

Stochastic enumeration:  
we don't want methods  
but we do want to practice

oracle(s)

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- ↳ x=measurement, categorisation, extraction and optimisation.  
we want to practice but we don't need methodologies.  
x=feeling, blurring, letting be, slowing down.  
blurred towards possible without naming it.

## Algorithm

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1. Select two texts to work with (this time we worked with *M Archive: After the End of the World* by Alexis Pauline Gumbs and our collective notes on our process and practices).
2. Select one or more dice, take time to select the dice, they may be your own, from a friend, specially aquired for this process. Dice with more sides and multiple dice will give you more options and less determinacy.
3. Choose one person to roll the dice and find something to roll the dice into. Close your eyes if you wish.
4. When its your turn, roll the dice when you feel. Repeat until you reach the number of rolls that feels right. (Or as a group you can set the number of rolls).
5. After each roll state whether the operator should be minuend, multiplicand, subtrahend, multiply, halt, commit, load, increment, decrement, addends, dividend, divisor, spin, invert, jump, or add and pop.
6. Run the calculation, use the sum to call the page line or page number from the first chosen text.
7. Repeat steps 2–5, this sum is used to call the page line or page number from the second chosen text.
8. Sit with the two pages and follow footnotes and annotations.
9. Begin to write together on a shared pad responding to the two texts, feel the edges of each other's workings through, attempt to lose track of who authored what.
10. Come back to the text after two months, attempt to annotate it, who wrote what, where did the texts sink into each other?

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Oracle(s) comes from the quotidian practice of engaging with chance --- towards finding meaningful answers in a time when life chances for many are becoming foreclosed. Through a centering of and engagement with Black Feminist Poethics (da Silva) and inspired by the ongoing oracle praxis from Alexis Pauline Gumbs, oracle(s) assembles and engages an archive of texts, scents and sounds that act as divinatory and sacred tools for engaging in collective unknowing practices. Contrary to contemporary computational paradigms, we acknowledge the impossibility of subduing risk through modes of prediction. Instead we engage in oracle inspired practices (such as bibliomancy) that engage the queerness of risk as a poetic future text for emboldening our relations to each other within unpredictability. We understand that resonance, non-linearity and association are powerful practices within oracle(s) that might create a »skeleton architecture« (Lorde) collectively training us for a world that is anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, full of tunings and cusps and towards anti-oppressive otherwises.

We propose a manifestation of oracle(s) to collectively conjure and ask questions (»take 10 minutes to ask questions that make your heart shake ...«). These questions are posed to a shared oracle, which is always a book of poetry from a Black Feminist writer as a source to work with, not extract from. By staying with one text we practice a variety of ways to engage with Black Feminist thought that isn't extractive. We do this

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towards finding proposals for us to practice in less oppressive ways, to shift and change our practices. Participants invite chance into the process by selecting pages from the text to guide their question, we then share in slow reading each passage that allows for thinking the world otherwise. These reading practices treat risk as an unavoidable feature of time and futurity that can generate intimacy and closeness through welcoming, weaving, writing, choosing, and intuiting together. Here, we publish our group poem, »apeiron«, as one response generated by the above oracle(s) algorithm. Below you will find each contributing author, their calculated sum using the algorithm, and the corresponding line from the shared notepad and passage from *M Archive*.

Invoking a practice of speaking nearby (Trinh T. Minh-ha), without seizing or claiming, this poem navigates unpredictability and unknowing through collective processes that attend to the gaps and pauses and developing moments of presence and permission that can open up in nonlinear encounters. We practice surviving within the present order, sharing the task and responsibility of how we are going to communicate and understand within unknowability, and engage radical vulnerability to become undone together.

We are an ecotonal alluvium bridging across the Atlantic Ocean that consists of Loren Britton, Romi Ron Morrison, Helen Pritchard and Eric Snodgrass.

### Calculations

Eric: [1]

$5 \times 4 \times 3 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 68$

Line from pad: discusses in plenary what about the minority

Page from *M Archive*:

»this time she put her face directly in the dirt. no glasses to remove. no precious hair to pull back. no back to

brace her to look up at the sky. just dirt. hard enough and soft enough to hold her. part of the day she pounded the earth with her fists and screamed blame and despair. part of the day she let soil slip through her fingers and felt comforted. most of the day she just acclimated herself to solid breathing and seeing all there was. which was brown. <sup>30</sup>« (Gumbs p.68)

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Helen: [2]

$$4 + 5 \times 6 \times 2 + 4 = 68$$

Line from pad: are located.

Page from *M Archive*:

»this time she put her face directly in the dirt. no glasses to remove. no precious hair to pull back. no back to brace her to look up at the sky. just dirt. hard enough and soft enough to hold her. part of the day she pounded the earth with her fists and screamed blame and despair. part of the day she let soil slip through her fingers and felt comforted. most of the day she just acclimated herself to solid breathing and seeing all there was. which was brown.<sup>30</sup>« (Gumbs p. 68)

Romi: [3]

$$(1 \times 4) + (1 \times 6 \times 5 \times 2) + 1 (- 1 \times 1) = 64$$

Line from pad: stay as close as possible to the text and the type.

Page from *M Archive*:

»everything told them it wasn't time. the tint of the soil. the nakedness of the sky. what had they done with the clouds? what had they done to their own breathing? what had they done to the ground? what could ever support them now?

the scouts from the ones waiting underground retreated back through the caves. the brave ones who had been sent to check were cleansed with mud and sweet touches when they returned. they closed their eyes and sang until their skin stopped hurting. until their lungs felt clean again. they let their voices echo off the walls.

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this was their destiny. to wait and check. to let go of all of the what what what and to ask with their waiting. when? when would the earthwalkers be ready for depth?<sup>27</sup>« (Gumbs p. 64)

Loren: [4]

$$(2 \times 1 \times 6 \times 4) + 4 + (5 \times 5 \times 5 \times 1) + 6 = 183$$

Line from pad: Dear Olga,

Page from *M Archive*:

»they used wax. crayons across the paper on the floor and one of the last remaining record collections. they drew what they could remember in color. using sound to reach back because the world didn't smell like itself anymore. the oldest among them remembered landscapes of grass and drew flat and rolling greens from where they sat. and the younger the people got they more they remembered brown, and then more orange and then red. the planet itself had to signal stop in their symbolic codes. but by that time, what else could they do?

i like the footprints that the little ones tracked across the remembered outlines of where there used to be pipes. where the gas lines tracked through the cities. where the books had been held.

let's shape our new home in the contour of the last toddler footprints. in honor of the ones who walked away.<sup>41</sup>« (Gumbs p. 183)



- Chen, N.N., 1992.  
»Speaking Nearby:« A Conversation with  
Trinh T. Minh-ha. *Visual Anthropology  
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- Da Silva, D.F., 2014.  
Toward a Black Feminist Poethics:  
The quest(ion) of Blackness toward the  
End of the World. *The Black Scholar*,  
44(2), pp.81–97.
- Gumbs, A.P., 2018.  
*M Archive: After the end of the world*.  
Duke University Press.
- Lorde, A., 1977.  
Poetry is not a Luxury. *Sister Outsider*.  
Crossing Press.

## Further Reading

aftermath \* the nth of letting go / P \* training  
in the everyday (new modes of living  
together), by oracle(s) Loren Britton,  
Romi Ron Morrison, Helen Pritchard  
and Eric Snodgrass

[https://newalphabetschool.hkw.de/aftermath-  
the-nth-of-letting-go-p-training-in-the-  
everyday-new-modes-of-living-together-  
by-oracles/](https://newalphabetschool.hkw.de/aftermath-the-nth-of-letting-go-p-training-in-the-everyday-new-modes-of-living-together-by-oracles/)