and Planning D, Society and Space*, 29, 3 (2011): 445-453.

2. Derek McCormack, 'Thinking in Transition: the Affirmative Refrain of Experience/Experiment', (hereafter cited in text as Thinking in Transition), in B. Anderson and P. Harrison (eds), *Taking place: Non-representational theories and geography*, Surrey, Ashgate, 2010, pp201-220.

3. Kathleen Stewart, 'New England Red', (hereafter cited in text as New England Red), in P. Vannini (ed), *Non-Representational Methodologies*, New York, Routledge, 2014.

4. Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

 DOI:10.3898/NEWF.82.07.2014

emerge' (Thinking in Transition, p217), attending to emergent patterns in everyday life and their poetic force.

We approach our two cases, then, with an experimental openness to what might be happening and to what could happen. We also approach them as lived experiments in themselves, as experiences that draw their energy of openness to the world precisely through their intensely affective-material rooting in the mundane. In the United States in the 1950s, the mood work of the good life leant texture, tone and sensuous design to the labours of ordinary living and coalesced into energies and trajectories that modelled a life by enacting it in minutely designed systems of living. As contemporary Germans negotiate a transition to renewable energy sources and environmental governance, the mood work of keeping house enfolds novel materials into mundane infrastructures for everyday living, where promise lies in a well-kept home, and, by extension, in a well-kept life. Each of these cases of mood work is a singular affective-material circuit of reaction to the twisting, cross-cutting forces of modernity, technoscientific promise, and precarity.[5] Each has energetics that surge, settle or deflate, inspire or depress. Each establishes trajectories through landscapes of living even while existing as a diffusion across the field of incommensurate objects and bodies of all kinds (human bodies, bodies of thought, bodies of rhetoric).

For us, mood work is a way of considering how a community throws itself together not through identity categories or a representational order but more directly and mundanely through common orientations to breaking forces and events and their catchment areas. Neither subjective nor objective, mood work displaces conceptual hierarchies between the big (important) and small (off-register, invisible, everyday) as it hits its mark in a middle range[6] of forces, lending colour[7] or tone to social and material forms. It is both an event and an endurance, both a distribution across a field of subjects, objects, orientations, agencies, boundaries and institutionalised kernels of force or ideology and a fine point of affective sense that takes root in subjects to become the small and strangely shared lines of a life.

We also approach mood work as an attention and an attachment to form, its flourishing and its maintenance. Mood work takes shape as a form that is similarly used or co-recognised between agents in a shared scene, a sense that something is happening and an attachment, however inchoate, to sensing out what that something is. The world composed comes apart all the time and at the same time something is (always) coming, and coming together. In an onrushing present where form is continually exposed, this process of sensing out gives rise to a feeling of resonance that locates its constituents in a real through which shifting social relations are contingently tethered.

Mood work creates moments of interiority and co-noticing as feelings are folded inward and outward around persistent and emergent objects of attention and attachment. As such, mood works recall Karen Barad's concept of the apparatus; they are 'specific material reconfigurings of the world that

5. Kathleen Stewart, 'Precarity's Forms', *Cultural Anthropology*, 27, 3 (2012): 518-525. http://doi.org/vz5

6. George E. Marcus, *Ethnography Through Thick And Thin*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1998.

7. Rita Felski and Susan Fraiman, 'Introduction', in *New Literary History*, 43 (2012): v-xii. http://doi.org/vzm ; http://doi.org/vzn

do not merely emerge in time but iteratively reconfigure spacetimematter as part of the ongoing dynamism of becoming'.[8] The immanent and eminent performance[9] of mood work generates its own spheres of influence. The force/pressure exerted by a genre of mood work is a resource for future iterations of form and expressivity.

A close ethnographic tracing of mood works - their movements, energies and forms - is a method of conceptualising the compositionality of social worlds and modes of being in the world. Ethnography attends to mood work's taking-place, foregrounding the 'inconsequentialities'[10] of a scene that may become visible as a form exposed, a reality effect through which people locate themselves in a real. In tacking between the rhythms, tones, and conceptual refrains of a life's registers, mood work opens onto the circulations and folds of history or the social.

The mood works with which we write here are diffuse and affecting objects of analysis that challenge us to find adequate ways to approach them, to score over their own refrains,[11] or to outline their contours on a horizon or in an expanse of detritus. We use the metaphor of *legibility* as a means of approaching their opaque and diffuse yet palpable qualities. In typography, legibility refers to type's capacity to be identified or recognised *as* type, whereas readability refers to a quality of visual comfort, an ease of reading. Mood works are not easily read, but they can be sensed out and followed. The contours of their influence can be spied in everyday scenes of their intensification or dispersal, in the lines of enclosure or exclusion they establish, in their accidental side steps, blockages, quick jumps or unexpected consequences. The effort to describe them requires an attunement to the ambient and the atmospheric, to what is throwing together and what is falling apart in lived compositions being pieced together out of words, sensibilities, matter, and tones.[12]

Our engagement with mood work attends to the liveness of matter more than the naming of emotions. In so doing, we create openings onto phenomena and their emergent potentiality rather than seeking to fit disparate and amorphous materials into normative expectations. As ethnographers, we too are performing mood work, locating ourselves in a real at the moment that we observe or recount mood work in others and fashioning our own engagement through a close, slow appreciation of the forms taking place in the scenes we describe and evoke. Writing to approach the material-semiosis of moods as such is an effort to describe what is gesturing into, or out of, or around form.

THE GOOD LIFE

Lives lived in a mood work's compositions are attuned to a world's modes of initiation, its responsibilities, its energetics of buoyancy, betrayal, slippage and failure. People float on their backs down a river of force or they shake

8. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2007, p142. http://doi.org/vz6

9. David P. Terry and Sarah Vartabedian, 'Alone But Together: Eminent Performance on the Appalachian Trail', *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 33, 4 (2013): 344-360. http://doi.org/vz7

10. Roland Barthes, *Incidents*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992, p7.

11. Kathleen Stewart, 'Refrains', in M. Greg and G. Seigworth (eds), *The Affect Theory Reader*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2010, pp339-353.

12. Kathleen Stewart, 'Tactile Compositions', in P. Harvey and E. Casella (eds), *Objects and Materials*, London, Routledge, 2013, pp775-810.

under the weight. They gesture at participation, carry secrets of passing and failing, and co-recognise pleasures and irritants with others.[13]

My partner, Ronn, and I were both born in 1953 to parents who were on the same blossoming path of the good life in the US. They were all white, heterosexual, of a predominant ethnic group in their regions, becoming middle class, culturally Christian, and on the east coast (his in the south, mine in New England). Their memories, stories, and the left-behind traces of materialities and practices suggest that the good life was a form of mood work lodged in mundane bodily comportments and objects in daily use. Here I speculatively draw the lines of the good life not as an overdetermined representation but as an ontological hinge that changed the nature of subjects and objects for a while. I approach it through the literal matter of its mood work - a material semiotics[14] at work in tales told to children, the look and touch of bodies, the built environment, the tracks of long term plans laid tentatively or with a vengeance, a circulating sensory aesthetics, the forms of pain and pleasure.

I had the singular insight of a child's angle on what seemed to be happening. Details spied here and there. An inattention as much as an attention, though it didn't seem so at the time. From this, there are some things I know. I know that our parents and their friends suffered childhoods marred by hunger and the likes of drunken rages and abuse, emotional frailty and dysfunction, abandonment, tragic deaths, and what was remembered as the dour mean-spiritedness of some grandmothers, some great aunts and a step mother. I know that they had a hardness of character coupled with the dogged buoyancy of their projects. That terrible things shocked them deeply not because the terrible was a surprise but because it was a crushing return. I know that there was anxiety, depression, rage. That they could explode and that they knew how to let off steam. That my mother wore California cool pedal pushers and doodled gorgeous bombshell women on scraps of paper when she was talking on the phone. That they never stopped using grocery bags to line trashcans instead of buying actual trash bags that fit. And that they made their beds carefully the minute they stepped out of them in the morning. That mood habits remained like a shell in their bodies and orientations as they aged. That they clung to them as small spheres of influence carved out of palpable alternatives of precarity or worse.

I know that our parents had been adults from a young age. That Clyde (I knew him as Pop) and Helen met at eighteen working at the Woolworths in Winston Salem (she on the candy counter, he in purchasing). That Helen was supporting her parents who were not known for their generosity of spirit. That Pop was living at the YMCA. That he had lost his mother as a baby and had been raised by a grandmother, caring for her until she died. That he then lived with his father, his step-mother, and their children briefly until his father died when he was sixteen. That an uncle then dropped him off at a junior college and said goodbye. Pop and Helen married young and had

13. Kathleen Stewart, 'A Life, A List, A Line', in Nicholas Long and Henrietta Moore (eds), *The Social Life of Achievement*, London, Berghahn, 2013.

14. Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

a baby before he shipped off to World War II. They built a tiny house in the country out of salvaged materials before he was called back to Korea.

I know that my mother, Claire, came from a long line of stern, competent, storytelling, fun-loving women and a line of men who drank. That her mother, Bea, had worked in the mills since she was a child. That Bea slept with a board under her bed to protect herself from her husband, made all her kids' clothes, helped them sneak out to go to dances, fed the family from the garden, cleaned houses for extra money. She'd say, 'Don't tell anyone we only had potato soup for supper'. By the time she was ten my mother was driving the farm truck. She went to a small catholic women's college in Vermont on a basketball scholarship, worked in a chemistry lab in Boston, taught at a boarding school in the Berkshires. She and her sisters lived all their lives with a horror of work-horses. They had secrets. They stuck together in a world they made in their town, always at walking distance from one another.

I know that my father, Frank, hated his mother, who worked in the mills, and never spoke to her in the forty years she lived after his father died of an aneurism. I never once saw her act like a grandmother. My grandfather was a milkman at Glennie's Dairy along with all of his brothers. He would stop in to have a cup of tea with my mother. Sometimes they would quit work early to play cards with the milk money they had collected. I know that my father got an associate degree in agriculture on the GI bill. That he dreamed of farming all his life. That he became a milk inspector in Vermont, carrying a leather satchel full of litmus paper and small glass bottles from farm to farm, and that he clung to the outlines of the dairy industry as it morphed and collapsed leaving him in bottling sales.

The story of our parents' lives (and our own, too) is a speculative account of a social-material-technological vortex that filled lives in with matter, sense, and sheer detail. Publicly circulating refrains wore into ruts for living, set in motion a range of experiments, etched forces into objects, simultaneously occluded events and forced them into view, and erupted in extreme trajectories such as the racist violence around schooling in the 1960s. The forms those lives took included life with gadgets and the cushioning of houses, the romance of popular culture, a landscape transmogrified from farms and agribusiness to strip malls and big box stores, a sense of accumulation and complexity.

The good life is almost preternaturally imagined as an overdetermined (and under-described) effect of a long-term economic boom tied to a military-industrial complex, the build-up of infrastructure, class mobilities, the hard-wiring of racial exclusion, a social service state, the dream house, marketing, suburban development and a national popular culture that became a flood of entertainment, distinction, thrill, commerce, and absorption. Distributed across a vast field of forms and forces the good life became opaquely legible as a sense of a clearing articulated with a world at large.[15] Politics was robust and close at hand, and experienced in common with a 'we' who watched transformative world events and sitcoms on the three networks. The world

15. Ben Anderson, 'Affective atmospheres', *Emotion, Space and Society*, 2 (2009): 77-81. http://doi.org/b7x84w

had become something to see. A life had become something to have. A hinge had opened between a suddenly detailed and sensory private life and some sort of world at large you taught your children about and travelled out into. Circuits of objects, sensory aesthetics, and the suddenly middle-class worlding labours of education, travel, and service provided lines of living out what was happening in the world. The good life was the elaborate design of a newly private and everyday life newly sparking with relation to a big world. This relation was literally launched and buoyed in systems of consumption, care, defence and repair. It literally took place in mood works of vigilance, task-completion, an aesthetic registering and the pleasure of being part of something.

Ronn and I came along in the sunrise of our parents' good life. What we have in common is our parents' identical silver-rimmed glass ashtrays, the knick-knacks that sat on mirrored shelves in the living rooms they never used, and our own transistor radios, the lyrics we memorised with our siblings and in high school bands (Summer in the City, Wild Thing, L'il Red Riding Hood, Paint it Black, The Leader of the Pack, Poor Side of Town, When a Man Loves a Woman). We were both at the New York World's Fair in 1964 (Belgian waffles, the dinosaur exhibit, the machines of the future) and the Montreal World's fair in 1967. (It could be that we stayed at the same hotel with the pool in the basement whose walls were painted top to bottom with under-the-sea murals that by today's standards of the built environment look quite amateur and half-hearted. It could be that we were swimming at the same time, cannon-balling each other even).

The idiosyncratic details I can recite are not just personal residues but lines of self-world composition.[16] The good life was life charged with emergence and performativity. Its legibilities were not just representations but actual, mundane forms of attention, neglect, pleasure, care, judgment, fear, responsibility or renunciation. Private spheres of living hung together like clusters of bubbles. Tips for living circulated. Scenes of pleasure floated by. Scaffolding for living was pieced together, recognised by others, and emulated in the daily mood work of creation and initiation, maintenance and repair, and the occasional re-start. People set about pulling themselves into alignment with it not because they could see it in outline on the horizon but because they were directly impacted by its lines of force.

16. Kathleen Stewart, 'An Autoethnography of What Happens', in S. Jones, T. Adams and C. Ellis (eds), *Handbook of Autoethnography*, Walnut Creek CA, Left Coast Press, 2013, pp880-920.

Our parents said they only did what people did then, that they never thought about it, and that they had fun. They drank, smoked and ate red meat when they could afford it. They had parties with their friends and later travelled with them or played golf. I remember stories, jokes, laughing, violent fights between brothers at the end of the night (and at the ends of lives too). It was as if a dream of living had been kick-started under the sign of the ordinary. As if the dogged responsibility they identified as their *modus operandi* gathered itself out of a collective aspirational excess. Every night they listened to the nightly news.

A mood work already set in motion was tempered, coloured, made tonal and not entirely contained by the enclosures of the couple, the family, sexuality, the dream house, the card party, race, the swell of a neighbourhood, self-help, the cult of domesticity, gender tweaked with self-importance, exercise, the science of nutrition, European styles of food and dress, the palpability of communities of all kinds, the smell of newness, daydreams, plastics, electronics, race and class bubbling up into a series of somethings that felt like something, music and dancing. The good life was a refrain on the airwaves, a scene on screens and in magazines, a forward-thinking gesture. It both washed over people and lingered in the form of a life-long mood, however multiple and fractured.

In our households things were regular, structured, established through judgment, and held in common with others. A phone call during dinner got the same response 'I'm sorry. We're having dinner. Could I have her/him call you back?' There was spaghetti day. There was laundry day. There was vacuuming day. On shopping day our mothers lined us up and marched us off to the supermarket. The winter clothes went into cedar chests for storage; good winter coats and dresses went into storage at the dry cleaners. Family dinners were tense with the effort to get the meat, potatoes, and one green and one yellow vegetable cooked and on the table at the same time. There was a week of spring-cleaning every year. There were family vacations at the beach or at little lakes, rowboats, clam digging, the women on chaise lounges, the intimacy of those bathing suits.

The dream house promised all the details of habit and mood. Pop and Helen built theirs in 1952 when they had been married for 11 years and had a ten-year-old son. It had seven closets. They turned the back door foyer into a pantry; at the far end of that they added an unheated closet they called the root cellar. Later, they converted the breezeway and garage into a den and office for their manufacturer's representative business. There were drapes on all the windows and thin gauzy white curtains that were kept pulled across the glass, softening the view.

Character, deliberation, and the details of care for people and things were aspirations. Pop worked eighty-hour weeks, much of it on the road. An unscrupulous business partner took advantage of him early on; Pop stuck to the contract he had signed, paying out nearly half his income to this guy for decades. He took Ronn with him on business trips to Boston or Washington D.C. to visit museums and walk the Freedom Trail. For his sons' teenage years, he installed a pool table in the basement to keep them and their friends close to home. Pop and Helen taught them manners: to call all adults Mr and Mrs, to answer yes, sir and yes, mam, to always open a woman's car door, to tell your sweetheart you love her everyday. Helen kept the books. She knew where every bill and receipt was in a bank of metal filing cabinets that filled a long wall of the office. She was tough, smart and generous to a fault, giving money, time, counselling, labour (twelve-hour days at the church making candles,

chicken pies, barbecue). To cool down the car in the summer she would open all the windows and the sunroof for exactly one minute, then turn on the air conditioning on high. If there was such a thing as a professional packer, Helen would have been the queen of the industry; she could fit out a small suitcase with a week's clothes and reading and her own carefully inventoried kits for shaving, mending, shoe-shining and smoking. When Ronn (the baby) left for college she bought Jimmie Hendrix and Led Zeppelin records at the used record store so she could play them in the house.

By the time Helen died after 61 years of marriage, Pop's house had become an infrastructure of matter and practice, standing upright like a model life. The same can-opener mounted on the kitchen wall for forty years, a bottle-opener in the pantry you clamped the bottle onto and then pulled a lever over in one smooth motion that plunged the corkscrew down and pulled out the cork. A tool to core tomatoes, another for strawberries. A pan for poaching eggs. Soup bowls with silver rims that had to be washed by hand with every use. Tiny bowls for the potato chips that occasionally replaced the oyster crackers with the soup at lunch. He kept an inventory, revised monthly, of the food stocked in his freezer in the basement: barbecue sauce (1), barbecue (4), marinara sauce (1), chilli beans (1), chicken broth with chicken (5 quarts), chicken broth pints (8), yellow squash (2), green peppers (1), mixed greens (17), vegetable soup (2), chicken and vegetable soup (14), turnips (4), chicken and pasta soup (9), deer sausage (1), deer steak (2), chicken legs, long (10), chicken legs, short (8), deer steaks ground (1), pork ribs (2), sirloin steaks (1), sweet potatoes (22), biscuits (30), rolls (I box), chicken and broth (5), sugar cake (1), turkey and broth (3), spaghetti sauce (27).

The good life was a machine set in motion, an energetics pulled into muscle and mind. It had a life of its own. It took sharp, firm forms in labours of living. It created a circuit, jumping from matter to metaphor, and people worked to find their own legibilities in its partial shade from life's harsh glare.

Even as a very old man Pop got up in the dark at 6am, got dressed and made his bed with military corners, and walked two miles, carrying newspapers from the curb to the door at each house he passed, and then veering out into the golf course. He worked until the end. He said it gave him a reason to put his two feet on the floor every morning. He was Head Usher at the church for 40 years and famous for his phone calls to every member on their birthdays. For decades he gave people he met little metal crosses he mail-ordered by the thousands. He always carried one in his pocket. One day in his last months he thought he lost the one he was carrying. He blamed himself. He looked for it for hours. He said he had a drawer full of them but it bothered him that he had been so careless, so stupid. The next day he found it.

My mother had projects. She furnished the house with antiques bought for two dollars a piece at barn sales in Vermont and New Hampshire and refinished in the driveway. She made lamps and lampshades for everyone she knew because she hated the cold illumination of overhead lighting.

She painted scenes on boxes and baskets, stools and dressers. She knitted comforters for the kids and the grandkids. She hung the laundry in the yard, pulling it off the line covered with ice in the winter. She wrote Christmas cards with long letters to old neighbours and friends and travelled to see them when she could. She raised us Catholic, led the girl scout troop, modelled for charities, observed Lent, prayed on her knees every night, deposited her whole paycheck in a college fund, set us onto our Saturday chores or took us on camping trips, setting up tents in the rain. When we were four surly teenagers, she got season's ski passes and got us up at 6am every blustery winter Saturday and Sunday to drive to Pat's Peak in New Hampshire. Sometimes we would catch her in a strange shaking posture when she was coming down the stairs, or standing in a corner in an upstairs bedroom. We all watched her.

My father loved her and her mother, Bea, cooked Sunday dinner for them both, still wanted to cut up my meat for me when I visited as an adult. With the kids, he had favourites. He had beautiful hands. I was his sympathetic ear; in pictures I am literally leaning over in his direction. Listing toward him. He was anxious; my mother saw him as off kilter. She would leave him out of her orbit of sparking characters and events. He watched her every move. He made failed gestures. He scraped the house and repainted it section by section. He brought home strange offerings (stolen salt shakers from a diner, big bags of samples of non-dairy creamer from his sales calls). When he needed to lose weight he went on a cottage cheese and tomato diet, eating nothing else until his body shrank. He would take one dose of random pills (an antibiotic, one of my mother's steroids) to see if it made him feel better. Any gifts he ever gave his kids or grandkids were shockingly cheap and off the mark. A little plastic pin he found remaindered at the drug store. A small stuffed animal with a logo he got from the car wash.

The mood work of the good life was atmospheric and ambient but also intensely personal and not easily shed or replaced. It was what put people into circulation in their worlds. What inscribed individual bodies, bodies of desire, and bodies of social-material-technological design as the material-semiosis of life itself. It culled attention to forms of living and magnetised subjects to the work of sensing out what was, or what could be, emergent in objects, scenes of interiority, characters and landscapes. It suspended them in the thrall of a real, a perpetual motion machine. With an energetics that could surge or deflate, inspire or depress, it settled on bodies as the weight of the world. It was the company and substance of a life, the impetus for a common life, and also, therefore a restricted legibility of the subject and the world. And it abandoned people.

It had accumulated in the bodies and lives of our parents in such a way that people gravitated around them. They were initiating forces in circles of friends, neighbourhoods, extended families, towns, churches. They all had the habit and ease of getting something going. My father had been the captain of the town football team. Everyone called him Punky. He was funny

at parties. He talked to people on the street. His blue eyes sparkled. He cut down trees and took down dangerous cliffs with his neighbour buddies. My mother took an impersonal pleasure in people and what came out of their mouths. People called her, stopped to talk to her on the street. At wakes she held court in a corner surrounded by a line of people who wanted to speak to her. She hosted the extended family Christmas parties. When she bought a cabin in New Hampshire others turned their eyes in that direction. When she moved to assisted living the old ladies turned their eyes again. Clyde excelled at sports and coached Basketball for years. Helen was sharp and generous to a fault. Stray women from the community kept her on the phone for long stretches to listen to their complaints. She engineered a fellowship hall at their church, raised the money, and drew up the architectural plans herself. The adult Sunday school class she and Pop started became the core social club of a generation of people for the next fifty years.

They were inspired by the concrete metaphors of a borrowed way of life, propelled by an imported energetics, at home in an infrastructure that threw itself together around them. Pop and Helen accumulated plaques on the walls of their house that were humbly, mundanely inspirational: 'the opinions expressed by the husband in this establishment are not necessarily those of the management'; 'it's not the mountains ahead that wear you down, it's the grain of sand in your shoe'. My mother had the Irish Blessing on the wall in the kitchen and on her dresser, just above the drawer full of jewellery inherited and picked up as souvenirs, was a milky white statue of the Virgin Mary. When the lights went out each night it shone with a bluish hue for just a few minutes.

A dispersed and diffuse field of emergent effects had coalesced into a worlding, life-constituting affective-material trajectory. For those pulled into alignment with it, its scenes, characters, and objects shone with the legibilities of mood work. It winked a colloquial promise of enclosures for living that resonated with the suggestion of something more.

ENVIRONMENTAL MOODS

Attention to mood opens up the everyday stuff of which lives are made in the midst of world-historical events, imploding narratives of how life 'is' or 'was' in a particular location into a complex of objects and attachments formed through the repetitive rhythms of everyday life. To engage these objects is not to jettison the political, but rather to consider the affective basis of attachments and the possibility that mundane attachments also constitute a politics worth engaging. In the motions of ordinary life, forms coalesce, narrated below in the form of windows, the angle of the window at a tilt, the cellar, the cleaning products, or light bulbs. These forms are like tuning forks, magnets for attention and activity. When something comes up, it's through them that feelings take shape.

In what follows, mood work opens onto everyday life in the midst of the *Energiewende*, Germany's nationwide 'energy turn' from nuclear power to renewable energy sources. This highly-mediatised moment in German politics has opened a space to dream of a better life enabled by technoscience but unfettered by the ills of modernity and their consequences. For the advocates of the transition, zero-sum living offers a means of phytoremediation, cleansing a landscape made toxic by modern development. Utopian hopes and aspirations hinge on the figure of the village, and specifically the figure of the sustainable village. With the decentralisation of the grid, renewable energy advocates hoped that rural-dwellers would be increasingly enfranchised in public life because their communities would be producing their own energy. Until recently,[17] however, there has been little discussion about the particularities of village life, and how these intersect with renewable energy initiatives.

17. Dorle Dracklé and Werner Krauss, 'The Decarbonization of Democracy', a talk given at the Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Chicago, Illinois, 20/11/2013.

I have observed that Germans live out the energy transition in everyday acts of making life and making do that exert political force even if they are not framed or articulated in political terms. In ordinary settings, aspects of the renewable energy transition are pulled into a real alongside other objects and concepts that may seem unrelated to the technopolitical moments, yet these shifting assemblages set the conditions of possibility for political feeling in a common place.

My observations are drawn from repeated visits over a period of thirteen years (including a year of continuous fieldwork from 2010 to 2011) to Dobbe, a village located in the region of East Frisia between the North Sea and the Ems River. Predominantly rural and prone to strong North Sea winds, East Frisia was one of the earliest sites of experimentation with wind turbine installation. In the late 1990s, the greater municipality of which Dobbe is a part licensed the installation of a wind park on the south side of the village. When I first arrived there, wind was the big thing and had been for a decade, but after the turn of the new century, solar power happened too. When I returned to Dobbe in 2010 after a three-year absence, every neighbourhood was covered in the dull glitter of blue-black photovoltaic. Within months, construction began on a biogas processing plant while cattle pastures and rapeseed fields transformed into test sites for bio fuel corn, a monoculture in formation that crowded in on the villagers from the edges of town.

While these projects were billed as the provenance of area residents, I found that Dobbeners felt that the area's development was largely out of their hands. Few farmed bio fuel crops or invested large sums in the area wind park, and thus they had little say in what went on. Planning meetings were reported in newspapers after the fact. Few were notified or involved unless they were set to invest, or unless their lands were to be affected by the various projects on the drawing board. In other words, Dobbe's citizens stood on the sidelines of the projects of which they were billed to be a part. At the same time, they fashioned infrastructures for everyday life from the novel technoscientific materials in their midst. There were ears of corn that children pulled the

stalks off at the test sites while walking the dog, the laughter of adults playing hide and seek between the bases of wind turbines, and the women who spoke of their well-being in energy metaphors. Moods spun out of situations with unpredictable beginnings and endings. Some lasted only an instant; others continued to unfold. Attitudes toward the energy transition cropped up in unexpected places, linked to materials from other times. People and things came together in scenes, arcing out a life through repetition and the accretion of sensory experiences around the village. In the 'phatic'[18] mood work of everyday life, seemingly disinterested villagers performed a citizen's labour of sensing out a political moment and dwelling in it. The infrastructures they fashioned provided the affective and social registers through which they made sense of the political processes and systems in which they were entangled.

18. Julia Elyachar, 'Phatic labor, infrastructure, and the question of empowerment in Cairo', *American Ethnologist*, 27, 3 (2011): 452-464.

More felt than spoken, these emergent forms compel modes of analysis that account for their lived materiality, their constituents and their impact. Mood work points to everyday ways of making life in a political moment that may one day be remembered in nostalgic tones, like cult consumer goods from a formerly divided Germany, or stories of post-war hardships. Below I foreground female villagers who were largely excluded from the business side of renewable energy projects because planning decisions were, at least publicly, left to a handful of (mostly male) experts and landowners. The situations described below tack in between mundane objects and the relations that inhere in them, tracing the connections through which people come into form and a moment of being-together is sensed out. They open onto other temporalities beyond the present moment or popular conceptions of history, tapping extant lifeways in response to emerging incitements, or recombining social forms in the sensing-out of something new. In each situation, the vicissitudes of zero-sum living thrum in the midst of a transformation that is well underway, yet far from certain.

PRO-WIN

One fall morning Regina and I got to talking about keeping house. Part of keeping house in the village is showing that you know the things that you're supposed to do even if you never do them. The worst, she said, was *Fenster Putzen*, window cleaning - so *ätzend*! So awful! 'All these women are always talking about the best way to clean their windows, but for whom?' And why?

Some years later, we were both part of a Friday breakfast circle. In East Frisia, people order themselves into groups that meet weekly or monthly, each time at a different person's home. These are circles or *Kreise* - breakfast circles, walking circles, wine circles, and tea circles, among others. The circle itself indexes the reciprocal exchange of the itinerant meetings, and the repetition of the meetings themselves provides a measure by which the stuff of everyday life is formed, lived out and explored in the use and perception of objects.

One Friday our group had a visit from a woman we called the Pro-Win

Tante (translated literally as 'aunt', but inflected like the North American word 'lady'), a saleswoman who went from home to home selling Pro-Win cleaning products like cosmetics. In addition to our usual group of five village mothers and me, another woman from the outskirts of town joined us to watch the demonstration. Four of the women around the table (including myself) had jobs outside the home, yet all of us were somehow also *Hausfrauen*, women of the house, charged with the task of being homemakers.

We sat in Hanna's eat-in kitchen, glassed in on one side like a greenhouse, sipping coffee and layering butter and salami and cucumber slices on Brötchen as Eva the Pro-Win Lady showed us her wares. First came the Alleskönner, the 'can-all' all-purpose cleaner, which Hanna demonstrated on the tile floor at Eva's request. 'You can put a little bit of that in a plate and no bugs will bother you when you sit outdoors in the summer', contributed Maike, who was already a regular customer. Then came the stainless steel cleaner, which Eva rubbed onto the face of Hanna's stainless steel oven. We all agreed it looked much better. Eva treated the cabinets with a cleaning paste and we crowded around the cabinets to admire our reflections on the shiny surface. Then she brandished a toilet brush that looked like a giant lever, with different bristles that targeted different areas of the toilet bowl. 'Have you ever seen something like this before?' Eva asked me, entreating me to grasp its glossy black plastic handle. And there was a window cleaning brush for the windows of Hanna's winter garden, a tall order to clean without such special equipment. At the end, Eva passed out a form on which everyone could enter their orders and everyone did, except for Maike (who'd already bought something that month) and me (a renter and student who had no children, I noted to myself). Regina and Angela went in together on the 30-Euro bottle of Alleskönner. The price was too steep to pay alone, but they'd already had good luck with the Orange Power stain remover that Eva demonstrated the last time she'd come. Every time Regina and Angela and I came together in the weeks that followed, they planned when they would swap over the Alleskönner, reminding me of how my grandmother and her friends alternated cookie duty after Sunday school.

When Regina talks about the awfulness of *Fenster Putzen*, she's also and ultimately talking about mood work. More specifically, she's talking about the labour of sensing out what is and isn't, and what works and what doesn't in domestic dreaming that is simultaneously a process of making knowledge and making do. Likewise, our carnival of cleaning products was like a postcard from the *Wirtschaftswunder,* the German economic miracle of the 1950s, where commodities offer the promise of a better life, or a scaled-down version of the *Energiewende,* offering a better, more eco-friendly life aligned with capitalist technoscience. The sense of aspiration that animates the breakfast circle doesn't stem from wounded attachment or a desire to 'fit in' as much as it coasts on the promise of a yet-to-be-fulfilled life. Even if a mood only envelops one person, mood work is always intersubjective, distributed across multiple

things in a space of conjuncture. Moods are made from the translation of movement across contiguous material spaces, whether virtual or physical.

The breakfast circle shows how a gathering of people can perform mood work in common: the metronomic preparation and consumption of foodstuffs, the crowding around the cabinets, the laughter at the sight of Hanna wielding a mop and a capful of Alleskönner, the fifteen Euros that buys you a half a bottle of woefully overpriced, all-natural household cleaner. All trace an infrastructure through which the materials of everyday life, born of strange social, political, and economic couplings, are pulled into a real. All combine in the formation of a mood that spins things into worlds. There are no authentic moods, but moods can give rise to feelings of authenticity or resonance, of being 'in' something that rallies the senses around it and gives rise to worlds in which people have a stake. The Pro-Win demonstration begat what Levinas called enjoyment:[19] sinking in to products and their promises, a parade of novelties metered by the familiar scraping of knives across breakfast rolls and the clinking of teacups on porcelain. The enjoyment can chip and fragment later, when the time comes to actually clean the windows, to think about who has and hasn't cleaned their own and whether they're looking at yours, too.

19. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Pittsburg, Dusquesne University Press, 1969; see also Alphonso Lingis, *The Imperative*, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1998.

AUF KIPP

Hanna's window wall was the latest iteration of the big picture windows that have dominated residential construction in Ostfriesland since the 1950s. In Ostfriesland, the windows tended to be square, with single panes and white trim that set them apart from the red bricks that make up the façade of every house in the village. The plastic, wrought iron, steel, lead, wood and aluminium that made up the windows tell a story of nation-building after the war, the economic miracle, and the regulations that nervous publics have enacted to ensure continued success. Energy conservation laws, born of the oil crisis of the 1970s and the greening of politics and industry, required that windows' insulation adhere to thickness standards to ensure minimal heat leakage. When the tabloid daily *Bild* asked future chancellor Angela Merkel what she most associated with the word 'Germany', she immediately replied, 'I think it's airtight windows [*dichte Fenster*]! No other land can build such airtight and lovely windows'.

In the village, as elsewhere in Germany, there was a grammar to using windows. You selected which way you'd like to open the window by the way you turned its hard white handle, which also allowed you to firmly lock the window in a certain position. Standard windows could be opened in at least two ways: back and forth like a door, or cracked at the top *auf Kipp*, at a tilt, for cooling and ventilation. You developed your own routines with the materials at hand.

During my first summer in Ostfriesland staying at Elfriede's house, for example, she told me to be sure that I opened all the windows in the house at least once a day, and to close them after ten minutes to keep the elements

from encroaching. When mould spots appeared behind a hallway chest of drawers, her first response was that we must not have keep the corridor properly ventilated; the bureau must have been pushed too far up against the wall, preventing air from moving around it. (A plumber eventually discovered the source of the mould: leaky pipes within the wall itself.) Elfriede's belief in ventilation is a near-universal tenet of German life. Once a professor of structural design told *Die Zeit* that perfectly airtight windows were risky because they permitted the growth of mould. It was, he contended, necessary to ventilate frequently to allow for the circulation of fresh air, as often as three times per day. The tighter the windows become, the more necessary it seemed to open them.

Opening and closing windows bent the space-time of historical narrative into pockets of sensuous engagement. Materials that emerged at different moments in time - energy savings incentives, weatherstrip, iron and steel and rubber from successive colonial and industrial periods, to name a few - converged in an everyday practice that located its constituents in a real. Such mood works were transversal, spanning disparate points in time, but they were also not unbounded. German window construction typically only offered a few degrees of freedom for everyday operation, and the gaze of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers from the street was similarly attuned to proper window-opening procedure. There was limited space to improvise without arousing attention, but the use of windows was nonetheless a means through which people extended themselves into a world. The unfolding of mood works are always immanent to those who experience them, and they are always under improvisation, transformed in the process of translation across multiple worlding and unworlding forms. This is not to say that mood works are devoid of power; all constellations of matter offer contingent degrees of freedom to their constituent parts. Rather, it is to say that mood works themselves are a sensuous practice of making that brings a contingent world to life.

OMA'S CELLAR

Most of the women from the breakfast circle live in tract housing around the village. Dobbe's earliest tract homes clustered on the west side of the sandy rise of glacial moraine that divided the moor to the east from the marshes to the west. They fanned out around angular roads between the hill and the small river that ran toward the lowlands and the Ems. Then came the land reclamation works that spanned four decades of the last century, spurred into action after the Second World War. As sea silt washed out of the pipelines and chutes and over the reeds and the bogs, cracking and crumbling into fields three meters above sea level, there was more room to expand. Living space expanded as well, built garages, laundry rooms and storage closets (*Abstellräume*) to store their preserves. Houses cropped up in a grid that recombined the village in a crazy-quilt pattern.

I first discovered the genre of the *Abstellraum* when Oma Paxtum died in 2000 and we went to her old house to sort through her things. We called her Oma Paxtum because she was Elfriede's mother and Paxtum was her village, located just a few kilometers from Dobbe. She had been living with Elfriede in Dobbe but checked back in at home every week or so, so upon entering the house it still felt more like a home than the storage depot it had slowly become, with pictures and crockery sticking out of the cabinets like stuffing from an old sofa. We came in the afternoon after her funeral as the sky was pinking in the winter light. Each grandchild took the things they wanted, and then we headed downstairs to help clean out the old cellar, which was the size of the kitchen.

At the foot of the rickety staircase was an *Abstellraum*. Several rows of floor-to-ceiling shelves deep, its footprint nearly as big as the kitchen upstairs, with one small window to the outside crammed up against the ceiling to let light inside. The shelves were lined with newspaper from the mid-1980s beneath jars of beets and jams and tomato preserves. The food piled up in stacks, each sorted according to season and use. In the very back corner sat a pile of potatoes behind a wooden crate, dusted with some kind of chemical preservative to keep them fresh. They were yet to fully decompose despite the fact that they clearly hadn't been touched in months or years. 'She lived through the Second World War', her grandson told me as we stared at the foodstuffs. 'She wanted to be ready if it ever happened again'.

Hauling the jars upstairs, we set up a makeshift assembly line, using a tool to loosen the jar's lids with a *POP* and dumping their contents with a *SPLUT* into a slop bucket. And so Oma's life cohered for us in its unworlding, in the dismantling of an unnoticed life's work. Each object was part of an invisible line of movement between the kitchen and the cellar, paths Oma had traced as she cored and canned the fruits, unbagging the grocery store cans and stacking them on the shelves, the newspapers that she cut up after reading them with Opa upstairs. The labour of everyday life thrummed through the cans and jars and the shelves themselves, in the preservative that kept the potatoes free of eyes.

The weirdness of emptying Oma's life's containers recalls Tim Morton's concept of environmentality,[20] where the form of a scene coheres in its exposure, in uncanny moments of dissolution or simply the realisation that there might be more to see. A mummy intact at the moment of its exhumation often dissolves upon exposure to air. Moments of exposure attune us to other ways of getting by than those that are codified in recorded history: the ways that a life pulls itself together in contractions of sentiment and force across sensuous objects.

20. Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2009.

Oma lived through the war and the West German *Wirtschaftswunder*, the birth of the Deutschmark and the Reunification. Her cellar tells a story of what it means to be increasingly flush, if not wealthy - flush with material things unheard of in previous decades, and flush with the expectation of material

things. Material things were a promise but also a threat. The possibility of more to gain also indicated more to lose. Successive regimes of colonisation and development articulated new forms of value and stakes of loss at the hands of any number of disasters. When Oma married Opa, there was no running water in Paxtum and folks grew their own food. After the war, they built a house with all the conveniences and as the years went by, groceries started coming from elsewhere, a plenty unheard of scant years before. The *Abstellraum* was a growing-in to history, a way of dwelling in a period of so-called economic promise and a bulwark against the threat of crisis.

As new households prepared for calamities yet to come, a politics took shape, worlded through new technologies and genres of homemaking. The genre of the *Abstellraum* is worlded anew through the energy transition, offering new solution to the old problem of how to order things people think they need to survive, and in turn begetting new things to worry about. Today Angela's *Abstellraum* has a digital gauge housed in a yellow plastic casing, ticking away each of the kilowatts that her home's solar panels deliver feed in to the grid. Contemporary *Abstellräume* contain not only supplies for use, but also waste-in-the-making, with containers for any or all the different classes of recyclables that villagers sort each day: plastic or aluminum packaging with a trademarked Green Dot, glass for recycling in town, glass for returning for the deposit, or old paper and newspaper. The romance of zero-sum living conjures order in an unruly world, like the shelves of Oma Paxtum's cellar, a dike against future floods. The *Abstellraum*'s materials align into a prosthetic for sensing out the world. Oma Paxtum's *Abstellraum* is a still life of Oma's own mood work. At the moment of its excavation and destruction, it was carried into the mood work of others, the sensing out of a life, its purpose and its significance in the stories people tell themselves about the way things are.

THE GRID

With the spread of sustainable development, villagers' senses extended through new materials like wind turbines and solar panels but also through other smaller-scale instruments of conservation like recycling bins and light switches. In Dobbe as elsewhere, uses tacked between need, propriety, and the constraints of the grid. Villagers learned to separate trash: there were different bins for different materials, and if you put cans in the paper by accident, the collectors wouldn't take your things. They weighed bins at the truck to ensure no one exceeded the weight limit. As much as the work of technicians or planners, trash sorting made and maintained the grid via intimate infrastructures that enfolded technoscientific materials in partial connection.

Something similar happened with light switches. Electricity came with a cost, so if I left a light on in an unused room, strangers would ask why. As I disciplined myself to follow a pattern of turning lights on and off, my thoughts inhered in the motion of switching. Everyday life was pulled into

a real, an arc of engagement that says 'this is who I am and what I do'. It's the same in Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, set in a city two countries and four-hundred and thirty kilometres from Dobbe. The titular character is a widow who supports her teenage son through afternoon prostitution. Dielman moves through her apartment in a predictable routine, flipping each light switch on and off in turn, but as she loses her grip on reality, she leaves some lights on, others always off. The lights are more than a sign that something is wrong; for onlookers, they *are* the something wrong, the affective fact of a future fate. Switching's form is exposed as the thing that held in a real; as the pattern disintegrates, she reels, grasping for new ways to sense out the world.

Something similar happened to me one morning in Dobbe when I walked into a sunlit hallway headed toward a staircase. As I walked toward the staircase, I opted not to flip the overhead light switch on because natural light was in abundance. But as I approached the first step down, the room was plunged into total darkness, as if someone had turned off the sun. I gripped the stair rail and watched as the room repeatedly became light again, then dark, then light once more, remembering after a moment that this was the moving shadow from the rotors of a neighbouring wind turbine, cast over and into my house by the position of the morning sun. East Frisian mornings were often rainy, which is why I had never noticed the shadow flickering over my window at that hour. Within thirty minutes it would be gone, the shadow creeping back toward the base of the turbine as the sun rose higher in the sky. But what would I do with the lights in the meantime? Should I turn them on for the seconds when the room was dark, or leave them off for the seconds when the room was light? I worked out a new pattern for making sense of the situation, scoring over the materials at hand and their entailments and enablements: sunbeams and shadows, potentially encroaching clouds, light switches and stairs, and perceived expectations of good citizens to conserve power. Instead of leaving the lights off, I turned them on.

My wandering mind and gripping fingers were performing mood work, recombining the known world to make sense of the unknown. They folded in the sensations of the wood in my hands and the stair under my feet and the pitch-blackness of the hallway with half-remembered statements from others about watching the lights in my window, the price of electricity, the position of the wind turbines, and the possibility of rain. My neighbour Antje laughed when I told her about it later. We were making a world out of the weirdness, the strange task of being a homemaker at a time when shadows were big enough to swallow your house whole. Antje said that the first time it happened to her, she thought she was having a stroke.

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Our two cases are singular experiences/experiments to sense out and make

legible what may be coming into or out of forms in the concurrent sensing out and making of worlds. What happens in the making of worlds in everyday scenes of intensification or dispersal? In lines of enclosure or exclusion, in material-semiotic residues, injunctions; in jump starts, accidental side steps and blockages? The term 'world' describes not simply an experience of our perceived environment but rather the fields that are illuminated and the forms that are filled or deflated, expanded or flattened, by the motions, aspirations, and lines of influence of people, technologies and things. Worlds, and the mood works that sense out and animate them, are not formed in the mind before they are lived. Rather, we come to know and enact a world from inhabiting it,[21] from becoming attuned to its ongoing condensations and differences. It is from the continual weaving of the multiplicity of bits and pieces that we, and worlds, emerge. What throws together can be a habitual rut or something that makes 'the multiplicity of beings about us an order, a cosmos'.[22]

Our concept of mood work is informed by recent work in the humanities and the social sciences that compels us to consider the contingent dimensions of residence in the world as much as representation in and of that world. The mood work we write through above tacks between what might be parsed out as residencies and representations,[23] as formlessness and forms, or as movements and images, asking what arcs are lent to matter as lives pile up in an ongoing accretion of moments. Even representations are presentations, things and events that have an expressive power as active agents in the co-fabrication of worlds (The Promise). Everything is composed, yet no less real for this. Everyday life is a plane of ontogenesis, where bodies emerge and are continually differentiated or individuated through sets of diverse and shifting practical relations.

J. Kevin O'Regan outlines four qualities of sensorimotor interactions with environments that are not reducible either to thoughts and imaginings or to the physical properties of things: richness (a scene spied provides infinite detail beyond what you can invent), bodiliness (the motions of the body affect sensory input), insubordinateness (the world has a life of its own; things move by themselves), and grabbiness (sensory impacts matter apart from their cognition).[24] Having a phenomenal experience means having skills with these qualities, or being skilled and scored by them. Reals are the name we give to this sense of being irreducible to matter or ideation. They denote a sense of energy or agency in affordance. A prism of qualities gathered into catchments of bodies, matters, acts and scenes, a real takes place as event or gap, presence or absence. The point of reals is not to find idiosyncratic cultural forms that can then be translated back to readymade categories of identity, ethnicity, class, race, gender, or any other sociological marker. Rather, it is to find a point of contact between sensing bodies. It is to posit a necessarily contingent name or throw an inevitably shifting anchor out into riddling sands. Through reals, we lean into worlding, into the knapping up

21. Ben Anderson and Paul Harrison, 'The promise of non-representational theories', (hereafter cited in text as The promise), in B. Anderson and P. Harrison (eds), *Taking place: Non-representational theories and geography*. Surrey, Ashgate, 2010.

22. Alphonso Lingis, *Sensation: Intelligibility in Sensibility*, New York, Prometheus Books, 1996, p13.

23. Paul Kockelman, 'Residence in the world', *Semiotica*, 162 (2006): 20.

24. J. Kevin O'Regan, 'Why red looks red rather than sounding like a bell', in *Humana. mente*, 14 (2010): 16.

of refrains that loop out and back and forth between form and matter (New England Red). A method scored by matter, mood work is also an expressivity stretched, still unfolding, across a field. It conjures registers of the ways in which people and things venture out into worlds and reals made up of projects and their failures, connections and divergences, lines of action and thought, and all kinds of things that matter literally and figuratively.

Mood work isn't always writing, but writing is always mood work. The challenge of writing mood while intentionally attending to mood work lies in constantly attuning to the force of things, events, bodies and situations, their social physics. It's not a matter of fully representing a mood but one of acknowledging and following mood work's legibilities, the simultaneous distribution and extension of social selves across and through unfolding worlds. The ethnography of mood work pulls ethnographer and audience into the thrall of a real, a perpetual motion machine of matter that is yet to be fully extrapolated into subjects, objects, ideas, intentions, or explanations, yet that nonetheless exerts force and compels attention.