Join us for a full day of learning from and with Laurie Gries and Brice Nordquist. Methodological workshops will take place in the morning (please register via Google Form) with public talks to follow at 1:30 and a Happy Hour at Murphy's after the talks.

Talk Abstracts:
New Materialist Autobiography: A Multi-Sensory Approach for Studying Rhetorical Entanglements and the Ontology of Becoming

In this talk, Laurie Gries discusses and models the affordances of new materialist autobiography (NMA), an in situ, experimental research method that attunes writers to our affective, persuasive encounters with the things around us. As a method, NMA studies how non-human entities in our surrounding environment trigger affective, cognitive, emotional, and physical experiences in order to disclose how rhetoricity emerges through deep relationality. In addition to relying on autoethnographic research strategies such as walking, recording, dwelling, and reflecting, NMA heavily relies on autobiography to recall memories and epiphanies as well as phenomenology to tap into our embodied responses and account for aiesthesis—the ancient term for sense perception. In addition, NMA—which operates through creative non-fiction—demands bringing forth energia in our writing in order to cultivate a state of heightened awareness and affective experience for not only ourselves as writers but our audience members. Gries will introduce this method and then read two vignettes that demonstrate how NMA can help generate deeper understandings about the relations between rhetoric, life’s deep entanglements, and the ontology of becoming.

Brice Nordquist:
Drawing on a series of go-along video observations with high school seniors on their daily commutes from Queens, the Bronx, and Brooklyn to a public school in Lower Manhattan, this presentation reveals how students use their smartphones and time in transit to complete most of their reading and writing for school, collaborate on school work across languages and media, and maintain and expand transnational social networks. Reading students’ mobile literacies against the backdrop of pedagogies of containment that characterize their experiences in school, I investigate the effects of material and embodied mobilities on literacy practices and demonstrate how scales of education are constituted, in part, by traversals across the city and internet.

Through an integration of literacy and mobility studies, the presentation offers researchers, teachers, and students ways to attend to pluralities of moving bodies, objects, ideas, and texts that make up and connect literacy practices and scenes across space-time. This attention is central to the project of “learning across contexts” in literacy education and paramount in the face of increasing movements of people around the world; accelerating circulations of capital and messages; and intensifying exertions of control over individual and collective mobilities imposed by neoliberal states and institutions, including K-16 education systems.